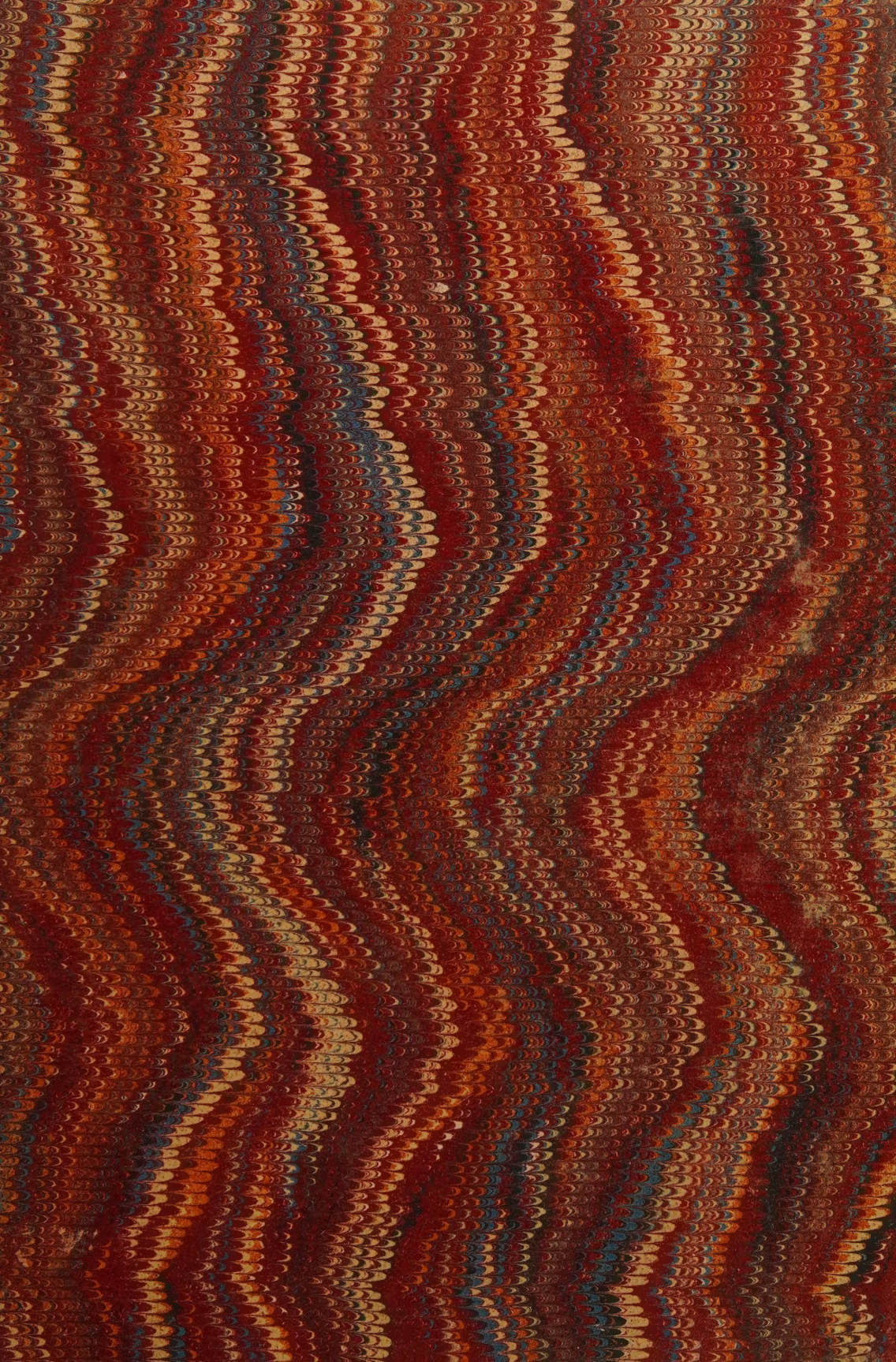

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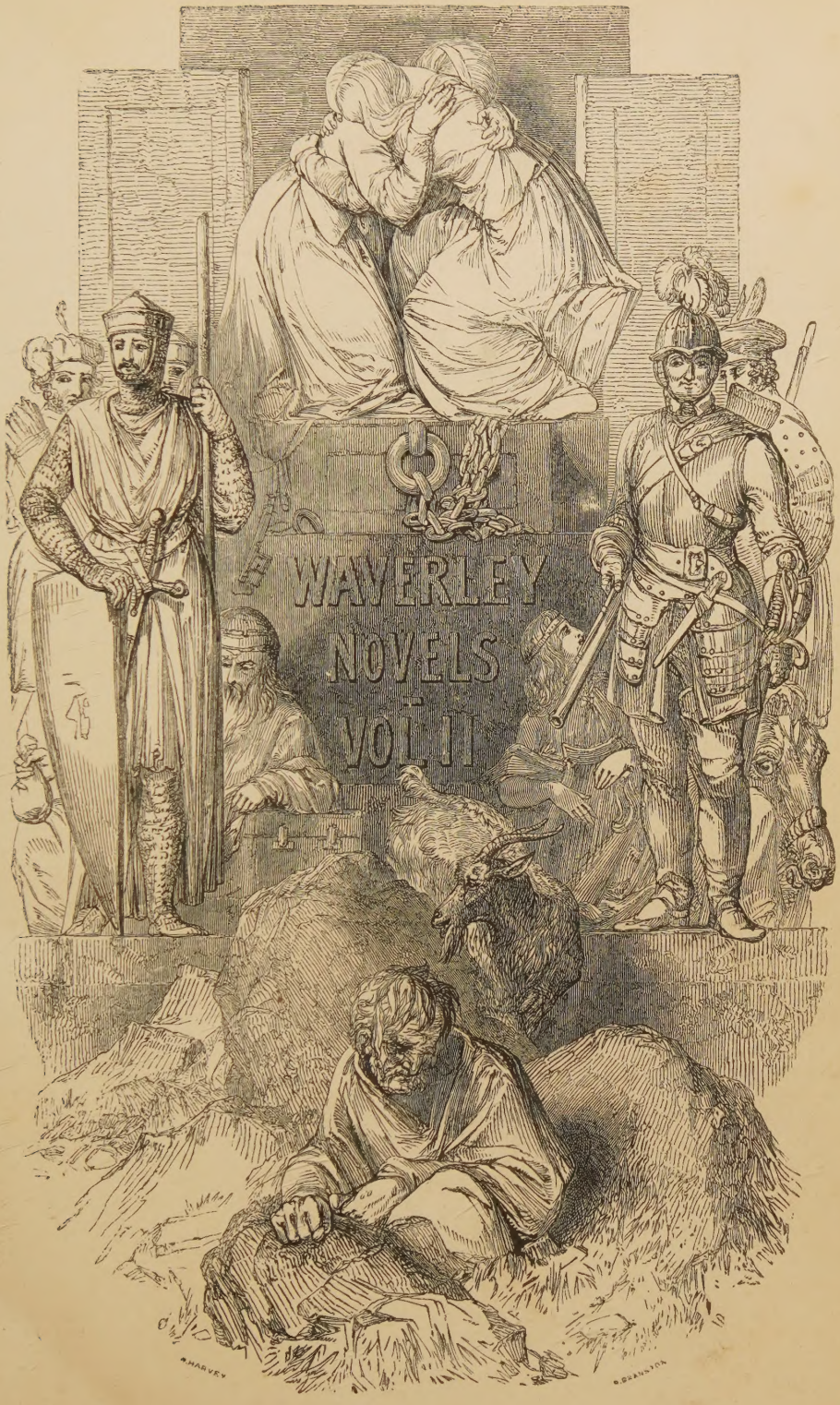

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, EDINBURGH.

THE NOVELS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

WITH

ALL HIS INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES.

VOL. II.

THE BLACK DWARF.
LEGEND OF MONTROSE.
HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN.
BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.
IVANHOE.
THE MONASTERY.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLVII.

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THE BLACK DWARF.

AND

A LEGEND OF MONTROSE.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

With all his Illustrations and Notes.

Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it!—BURNS.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLVI.

TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM,

SCHOOLMASTER AND PARISH-CLERK OF GANDERCLEUCH.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there 's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel 's amang you takin' notes.
An' faith he 'll prent it! — BURNS.

Ahora bien, dixo il Cura; traedme, senor huêsped, aquesos libros, que los quiero ver. Que me place, respondió el; y entrando en su aposento, sacó dél una malletilla vieja cerrada con una cadenilla, y abriéndola, halló en ella tres libros grandes y unos papeles de muy buena letra escritos de mano. — DON QUIXOTE, Parte I. Capitulo 32.

It is mighty well, said the priest; pray, landlord, bring me those books, for I have a mind to see them. With all my heart, answered the host; and going to his chamber, he brought out a little old cloke-bag, with a padlock and chain to it, and opening it, he took out three large volumes, and some manuscript papers written in a fine character. — JARVIS'S *Translation.*

The Black Dwarf.

INTRODUCTION — (1829.)

THE ideal being who is here presented as residing in solitude, and haunted by a consciousness of his own deformity, and a suspicion of his being generally subjected to the scorn of his fellow-men, is not altogether imaginary. An individual existed many years since, under the author's observation, which suggested such a character. This poor unfortunate man's name was David Ritchie, a native of Tweeddale. He was the son of a labourer in the slate-quarries of Stobo, and must have been born in the mis-shapen form which he exhibited, though he sometimes imputed it to ill-usage when in infancy. He was bred a brush-maker at Edinburgh, and had wandered to several places, working at his trade, from all which he was chased by the disagreeable attention which his hideous singularity of form and face attracted wherever he came. The author understood him to say he had even been in Dublin.

Tired at length of being the object of shouts, laughter, and derision, David Ritchie resolved, like a deer hunted from the herd, to retreat to some wilderness, where he might have the least possible communication with the world which scoffed at him. He settled himself, with this view, upon a patch of wild moorland at the bottom of a bank on the farm of Woodhouse, in the sequestered vale of the small river Manor, in Peebles-shire. The few people who had occasion to pass that way were much surprised, and some superstitious persons a little alarmed, to see so strange a figure as Bow'd Davie (*i. e.* Crooked David) employed in a task, for which he seemed so totally unfit, as that of erecting a house. The cottage which he built was extremely small, but the walls, as well as those of a little garden that surrounded it, were constructed with an ambitious degree of solidity, being composed of layers of large stones and turf; and some of the corner stones were so weighty, as to puzzle the spectators how such a person as the architect could possibly have raised them. In fact, David received from passengers, or those who came attracted by curiosity, a good deal of assistance; and as no one knew how much aid had been given by others, the wonder of each individual remained undiminished.

The proprietor of the ground, the late Sir James Naesmith, Baronet, chanced to pass this singular dwelling, which, having been placed there without right or leave asked or given, formed an exact parallel with Falstaff's simile of a "fair house built on another's ground;" so that poor David might

have lost his edifice by mistaking the property where he had erected it. Of course, the proprietor entertained no idea of exacting such a forfeiture, but readily sanctioned the harmless encroachment.

The personal description of Elshender of Mucklestane-Moor has been generally allowed to be a tolerably exact and unexaggerated portrait of David of Manor Water. He was not quite three feet and a half high, since he could stand upright in the door of his mansion, which was just that height. The following particulars concerning his figure and temper occur in the Scots Magazine for 1817, and are now understood to have been communicated by the ingenious Mr Robert Chambers of Edinburgh, who has recorded with much spirit the traditions of the Good Town, and, in other publications, largely and agreeably added to the stock of our popular antiquities. He is the countryman of David Ritchie, and had the best access to collect anecdotes of him.

"His skull," says this authority, "which was of an oblong and rather unusual shape, was said to be of such strength, that he could strike it with ease through the panel of a door, or the end of a barrel. His laugh is said to have been quite horrible; and his screech-owl voice, shrill, uncouth, and dissonant, corresponded well with his other peculiarities.

"There was nothing very uncommon about his dress. He usually wore an old slouched hat when he went abroad; and when at home, a sort of cowl, or night-cap. He never wore shoes, being unable to adapt them to his mis-shapen finlike feet, but always had both feet and legs quite concealed, and wrapt up with pieces of cloth. He always walked with a sort of pole, or pike-staff, considerably taller than himself. His habits were, in many respects, singular, and indicated a mind congenial to its uncouth tabernacle. A jealous, misanthropical, and irritable temper, was his prominent characteristic. The sense of his deformity haunted him like a phantom. And the insults and scorn to which this exposed him, had poisoned his heart with fierce and bitter feelings, which, from other points in his character, do not appear to have been more largely infused into his original temperament than that of his fellow-men.

"He detested children on account of their propensity to insult and persecute him. To strangers he was generally reserved, crabbed, and surly; and though he by no means refused assistance or charity, he seldom either expressed or exhibited much gratitude. Even towards persons who had been his greatest benefactors, and who possessed the greatest share of his good-will, he frequently displayed much caprice and jealousy. A lady who had known him from his infancy, and who has furnished us in the most obliging manner with some particulars respecting him, says, that although Davie shewed as much respect and attachment to her father's family, as it was in his nature to shew to any, yet they were always obliged to be very cautious in their deportment towards him. One day, having gone to visit him with another lady, he took them through his garden, and was shewing them, with much pride and good-humour, all his rich and tastefully assorted borders, when they happened to stop near a plot of cabbages which had been somewhat injured by the caterpillars. Davie observing one of the ladies smile, instantly assumed his savage, scowling aspect, rushed among the cabbages, and dashed them to pieces with his *kent*, exclaiming, 'I hate the worms, for they mock me!'

"Another lady, likewise a friend and old acquaintance of his, very unintentionally gave David mortal offence on a similar occasion. Throwing back his jealous glance as he was ushering her into his garden, he fancied he observed her spit, and exclaimed, with great ferocity, 'Am I a toad, woman! that ye spit at me—that ye spit at me?' and without listening to any answer or excuse, drove her out of his garden with imprecations and insult. When irritated by persons for whom he entertained little respect, his misanthropy displayed itself in words, and sometimes in actions, of still greater rudeness; and he used on such occasions the most unusual and singularly savage imprecations and threats."[1]

Nature maintains a certain balance of good and evil in all her works; and there is no state perhaps so utterly desolate, which does not possess some source of gratification peculiar to itself. This poor man, whose misanthropy was founded in a sense of his own preternatural deformity, had yet his own particular enjoyments. Driven into solitude, he became an admirer of the beauties of nature. His garden, which he sedulously cultivated, and from a piece of wild moorland made a very productive spot, was his pride and his delight; but he was also an admirer of more natural beauty: the soft sweep of the green hill, the bubbling of a clear fountain, or the complexities of a wild thicket, were scenes on which he often gazed for hours, and, as he said, with inexpressible delight. It was perhaps for this reason that he was fond of Shenstone's pastorals, and some parts of Paradise Lost. The author has heard his most unmusical voice repeat the celebrated description of Paradise, which he seemed fully to appreciate. His other studies were of a different cast, chiefly polemical. He never went to the parish church, and was therefore suspected of entertaining heterodox opinions, though his objection was probably to the concourse of spectators, to whom he must have exposed his unseemly deformity. He spoke of a future state with intense feeling, and even with tears. He expressed disgust at the idea of his remains being mixed with the common rubbish, as he called it, of the churchyard, and selected with his usual taste a beautiful and wild spot in the glen where he had his hermitage, in which to take his last repose. He changed his

[1] Scots Magazine, vol. 80, p. 207.

mind, however, and was finally interred in the common burial-ground of Manor parish. The author has invested Wise Elshie with some qualities which made him appear, in the eyes of the vulgar, a man possessed of supernatural power. Common fame paid David Ritchie a similar compliment, for some of the poor and ignorant, as well as all the children, in the neighbourhood, held him to be what is called *uncanny*. He himself did not altogether discourage the idea; it enlarged his very limited circle of power, and in so far gratified his conceit; and it soothed his misanthropy, by increasing his means of giving terror or pain. But even in a rude Scottish glen thirty years back, the fear of sorcery was very much out of date.

David Ritchie affected to frequent solitary scenes, especially such as were supposed to be haunted, and valued himself upon his courage in doing so. To be sure he had little chance of meeting any thing more ugly than himself. At heart, he was superstitious, and planted many rowans (mountain ashes) around his hut, as a certain defence against necromancy. For the same reason, doubtless, he desired to have rowan-trees set about his grave.

We have stated that David Ritchie loved objects of natural beauty. His only living favourites were a dog and a cat, to which he was particularly attached, and his bees, which he treated with great care. He took a sister, latterly, to live in a hut adjacent to his own, but he did not permit her to enter it. She was weak in intellect, but not deformed in person; simple, or rather silly, but not, like her brother, sullen or bizarre. David was never affectionate to her; it was not in his nature; but he endured her. He maintained himself and her by the sale of the produce of their garden and bee-hives; and, latterly, they had a small allowance from the parish. Indeed, in the simple and patriarchal state in which the country then was, persons in the situation of David and his sister were sure to be supported. They had only to apply to the next gentleman or respectable farmer, and were sure to find them equally ready and willing to supply their very moderate wants. David often received gratuities from strangers, which he never asked, never refused, and never seemed to consider as an obligation. He had a right, indeed, to regard himself as one of Nature's paupers, to whom she gave a title to be maintained by his kind, even by that deformity which closed against him all ordinary ways of supporting himself by his own labour. Besides, a bag was suspended in the mill for David Ritchie's benefit; and those who were carrying home a melder of meal, seldom failed to add a *gowpen*,[1] to the alms-bag of the deformed cripple. In short, David had no occasion for money, save to purchase snuff, his only luxury, in which he indulged himself liberally. When he died, in the beginning of the present century, he was found to have hoarded about twenty pounds, a habit very consistent with his disposition; for wealth is power, and power was what David Ritchie desired to possess, as a compensation for his exclusion from human society.

His sister survived till the publication of the tale to which this brief notice forms the introduction; and the author is sorry to learn that a sort of "local sympathy," and the curiosity then expressed concerning the Author of Waverley and the subjects of his Novels, exposed the poor woman to inquiries which gave her pain. When pressed about her brother's peculiarities, she asked, in her turn, why they would not permit the dead to rest? To others who pressed for some account of her parents, she answered in the same tone of feeling.

The author saw this poor, and, it may be said, unhappy man, in autumn 1797. Being then, as he has the happiness still to remain, connected by ties of intimate friendship with the family of the venerable Dr Adam Fergusson, the philosopher and historian, who then resided at the mansion-house of Halyards, in the vale of Manor, about a mile from Ritchie's hermitage, the author was upon a visit at Halyards, which lasted for several days, and was made acquainted with this singular anchorite, whom Dr Fergusson considered as an extraordinary character, and whom he assisted in various ways, particularly by the occasional loan of books. Though the taste of the philosopher and the poor peasant did not, it may be supposed, always correspond,[2] Dr Fergusson considered him as a man of a powerful capacity and original ideas, but whose mind was thrown off its just bias by a predominant degree of self-love and self-opinion, galled by the sense of ridicule and contempt, and avenging itself upon society, in idea at least, by a gloomy misanthropy.

David Ritchie, besides the utter obscurity of his life while in existence, had been dead for many years, when it occurred to the author that such a character might be made a powerful agent in fictitious narrative. He, accordingly, sketched that of Elshie of the Mucklestane-Moor. The story was intended to be longer, and the catastrophe more artificially brought out; but a friendly critic, to whose opinion I subjected the work in its progress, was of opinion, that the idea of the Solitary was of a kind too revolting, and more likely to disgust than to interest the reader. As I had good right to consider my adviser as an excellent judge of public opinion, I got off my subject by hastening the story to an end, as fast as it was possible; and, by huddling into one volume, a tale which was designed to occupy two, have perhaps produced a narrative as much disproportioned and distorted, as the Black Dwarf, who is its subject.

[1] Handful.

[2] I remember David was particularly anxious to see a book, which he called, I think, Letters to the Elect Ladies, and which, he said, was the best composition he had ever read; but Dr Fergusson's library did not supply the volume.

The Black Dwarf.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary.

Hast any philosophy in thee, Shepherd?
As You Like it.

It was a fine April morning (excepting that it had snowed hard the night before, and the ground remained covered with a dazzling mantle of six inches in depth) when two horsemen rode up to the Wallace Inn. The first was a strong, tall, powerful man, in a grey riding-coat, having a hat covered with wax-cloth, a huge silver-mounted horsewhip, boots, and dreadnought overalls. He was mounted on a large strong brown mare, rough in coat, but well in condition, with a saddle of the yeomanry cut, and a double-bitted military bridle. The man who accompanied him was apparently his servant; he rode a shaggy little grey pony, had a blue bonnet on his head, and a large check napkin folded about his neck, wore a pair of long blue worsted hose instead of boots, had his gloveless hands much stained with tar, and observed an air of deference and respect towards his companion, but without any of those indications of precedence and punctilio which are preserved between the gentry and their domestics. On the contrary, the two travellers entered the court-yard abreast, and the concluding sentence of the conversation which had been carrying on betwixt them was a joint ejaculation, "Lord guide us, an this weather last, what will come o' the lambs!" The hint was sufficient for my Landlord, who, advancing to take the horse of the principal person, and holding him by the reins as he dismounted, while his ostler rendered the same service to the attendant, welcomed the stranger to Gandercleugh, and, in the same breath, inquired, "What news from the south hielands?"

"News?" said the farmer, "bad eneugh news, I think;—an we can carry through the yowes, it will be a' we can do; we maun e'en leave the lambs to the Black Dwarf's care."

"Ay, ay," subjoined the old shepherd, (for such he was,) shaking his head, "he'll be unco busy amang the morts this season."

"The Black Dwarf!" said *my learned friend and patron*,[1] Mr Jedediah Cleishbotham, "and what sort of a personage may he be?"

"Hout awa' man," answered the farmer, "ye 'll hae heard o' Canny Elshie the Black Dwarf, or I am muckle mistaen—A' the warld tells tales about him, but it 's but daft nonsense after a'—I dinna believe a word o 't frae beginning to end."

"Your father believed it unco stievely, though," said the old man, to whom the scepticism of his master gave obvious displeasure.

"Ay, very true, Bauldy, but that was in the time o' the black-faces—they believed a hantle queer things in thae days, that naebody heeds since the lang sheep cam in."

"The mair 's the pity, the mair 's the pity," said the old man. "Your father,—and sae I have aften tell'd ye, maister,—wad hae been sair vexed to hae seen the auld peel-house wa's pu'd down to make park-dykes; and the bonny broomy knowe, where he liked sae weel to sit at e'en, wi' his plaid about him, and look at the kye as they cam down the loaning, ill wad he hae liked to hae seen that braw sunny knowe a' riven out wi' the pleugh in the fashion it is at this day."

"Hout, Bauldie," replied the principal, "tak ye that dram the landlord's offering ye, and never fash your head about the changes o' the warld, sae lang as ye 're blithe and bien yourself."

"Wussing your health, sirs," said the shepherd; and having taken off his glass, and observed the whisky was the right thing, he continued, "It 's no for the like o' us to be judging, to be sure; but it was a bonny knowe that broomy knowe, and an unco braw shelter for the lambs in a severe morning like this."

"Ay," said his patron, "but ye ken we maun hae turnips for the lang sheep, billie, and muckle hard wark to get them, baith wi' the pleugh and the howe; and that wad sort ill wi' sitting on the broomy knowe, and cracking about Black Dwarfs, and siccan clavers, as was the gate lang syne, when the short sheep were in the fashion."

"Aweel, aweel, maister," said the attendant, "short sheep had short rents, I 'm thinking."

Here my *worthy and learned* patron again interposed, and observed, "that he could never perceive any material difference, in point of longitude, between one sheep and another."

This occasioned a loud hoarse laugh on the part of the farmer, and an astonished stare on the part of the shepherd. "It 's the woo', man,—it 's the woo', and no the beasts themsells, that makes them be ca'd lang or short. I believe if ye were to measure their backs, the short sheep wad be rather the langer-bodied o' the twa; but it 's the woo' that pays the rent in thae days, and it had muckle need."

"Odd, Bauldie says very true,—short sheep did

[1] We have, in this and other instances, printed in italics some few words which the worthy editor, Mr Jedediah Cleishbotham, seems to have interpolated upon the text of his deceased friend, Mr Pattieson. We must observe, once for all, that such liberties seem only to have been taken by the learned gentleman where his own character and conduct are concerned; and surely he must be the best judge of the style in which his own character and conduct should be treated of.

make short rents—my father paid for our steading just threescore punds, and it stands me in three hundred, plack and bawbee.—And that's very true—I hae nae time to be standing here clavering—Landlord, get us our breakfast, and see an' get the yauds fed—I am for doun to Christy Wilson's, to see if him and me can gree about the luckpenny I am to gie him for his year-aulds. We had drank sax mutchkins to the making the bargain at St Boswell's fair, and some gate we canna gree upon the particulars preceesely, for as muckle time as we took about it—I doubt we draw to a plea—But hear ye, neighbour," addressing my *worthy and learned* patron, "if ye want to hear ony thing about lang or short sheep, I will be back here to my kail against ane o'clock; or, if ye want ony auld warld stories about the Black Dwarf, and sic-like, if ye 'll ware a half mutchkin upon Bauldie there, he 'll crack t' ye like a pen-gun. And I 'se gie ye a mutchkin mysell, man, if I can settle weel wi' Christy Wilson."

The farmer returned at the hour appointed, and with him came Christy Wilson, their difference having been fortunately settled without an appeal to the gentlemen of the long robe. My *learned and worthy* patron failed not to attend, both on account of the refreshment promised to the mind and to the body, *although he is known to partake of the latter in a very moderate degree;* and the party, with which my Landlord was associated, continued to sit late in the evening, seasoning their liquor with many choice tales and songs. The last incident which I recollect, was my *learned and worthy* patron falling from his chair, just as he concluded a long lecture upon temperance, by reciting, from the Gentle Shepherd, a couplet, which he *right happily* transferred from the vice of avarice to that of ebriety:

> He that has just eneugh may soundly sleep,
> The owercome only fashes folk to keep.

In the course of the evening the Black Dwarf[1] had not been forgotten, and the old shepherd, Bauldie, told so many stories of him, that they excited a good deal of interest. It also appeared, though not till the third punch-bowl was emptied, that much of the farmer's scepticism on the subject was affected, as evincing a liberality of thinking, and a freedom from ancient prejudices, becoming a man who paid three hundred pounds a-year of rent, while, in fact, he had a lurking belief in the traditions of his forefathers. After my usual manner, I made farther inquiries of other persons connected with the wild and pastoral district in which the scene of the following narrative is placed, and I was fortunate enough to recover many links of the story, not generally known, and which account, at least in some degree, for the circumstances of exaggerated marvel with which superstition has attired it in the more vulgar traditions.

CHAPTER II.

> Will none but Hearne the Hunter serve your turn?
> *Merry Wives of Windsor.*

In one of the most remote districts of the south of Scotland, where an ideal line, drawn along the tops of lofty and bleak mountains, separates that land from her sister kingdom, a young man, called Halbert, or Hobbie Elliot, a substantial farmer, who boasted his descent from old Martin Elliot of the Preakin-tower, noted in Border story and song, was on his return from deer-stalking. The deer, once so numerous among these solitary wastes, were now reduced to a very few herds, which, sheltering themselves in the most remote and inaccessible recesses, rendered the task of pursuing them equally toilsome and precarious. There were, however, found many youth of the country ardently attached to this sport, with all its dangers and fatigues. The sword had been sheathed upon the Borders for more than a hundred years, by the peaceful union of the crowns in the reign of James the First of Great Britain. Still the country retained traces of what it had been in former days; the inhabitants, their more peaceful avocations having been repeatedly interrupted by the civil wars of the preceding century, were scarce yet broken in to the habits of regular industry, sheep-farming had not been introduced upon any considerable scale, and the feeding of black

[1] The Black Dwarf, now almost forgotten, was once held a formidable personage by the dalesmen of the Border, where he got the blame of whatever mischief befell the sheep or cattle. "He was," says Dr Leyden, who makes considerable use of him in the ballad called the Cowt of Keeldar, "a fairy of the most malignant order—the genuine Northern Duergar." The best and most authentic account of this dangerous and mysterious being occurs in a tale communicated to the author by that eminent antiquary, Richard Surtees, Esq. of Mainsforth, author of the History of the Bishopric of Durham.

According to this well attested legend, two young Northumbrians were out on a shooting party, and had plunged deep among the mountainous moorlands which border on Cumberland. They stopped for refreshment in a little secluded dell by the side of a rivulet. There, after they had partaken of such food as they brought with them, one of the party fell asleep; the other, unwilling to disturb his friend's repose, stole silently out of the dell with the purpose of looking around him, when he was astonished to find himself close to a being who seemed not to belong to this world, as he was the most hideous dwarf that the sun had ever shone on. His head was of full human size, forming a frightful contrast with his height, which was considerably under four feet. It was thatched with no other covering than long matted red hair, like that of the felt of a badger in consistence, and in colour a reddish brown, like the hue of the heather-blossom. His limbs seemed of great strength; nor was he otherwise deformed than from their undue proportion in thickness to his diminutive height. The terrified sportsman stood gazing on this horrible apparition, until, with an angry countenance, the being demanded by what right he intruded himself on those hills, and destroyed their harmless inhabitants. The perplexed stranger endeavoured to propitiate the incensed dwarf, by offering to surrender his game, as he would to an earthly Lord of the Manor. The proposal only redoubled the offence already taken by the dwarf, who alleged that he was the lord of those mountains, and the protector of the wild creatures who found a retreat in their solitary recesses; and that all spoils derived from their death, or misery, were abhorrent to him. The hunter humbled himself before the angry goblin, and by protestations of his ignorance, and of his resolution to abstain from such intrusion in future, at last succeeded in pacifying him. The gnome now became more communicative, and spoke of himself as belonging to a species of beings something between the angelic race and humanity. He added, moreover, which could hardly have been anticipated, that he had hopes of sharing in the redemption of the race of Adam. He pressed the sportsman to visit his dwelling, which he said was hard by, and plighted his faith for his safe return. But at this moment, the shout of the sportsman's companion was heard calling for his friend, and the dwarf, as if unwilling that more than one person should be cognisant of his presence, disappeared as the young man emerged from the dell to join his comrade.

It was the universal opinion of those most experienced in such matters, that if the shooter had accompanied the spirit, he would, notwithstanding the dwarf's fair pretences, have been either torn to pieces, or immured for years in the recesses of some fairy hill.

Such is the last and most authentic account of the apparition of the Black Dwarf.

cattle was the chief purpose to which the hills and valleys were applied. Near to the farmer's house, the tenant usually contrived to raise such a crop of oats or barley, as afforded meal for his family; and the whole of this slovenly and imperfect mode of cultivation left much time upon his own hands, and those of his domestics. This was usually employed by the young men in hunting and fishing; and the spirit of adventure, which formerly led to raids and forays in the same districts, was still to be discovered in the eagerness with which they pursued those rural sports.

The more high-spirited among the youth were, about the time that our narrative begins, expecting, rather with hope than apprehension, an opportunity of emulating their fathers in their military achievements, the recital of which formed the chief part of their amusement within doors. The passing of the Scottish act of security had given the alarm to England, as it seemed to point at a separation of the two British kingdoms, after the decease of Queen Anne, the reigning sovereign. Godolphin, then at the head of the English administration, foresaw that there was no other mode of avoiding the probable extremity of a civil war, but by carrying through an incorporating union. How that treaty was managed, and how little it seemed for some time to promise the beneficial results which have since taken place to such extent, may be learned from the history of the period. It is enough for our purpose to say, that all Scotland was indignant at the terms on which their legislature had surrendered their national independence. The general resentment led to the strangest leagues and to the wildest plans. The Cameronians were about to take arms for the restoration of the house of Stewart, whom they regarded, with justice, as their oppressors; and the intrigues of the period presented the strange picture of papists, prelatists, and presbyterians, caballing among themselves against the English government, out of a common feeling that their country had been treated with injustice. The fermentation was universal; and, as the population of Scotland had been generally trained to arms, under the act of security, they were not indifferently prepared for war, and waited but the declaration of some of the nobility to break out into open hostility. It was at this period of public confusion that our story opens.

The cleugh, or wild ravine, into which Hobbie Elliot had followed the game, was already far behind him, and he was considerably advanced on his return homeward, when the night began to close upon him. This would have been a circumstance of great indifference to the experienced sportsman, who could have walked blindfold over every inch of his native heaths, had it not happened near a spot, which, according to the traditions of the country, was in extremely bad fame, as haunted by supernatural appearances. To tales of this kind Hobbie had, from his childhood, lent an attentive ear; and as no part of the country afforded such a variety of legends, so no man was more deeply read in their fearful lore than Hobbie of the Heugh-foot; for so our gallant was called, to distinguish him from a round dozen of Elliots who bore the same Christian name. It cost him no efforts, therefore, to call to memory the terrific incidents connected with the extensive waste upon which he was now entering. In fact, they presented themselves with a readiness which he felt to be somewhat dismaying.

This dreary common was called Mucklestane-Moor, from a huge column of unhewn granite, which raised its massy head on a knoll near the centre of the heath, perhaps to tell of the mighty dead who slept beneath, or to preserve the memory of some bloody skirmish. The real cause of its existence had, however, passed away; and tradition, which is as frequently an inventor of fiction as a preserver of truth, had supplied its place with a supplementary legend of her own, which now came full upon Hobbie's memory. The ground about the pillar was strewed, or rather encumbered, with many large fragments of stone of the same consistence with the column, which, from their appearance as they lay scattered on the waste, were popularly called the Grey Geese of Mucklestane-Moor. The legend accounted for this name and appearance by the catastrophe of a noted and most formidable witch who frequented these hills in former days, causing the ewes to *keb*, and the kine to cast their calves, and performing all the feats of mischief ascribed to these evil beings. On this moor she used to hold her revels with her sister hags; and rings were still pointed out on which no grass nor heath ever grew, the turf being, as it were, calcined by the scorching hoofs of their diabolical partners.

Once upon a time this old hag is said to have crossed the moor, driving before her a flock of geese, which she proposed to sell to advantage at a neighbouring fair; for it is well known that the Fiend, however liberal in imparting his powers of doing mischief, ungenerously leaves his allies under the necessity of performing the meanest rustic labours for subsistence. The day was far advanced, and her chance of obtaining a good price depended on her being first at the market. But the geese, which had hitherto preceded her in a pretty orderly manner, when they came to this wide common, interspersed with marshes and pools of water, scattered in every direction, to plunge into the element in which they delighted. Incensed at the obstinacy with which they defied all her efforts to collect them, and not remembering the precise terms of the contract by which the Fiend was bound to obey her commands for a certain space, the sorceress exclaimed, "Deevil, that neither I nor they ever stir from this spot more!" The words were hardly uttered, when, by a metamorphosis as sudden as any in Ovid, the hag and her refractory flock were converted into stone, the angel whom she served, being a strict formalist, grasping eagerly at an opportunity of completing the ruin of her body and soul by a literal obedience to her orders. It is said, that when she perceived and felt the transformation which was about to take place, she exclaimed to the treacherous Fiend, "Ah, thou false thief! lang hast thou promised me a grey gown, and now I am getting ane that will last for ever." The dimensions of the pillar, and of the stones, were often appealed to, as a proof of the superior stature and size of old women and geese in the days of other years, by those praisers of the past who held the comfortable opinion of the gradual degeneracy of mankind.

All particulars of this legend Hobbie called to mind as he passed along the moor. He also remembered, that, since the catastrophe had taken

place, the scene of it had been avoided, at least after night-fall, by all human beings, as being the ordinary resort of kelpies, spunkies, and other demons, once the companions of the witch's diabolical revels, and now continuing to rendezvous upon the same spot, as if still in attendance on their transformed mistress. Hobbie's natural hardihood, however, manfully combated with these intrusive sensations of awe. He summoned to his side the brace of large greyhounds, who were the companions of his sports, and who were wont, in his own phrase, to fear neither dog nor devil; he looked at the priming of his piece, and, like the clown in Hallowe'en, whistled up the warlike ditty of Jock of the Side, as a general causes his drums be beat to inspirit the doubtful courage of his soldiers.

In this state of mind, he was very glad to hear a friendly voice shout in his rear, and propose to him a partner on the road. He slackened his pace, and was quickly joined by a youth well known to him, a gentleman of some fortune in that remote country, and who had been abroad on the same errand with himself. Young Earnscliff, "of that ilk," had lately come of age, and succeeded to a moderate fortune, a good deal dilapidated, from the share his family had taken in the disturbances of the period. They were much and generally respected in the country; a reputation which this young gentleman seemed likely to sustain, as he was well educated, and of excellent disposition.

"Now, Earnscliff," exclaimed Hobbie, "I am glad to meet your honour ony gate, and company's blithe on a bare moor like this—it's an unco bogilly bit—Where hae ye been sporting?"

"Up the Carla Cleugh, Hobbie," answered Earnscliff, returning his greeting. "But will our dogs keep the peace, think you?"

"Deil a fear o' mine," said Hobbie, "they hae scarce a leg to stand on. Odd! the deer's fled the country, I think! I have been as far as Ingerfell-foot, and deil a horn has Hobbie seen, excepting three red-wud raes, that never let me within shot of them, though I gaed a mile round to get up the wind to them, an' a'. Deil o' me wad care muckle, only I wanted some venison to our auld gude-dame. The carline, she sits in the neuk yonder, upbye, and cracks about the grand shooters and hunters lang syne—Odd, I think they hae killed a' the deer in the country, for my part."

"Well, Hobbie, I have shot a fat buck, and sent him to Earnscliff this morning—you shall have half of him for your grandmother."

"Mony thanks to ye, Mr Patrick, ye're kend to a' the country for a kind heart. It will do the auld wife's heart gude—mair by token, when she kens it comes frae you—and maist of a', gin ye'll come up and take your share, for I reckon ye are lonesome now in the auld tower, and a' your folk at that weary Edinburgh. I wonder what they can find to do amang a wheen ranks o' stane houses wi' slate on the tap o' them, that might live on their ain bonny green hills."

"My education and my sisters' has kept my mother much in Edinburgh for several years," said Earnscliff, "but I promise you I propose to make up for lost time."

"And ye'll rig out the auld tower a bit," said Hobbie, "and live hearty and neighbour-like wi' the auld family friends, as the Laird o' Earnscliff should? I can tell ye, my mother—my grand mother I mean—but, since we lost our ain mother, we ca' her sometimes the tane, and sometimes the tother—but, ony gate, she conceits hersell no that distant connected wi' you."

"Very true, Hobbie, and I will come to the Heugh-foot to dinner to-morrow with all my heart."

"Weel, that's kindly said! We are auld neighbours, an we were nae kin—and my gude-dame's fain to see you—she clavers about your father that was killed lang syne."

"Hush, hush, Hobbie—not a word about that—it's a story better forgotten."

"I dinna ken—if it had chanced amang our folk, we wad hae keepit it in mind mony a day till we got some mends for't—but ye ken your ain ways best, you lairds—I have heard that Ellieslaw's friend stickit your sire after the laird himsell had mastered his sword."

"Fie, fie, Hobbie; it was a foolish brawl, occasioned by wine and politics—many swords were drawn—it is impossible to say who struck the blow."

"At ony rate, auld Ellieslaw was aiding and abetting; and I am sure if ye were sae disposed as to take amends on him, naebody could say it was wrang, for your father's blood is beneath his nails—and besides, there's naebody else left that was concerned to take amends upon, and he's a prelatist and a jacobite into the bargain—I can tell ye the country folk look for something atween ye."

"O, for shame, Hobbie!" replied the young Laird; "you, that profess religion, to stir your friend up to break the law, and take vengeance at his own hand, and in such a bogilly bit too, where we know not what beings may be listening to us!"

"Hush, hush!" said Hobbie, drawing nearer to his companion, "I wasna thinking o' the like o' them—But I can guess a wee bit what keeps your hand up, Mr Patrick; we a' ken it's no lack o' courage, but the twa grey een of a bonny lass, Miss Isabel Vere, that keeps you sae sober."

"I assure you, Hobbie," said his companion, rather angrily, "I assure you you are mistaken; and it is extremely wrong of you, either to think of, or to utter, such an idea; I have no idea of permitting freedoms to be carried so far as to connect my name with that of any young lady."

"Why, there now—there now!" retorted Elliot; "did I not say it wasna want o' spunk that made ye sae mim?—Weel, weel, I meant nae offence; but there's just ae thing ye may notice frae a friend. The auld Laird of Ellieslaw has the auld riding blood far hetter at his heart than ye hae—troth, he kens naething about thae newfangled notions o' peace and quietness—he's a' for the auld-warld doings o' lifting and laying on, and he has a wheen stout lads at his back too, and keeps them weel up in heart, and as fu' o' mischief as young colts. Where he gets the gear to do't, nane can say; he lives high, and far abune his rents here; however, he pays his way—Sae, if there's ony out-break in the country, he's likely to break out wi' the first—and weel does he mind the auld quarrels between ye. I am surmizing he'll be for a touch at the auld tower at Earnscliff."

"Well, Hobbie," answered the young gentleman, "if he should be so ill advised, I shall try to make the old tower good against him, as it has been made good by my betters against his betters many a day ago."

"Very right—very right—that 's speaking like a man now," said the stout yeoman; "and, if sae should be that this be sae, if ye 'll just gar your servant jow out the great bell in the tower, there 's me, and my twa brothers, and little Davie of the Stenhouse, will be wi' you, wi' a' the power we can make, in the snapping of a flint."

"Many thanks, Hobbie," answered Earnscliff; "but I hope we shall have no war of so unnatural and unchristian a kind in our time."

"Hout, sir, hout," replied Elliot; "it wad be but a wee bit neighbour war, and Heaven and earth would make allowances for it in this uncultivated place—it 's just the nature o' the folk and the land—we canna live quiet like London folk—we haena sae muckle to do. It 's impossible."

"Well, Hobbie," said the Laird, "for one who believes so deeply as you do in supernatural appearances, I must own you take Heaven in your own hand rather audaciously, considering where we are walking."

"What needs I care for the Mucklestane-Moor ony mair than ye do yoursell, Earnscliff?" said Hobbie, something offended. "To be sure, they do say there 's a sort o' worricows and lang-nebbit things about the land, but what need I care for them? I hae a good conscience, and little to answer for, unless it be about a rant amang the lasses, or a splore at a fair, and that 's no muckle to speak of. Though I say it mysell, I am as quiet a lad and as peaceable——"

"And Dick Turnbull's head that you broke, and Willie of Winton whom you shot at?" said his travelling companion.

"Hout, Earnscliff, ye keep a record of a' men's misdoings—Dick's head's healed again, and we 're to fight out the quarrel at Jeddart, on the Roodday, so that 's like a thing settled in a peaceable way; and then I am friends wi' Willie again, puir chield—it was but twa or three hail draps after a'. I wad let ony body do the like o't to me for a pint o' brandy. But Willie's lowland bred, poor fallow, and soon frighted for himsell—And, for the worricows, were we to meet ane on this very bit——"

"As is not unlikely," said young Earnscliff, "for there stands your old witch, Hobbie."

"I say," continued Elliot, as if indignant at this hint—"I say, if the auld carline hersell was to get up out o' the grund just before us here, I would think nae mair—But, gude preserve us, Earnscliff, what can yon be?"

CHAPTER III.

> Brown Dwarf, that o'er the moorland strays,
> Thy name to Keeldar tell!
> "The Brown Man of the Moor, that stays
> Beneath the heather-bell."
>
> JOHN LEYDEN.

THE object which alarmed the young farmer in the middle of his valorous protestations, startled for a moment even his less prejudiced companion. The moon, which had arisen during their conversation, was, in the phrase of that country, wading or struggling with clouds, and shed only a doubtful and occasional light. By one of her beams, which streamed upon the great granite column to which they now approached, they discovered a form, apparently human, but of a size much less than ordinary, which moved slowly among the large grey stones, not like a person intending to journey onward, but with the slow, irregular, flitting movement of a being who hovers around some spot of melancholy recollection, uttering also, from time to time, a sort of indistinct muttering sound. This so much resembled his idea of the notions of an apparition, that Hobbie Elliot, making a dead pause, while his hair erected itself upon its scalp, whispered to his companion, "It 's Auld Ailie hersell! Shall I gie her a shot, in the name of God?"

"For Heaven's sake, no," said his companion, holding down the weapon which he was about to raise to the aim—"for Heaven's sake, no; it 's some poor distracted creature."

"Ye 're distracted yoursell, for thinking of going so near to her," said Elliot, holding his companion in his turn, as he prepared to advance. "We 'll aye hae time to pit ower a bit prayer (an I could but mind ane) afore she comes this length—God! she 's in nae hurry," continued he, growing bolder from his companion's confidence, and the little notice the apparition seemed to take of them. "She hirples like a hen on a het girdle. I redd ye, Earnscliff," (this he added in a gentle whisper,) "let us take a cast about, as if to draw the wind on a buck—the bog is no abune knee-deep, and better a saft road as bad company."[1]

Earnscliff, however, in spite of his companion's resistance and remonstrances, continued to advance on the path they had originally pursued, and soon confronted the object of their investigation.

The height of the figure, which appeared even to decrease as they approached it, seemed to be under four feet, and its form, as far as the imperfect light afforded them the means of discerning, was very nearly as broad as long, or rather of a spherical shape, which could only be occasioned by some strange personal deformity. The young sportsman hailed this extraordinary appearance twice, without receiving any answer, or attending to the pinches by which his companion endeavoured to intimate that their best course was to walk on, without giving farther disturbance to a being of such singular and preternatural exterior. To the third repeated demand of "Who are you? What do you here at this hour of night?"—a voice replied, whose shrill, uncouth, and dissonant tones made Elliot step two paces back, and startled even his companion, "Pass on your way, and ask nought at them that ask nought at you."

"What do you do here so far from shelter? Are you benighted on your journey? Will you follow us home, ('God forbid!' ejaculated Hobbie Elliot, involuntarily,) and I will give you a lodging?"

"I would sooner lodge by mysell in the deepest of the Tarras-flow," again whispered Hobbie.

"Pass on your way," rejoined the figure, the harsh tones of his voice still more exalted by passion. "I want not your guidance—I want not your lodging—it is five years since my head was under a human roof, and I trust it was for the last time."

"He is mad," said Earnscliff.

"He has a look of auld Humphrey Ettercap,

[1] The Scots use the epithet soft, *in malam partem*, in two cases at least. A *soft* road, is a road through quagmire and bogs; and *soft* weather, signifies that which is very rainy.

the tinkler, that perished in this very moss about five years syne," answered his superstitious companion; "but Humphrey wasna that awfu' big in the bouk."

"Pass on your way," reiterated the object of their curiosity, "the breath of your human bodies poisons the air around me — the sound of your human voices goes through my ears like sharp bodkins."

"Lord save us!" whispered Hobbie, "that the dead should bear sic fearfu' ill-will to the living! — his saul maun be in a puir way, I 'm jealous."

"Come, my friend," said Earnscliff, "you seem to suffer under some strong affliction; common humanity will not allow us to leave you here."

"Common humanity!" exclaimed the being, with a scornful laugh that sounded like a shriek, "where got ye that catch-word — that noose for woodcocks — that common disguise for man-traps — that bait which the wretched idiot who swallows, will soon find covers a hook with barbs ten times sharper than those you lay for the animals which you murder for your luxury!"

"I tell you, my friend," again replied Earnscliff, "you are incapable of judging of your own situation — you will perish in this wilderness, and we must, in compassion, force you along with us."

"I 'll hae neither hand nor foot in 't," said Hobbie; "let the ghaist take his ain way, for God's sake!"

"My blood be on my own head, if I perish here," said the figure; and, observing Earnscliff meditating to lay hold on him, he added, "And your blood be upon yours, if you touch but the skirt of my garments, to infect me with the taint of mortality!"

The moon shone more brightly as he spoke thus, and Earnscliff observed that he held out his right hand armed with some weapon of offence, which glittered in the cold ray like the blade of a long knife, or the barrel of a pistol. It would have been madness to persevere in his attempt upon a being thus armed, and holding such desperate language, especially as it was plain he would have little aid from his companion, who had fairly left him to settle matters with the apparition as he could, and had proceeded a few paces on his way homeward. Earnscliff, therefore, turned and followed Hobbie, after looking back towards the supposed maniac, who, as if raised to frenzy by the interview, roamed wildly around the great stone, exhausting his voice in shrieks and imprecations, that thrilled wildly along the waste heath.

The two sportsmen moved on some time in silence, until they were out of hearing of these uncouth sounds, which was not ere they had gained a considerable distance from the pillar that gave name to the moor. Each made his private comments on the scene they had witnessed, until Hobbie Elliot suddenly exclaimed, "Weel, I 'll uphaud that yon ghaist, if it be a ghaist, has baith done and suffered muckle evil in the flesh, that gars him rampauge in that way after he is dead and gane."

"It seems to me the very madness of misanthropy," said Earnscliff, following his own current of thought.

"And ye didna think it was a spiritual creature, then?" asked Hobbie at his companion.

"Who, I? — No, surely."

"Weel, I am partly of the mind mysell that it may be a live thing — and yet I dinna ken, I wadna wish to see ony thing look liker a bogle."

"At any rate," said Earnscliff, "I will ride over to-morrow, and see what has become of the unhappy being."

"In fair daylight?" queried the yeoman; "then, grace o' God, I 'se be wi' ye. But here we are nearer to Heugh-foot than to your house by twa mile, — hadna ye better e 'en gae hame wi' me, and we 'll send the callant on the powny to tell them that you are wi' us, though I believe there 's naebody at hame to wait for you but the servants and the cat."

"Have with you then, friend Hobbie," said the young hunter; "and as I would not willingly have either the servants be anxious, or puss forfeit her supper, in my absence, I 'll be obliged to you to send the boy as you propose."

"Aweel, that *is* kind, I must say. And ye 'll gae hame to Heugh-foot? They 'll be right blithe to see you, that will they."

This affair settled, they walked briskly on a little farther, when, coming to the ridge of a pretty steep hill, Hobbie Elliot exclaimed, "Now, Earnscliff, I am aye glad when I come to this very bit — Ye see the light below, that 's in the ha' window, where grannie, the gash auld carline, is sitting birling at her wheel — and ye see yon other light that 's gaun whiddin' back and forrit through amang the windows? that 's my cousin, Grace Armstrong, — she 's twice as clever about the house as my sisters, and sae they say themsells, for they 're good-natured lasses as ever trode on heather; but they confess themsells, and sae does grannie, that she has far maist action, and is the best goer about the toun, now that grannie is off the foot hersell. — My brothers, ane o' them 's away to wait upon the chamberlain, and ane 's at Moss-phadraig, that 's our led farm — he can see after the stock just as weel as I can do."

"You are lucky, my good friend, in having so many valuable relations."

"Troth am I — Grace make me thankful, I 'se never deny it. — But will ye tell me now, Earnscliff, you that have been at college, and the high-school of Edinburgh, and got a' sort o' lair where it was to be best gotten — will ye tell me — no that it 's ony concern of mine in particular, — but I heard the priest of St John's, and our minister, bargaining about it at the Winter fair, and troth they baith spak very weel — Now, the priest says it 's unlawful to marry ane 's cousin; but I cannot say I thought he brought out the Gospel authorities half sae weel as our minister — our minister is thought the best divine and the best preacher atween this and Edinburgh — Dinna ye think he was likely to be right?"

"Certainly marriage, by all protestant Christians, is held to be as free as God made it by the Levitical law; so, Hobbie, there can be no bar, legal or religious, betwixt you and Miss Armstrong."

"Hout awa' wi' your joking, Earnscliff," replied his companion, — "ye are angry eneugh yoursell if ane touches you a bit, man, on the sooth side of the jest — No that I was asking the question about Grace, for ye maun ken she 's no my cousin-germain out and out, but the daughter of my uncle 's wife by her first marriage, so she 's nae kith nor kin to me — only a connection like. But now we 're at the Sheeling-hill — I 'll fire off my gun, to let them

ken I 'm coming, that 's aye my way ; and if I hae a deer I gie them twa shots, ane for the deer and ane for mysell."

He fired off his piece accordingly, and the number of lights were seen to traverse the house, and even to gleam before it. Hobbie Elliot pointed out one of these to Earnscliff, which seemed to glide from the house towards some of the out-houses — "That 's Grace hersell," said Hobbie. "She 'll no meet me at the door, I 'se warrant her — but she 'll be awa', for a' that, to see if my hounds' supper be ready, poor beasts."

"Love me, love my dog," answered Earnscliff. "Ah, Hobbie, you are a lucky young fellow !"

This observation was uttered with something like a sigh, which apparently did not escape the ear of his companion.

"Hout, other folk may be as lucky as I am — O how I have seen Miss Isbel Vere's head turn after somebody when they passed ane another at the Carlisle races ! Wha kens but things may come round in this world ?"

Earnscliff muttered something like an answer ; but whether in assent of the proposition, or rebuking the application of it, could not easily be discovered ; and it seems probable that the speaker himself was willing his meaning should rest in doubt and obscurity. They had now descended the broad loaning, which, winding round the foot of the steep bank, or heugh, brought them in front of the thatched, but comfortable, farm-house, which was the dwelling of Hobbie Elliot and his family.

The doorway was thronged with joyful faces ; but the appearance of a stranger blunted many a gibe which had been prepared on Hobbie's lack of success in the deer-stalking. There was a little bustle among three handsome young women, each endeavouring to devolve upon another the task of ushering the stranger into the apartment, while probably all were anxious to escape for the purpose of making some little personal arrangements, before presenting themselves to a young gentleman in a dishabille only intended for their brother.

Hobbie, in the meanwhile, bestowing some hearty and general abuse upon them all, (for Grace was not of the party,) snatched the candle from the hand of one of the rustic coquettes, as she stood playing pretty with it in her hand, and ushered his guest into the family parlour, or rather hall ; for the place having been a house of defence in former times, the sitting apartment was a vaulted and paved room, damp and dismal enough compared with the lodgings of the yeomanry of our days, but which, when well lighted up with a large sparkling fire of turf and bog-wood, seemed to Earnscliff a most comfortable exchange for the darkness and bleak blast of the hill. Kindly and repeatedly was he welcomed by the venerable old dame, the mistress of the family, who, dressed in her coif and pinners, her close and decent gown of home-spun wool, but with a large gold necklace and ear-rings, looked, what she really was, the lady as well as the farmer's wife, while, seated in her chair of wicker, by the corner of the great chimney, she directed the evening occupations of the young women, and of two or three stout serving wenches, who sate plying their distaffs behind the backs of their young mistresses.

As soon as Earnscliff had been duly welcomed, and hasty orders issued for some addition to the evening meal, his grand-dame and sisters opened their battery upon Hobbie Elliot for his lack of success against the deer.

"Jenny needna have kept up her kitchen-fire for a' that Hobbie has brought hame," said one sister.

"Troth no, lass," said another ; "the gathering peat,[1] if it was weel blawn, wad dress a' our Hobbie's venison."

"Ay, or the low of the candle, if the wind wad let it bide steady," said a third ; "if I were him, I would bring hame a black craw, rather than come back three times without a buck's horn to blaw on."

Hobbie turned from the one to the other, regarding them alternately with a frown on his brow, the augury of which was confuted by the good-humoured laugh on the lower part of his countenance. He then strove to propitiate them, by mentioning the intended present of his companion.

"In my young days," said the old lady, "a man wad hae been ashamed to come back frae the hill without a buck hanging on each side o' his horse, like a cadger carrying calves."

"I wish they had left some for us then, grannie," retorted Hobbie ; "they 've cleared the country o' them, thae auld friends o' yours, I 'm thinking."

"Ye see other folk can find game, though you cannot, Hobbie ;" said the eldest sister, glancing a look at young Earnscliff.

"Weel, weel, woman, hasna every dog his day, begging Earnscliff's pardon for the auld saying — Mayna I hae his luck, and he mine, another time ? — It 's a braw thing for a man to be out a' day, and frighted — na, I winna say that neither — but mistrysted wi' bogles in the hame-coming, an' then to hae to flyte wi' a wheen women that hae been doing naething a' the live-lang day, but whirling a bit stick, wi' a thread trailing at it, or boring at a clout."

"Frighted wi' bogles !" exclaimed the females, one and all, — for great was the regard then paid, and perhaps still paid, in these glens, to all such fantasies.

"I did not say frighted, now — I only said mis-set wi' the thing — And there was but ae bogle, neither — Earnscliff, ye saw it as weel as I did ?"

And he proceeded, without very much exaggeration, to detail, in his own way, the meeting they had with the mysterious being at Mucklestane-Moor, concluding, he could not conjecture what on earth it could be, "unless it was either the Enemy himsell, or some of the auld Peghts that held the country lang syne."

"Auld Peght !" exclaimed the grand-dame ; "na, na — bless thee frae scathe, my bairn, it's been nae Peght that — it's been the Brown Man of the moors ! O weary fa' thae evil days ! — what can evil beings be coming for to distract a poor country, now it 's peacefully settled, and living in love and law ? — O weary on him ! he ne'er brought gude to these lands or the indwellers. My father aften tauld me he was seen in the year o' the bloody fight at Marston-Moor, and then again in Montrose's troubles, and again before the rout o' Dunbar, and, in my ain time, he was seen about the time o' Bothwell-Brigg, and they said the second-sighted Laird of Benarbuck had a communing wi' him some

[1] The gathering peat is the piece of turf left to treasure up the secret seeds of fire, without any generous consumption of fuel ; in a word, to keep the fire alive.

time afore Argyle's landing, but that I cannot speak to sae preceesely — it was far in the west. — O, bairns, he 's never permitted but in an ill time, sae mind ilka ane o' ye to draw to Him that can help in the day of trouble."

Earnscliff now interposed, and expressed his firm conviction that the person they had seen was some poor maniac, and had no commission from the invisible world to announce either war or evil. But his opinion found a very cold audience, and all joined to deprecate his purpose of returning to the spot the next day.

" O, my bonny bairn," said the old dame, (for, in the kindness of her heart, she extended her parental style to all in whom she was interested) — " You should beware mair than other folk — there 's been a heavy breach made in your house wi' your father's bloodshed, and wi' law-pleas, and losses sinsyne ; — and you are the flower of the flock, and the lad that will build up the auld bigging again (if it be His will) to be an honour to the country, and a safeguard to those that dwell in it — you, before others, are called upon to put yoursell in no rash adventures — for yours was aye ower venturesome a race, and muckle harm they have got by it."

" But I am sure, my good friend, you would not have me be afraid of going to an open moor in broad day-light ?"

" I dinna ken," said the good old dame ; " I wad never bid son or friend o' mine haud their hand back in a gude cause, whether it were a friend's or their ain — that should be by nae bidding of mine, or of ony body that 's come of a gentle kindred — But it winna gang out of a grey head like mine, that to gang to seek for evil that 's no fashing wi' you, is clean against law and Scripture."

Earnscliff resigned an argument which he saw no prospect of maintaining with good effect, and the entrance of supper broke off the conversation. Miss Grace had by this time made her appearance, and Hobbie, not without a conscious glance at Earnscliff, placed himself by her side. Mirth and lively conversation, in which the old lady of the house took the good-humoured share which so well becomes old age, restored to the cheeks of the damsels the roses which their brother's tale of the apparition had chased away, and they danced and sung for an hour after supper as if there were no such things as goblins in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

I am a misanthropos, and hate mankind ;
For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,
That I might love thee something.
Timon of Athens.

On the following morning, after breakfast, Earnscliff took leave of his hospitable friends, promising to return in time to partake of the venison, which had arrived from his house. Hobbie, who apparently took leave of him at the door of his habitation, slunk out, however, and joined him at the top of the hill.

" Ye 'll be gaun yonder, Mr Patrick ; feind o' me will mistryst you for a' my mother says. I thought it best to slip out quietly though, in case she should mislippen something of what we 're gaun to do — we maunna vex her at nae rate — it was amaist the last word my father said to me on his deathbed."

" By no means, Hobbie," said Earnscliff ; " she well merits all your attention."

" Troth, for that matter, she would be as sair vexed amaist for you as for me. But d' ye really think there 's nae presumption in venturing back yonder ? — We hae nae special commission, ye ken."

" If I thought as you do, Hobbie," said the young gentleman, " I would not perhaps inquire farther into this business ; but as I am of opinion that preternatural visitations are either ceased altogether, or become very rare in our days, I am unwilling to leave a matter uninvestigated which may concern the life of a poor distracted being."

" Aweel, aweel, if ye really think that," answered Hobbie doubtfully — " And it 's for certain the very fairies — I mean the very good neighbours themsells (for they say folk suldna ca' them fairies) that used to be seen on every green knowe at e'en, are no half sae often visible in our days. I canna depone to having ever seen ane mysell, but I ance heard ane whistle ahint me in the moss, as like a whaup[1] as ae thing could be like anither. And mony ane my father saw when he used to come hame frae the fairs at e'en, wi' a drap drink in his head, honest man."

Earnscliff was somewhat entertained with the gradual declension of superstition from one generation to another which was inferred in this last observation ; and they continued to reason on such subjects, until they came in sight of the upright stone which gave name to the moor.

" As I shall answer," says Hobbie, " yonder 's the creature creeping about yet ! — But it 's day-light, and you have your gun, and I brought out my bit whinger — I think we may venture on him."

" By all manner of means," said Earnscliff ; " but, in the name of wonder, what can he be doing there ?"

" Biggin a dry-stane dyke, I think, wi' the grey geese, as they ca' thae great loose stanes — Odd, that passes a' thing I e'er heard tell of !"

As they approached nearer, Earnscliff could not help agreeing with his companion. The figure they had seen the night before seemed slowly and toilsomely labouring to pile the large stones one upon another, as if to form a small enclosure. Materials lay around him in great plenty, but the labour of carrying on the work was immense, from the size of most of the stones ; and it seemed astonishing that he should have succeeded in moving several which he had already arranged for the foundation of his edifice. He was struggling to move a fragment of great size when the two young men came up, and was so intent upon executing his purpose, that he did not perceive them till they were close upon him. In straining and heaving at the stone, in order to place it according to his wish, he displayed a degree of strength which seemed utterly inconsistent with his size and apparent deformity. Indeed, to judge from the difficulties he had already surmounted, he must have been of Herculean powers ; for some of the stones he had succeeded in raising apparently required two men's strength to have moved them. Hobbie's suspicions began

[1] Curlew.

to revive, on seeing the preternatural strength he exerted.

"I am amaist persuaded it 's the ghaist of a stane-mason — see siccan band-stanes as he 's laid! — An it be a man, after a', I wonder what he wad take by the rood to build a march dyke. There 's ane sair wanted between Cringlehope and the Shaws. — Honest man," (raising his voice,) "ye make good firm wark there."

The being whom he addressed raised his eyes with a ghastly stare, and, getting up from his stooping posture, stood before them in all his native and hideous deformity. His head was of uncommon size, covered with a fell of shaggy hair, partly grizzled with age; his eyebrows, shaggy and prominent, overhung a pair of small, dark, piercing eyes, set far back in their sockets, that rolled with a portentous wildness, indicative of a partial insanity. The rest of his features were of the coarse, rough-hewn stamp, with which a painter would equip a giant in romance; to which was added the wild, irregular, and peculiar expression, so often seen in the countenances of those whose persons are deformed. His body, thick and square, like that of a man of middle size, was mounted upon two large feet; but nature seemed to have forgotten the legs and the thighs, or they were so very short as to be hidden by the dress which he wore. His arms were long and brawny, furnished with two muscular hands, and, where uncovered in the eagerness of his labour, were shagged with coarse black hair. It seemed as if nature had originally intended the separate parts of his body to be the members of a giant, but had afterwards capriciously assigned them to the person of a dwarf, so ill did the length of his arms and the iron strength of his frame correspond with the shortness of his stature. His clothing was a sort of coarse brown tunic, like a monk's frock, girt round him with a belt of seal-skin. On his head he had a cap made of badger's skin, or some other rough fur, which added considerably to the grotesque effect of his whole appearance, and overshadowed features, whose habitual expression seemed that of sullen malignant misanthropy.

This remarkable Dwarf gazed on the two youths in silence, with a dogged and irritated look, until Earnscliff, willing to soothe him into better temper, observed, "You are hard tasked, my friend; allow us to assist you."

Elliot and he accordingly placed the stone, by their joint efforts, upon the rising wall. The Dwarf watched them with the eye of a taskmaster, and testified, by peevish gestures, his impatience at the time which they took in adjusting the stone. He pointed to another — they raised it also — to a third, to a fourth — they continued to humour him, though with some trouble, for he assigned them, as if intentionally, the heaviest fragments which lay near.

"And now, friend," said Elliot, as the unreasonable Dwarf indicated another stone larger than any they had moved, "Earnscliff may do as he likes; but be ye man or be ye waur, deil be in my fingers if I break my back wi' heaving thae stanes ony langer like a barrow-man, without getting sae muckle as thanks for my pains."

"Thanks!" exclaimed the Dwarf, with a motion expressive of the utmost contempt — "There — take them, and fatten upon them! Take them, and may they thrive with you as they have done with me — as they have done with every mortal worm that ever heard the word spoken by his fellow reptile! Hence — either labour or begone!"

"This is a fine reward we have, Earnscliff, for building a tabernacle for the devil, and prejudicing our ain souls into the bargain, for what we ken."

"Our presence," answered Earnscliff, "seems only to irritate his frenzy; we had better leave him, and send some one to provide him with food and necessaries."

They did so. The servant despatched for this purpose found the Dwarf still labouring at his wall, but could not extract a word from him. The lad, infected with the superstitions of the country, did not long persist in an attempt to intrude questions or advice on so singular a figure, but having placed the articles which he had brought for his use on a stone at some distance, he left them at the misanthrope's disposal.

The Dwarf proceeded in his labours, day after day, with an assiduity so incredible as to appear almost supernatural. In one day he often seemed to have done the work of two men, and his building soon assumed the appearance of the walls of a hut, which, though very small, and constructed only of stones and turf, without any mortar, exhibited, from the unusual size of the stones employed, an appearance of solidity very uncommon for a cottage of such narrow dimensions and rude construction. Earnscliff, attentive to his motions, no sooner perceived to what they tended, than he sent down a number of spars of wood suitable for forming the roof, which he caused to be left in the neighbourhood of the spot, resolving next day to send workmen to put them up. But his purpose was anticipated, for in the evening, during the night, and early in the morning, the Dwarf had laboured so hard, and with such ingenuity, that he had nearly completed the adjustment of the rafters. His next labour was to cut rushes and thatch his dwelling, a task which he performed with singular dexterity.

As he seemed averse to receive any aid beyond the occasional assistance of a passenger, materials suitable to his purpose, and tools, were supplied to him, in the use of which he proved to be skilful. He constructed the door and window of his cot, he adjusted a rude bedstead, and a few shelves, and appeared to become somewhat soothed in his temper as his accommodations increased.

His next task was to form a strong enclosure, and to cultivate the land within it to the best of his power; until, by transporting mould, and working up what was upon the spot, he formed a patch of garden-ground. It must be naturally supposed, that, as above hinted, this solitary being received assistance occasionally from such travellers as crossed the moor by chance, as well as from several who went from curiosity to visit his works. It was, indeed, impossible to see a human creature, so unfitted, at first sight, for hard labour, toiling with such unremitting assiduity, without stopping a few minutes to aid him in his task; and, as no one of his occasional assistants was acquainted with the degree of help which the Dwarf had received from others, the celerity of his progress lost none of its marvels in their eyes. The strong and compact appearance of the cottage, formed in so very short a space, and by such a being, and the superior skill which he displayed in mechanics, and in other arts, gave suspicion to the surrounding neighbours. They insisted, that, if he was not a phantom, — an

opinion which was now abandoned, since he plainly appeared a being of blood and bone with themselves,—yet he must be in close league with the invisible world, and have chosen that sequestered spot to carry on his communication with them undisturbed. They insisted, though in a different sense from the philosopher's application of the phrase, that he was never less alone than when alone; and that from the heights which commanded the moor at a distance, passengers often discovered a person at work along with this dweller of the desert, who regularly disappeared as soon as they approached closer to the cottage. Such a figure was also occasionally seen sitting beside him at the door, walking with him in the moor, or assisting him in fetching water from his fountain. Earnscliff explained this phenomenon by supposing it to be the Dwarf's shadow.

"Deil a shadow has he," replied Hobbie Elliot, who was a strenuous defender of the general opinion; "he 's ower far in wi' the Auld Ane to have a shadow. Besides," he argued more logically, "wha ever heard of a shadow that cam between a body and the sun? and this thing, be it what it will, is thinner and taller than the body himsell, and has been seen to come between him and the sun mair than anes or twice either."

These suspicions, which, in any other part of the country, might have been attended with investigations a little inconvenient to the supposed wizard, were here only productive of respect and awe. The recluse being seemed somewhat gratified by the marks of timid veneration with which an occasional passenger approached his dwelling, the look of startled surprise with which he surveyed his person and his premises, and the hurried step with which he pressed his retreat as he passed the awful spot. The boldest only stopped to gratify their curiosity by a hasty glance at the walls of his cottage and garden, and to apologize for it by a courteous salutation, which the inmate sometimes deigned to return by a word or a nod. Earnscliff often passed that way, and seldom without inquiring after the solitary inmate, who seemed now to have arranged his establishment for life.

It was impossible to engage him in any conversation on his own personal affairs; nor was he communicative or accessible in talking on any other subject whatever, although he seemed to have considerably relented in the extreme ferocity of his misanthropy, or rather to be less frequently visited with the fits of derangement of which this was a symptom. No argument could prevail upon him to accept any thing beyond the simplest necessaries, although much more was offered by Earnscliff out of charity, and by his more superstitious neighbours from other motives. The benefits of these last he repaid by advice, when consulted (as at length he slowly was) on their diseases, or those of their cattle. He often furnished them with medicines also, and seemed possessed, not only of such as were the produce of the country, but of foreign drugs. He gave these persons to understand, that his name was Elshender the Recluse; but his popular epithet soon came to be Canny Elshie, or the Wise Wight of Mucklestane-Moor. Some extended their queries beyond their bodily complaints, and requested advice upon other matters, which he delivered with an oracular shrewdness that greatly confirmed the opinion of his possessing preternatural skill. The querists usually left some offering upon a stone, at a distance from his dwelling; if it was money, or any article which did not suit him to accept, he either threw it away, or suffered it to remain where it was without making use of it. On all occasions his manners were rude and unsocial; and his words, in number, just sufficient to express his meaning as briefly as possible, and he shunned all communication that went a syllable beyond the matter in hand. When winter had passed away, and his garden began to afford him herbs and vegetables, he confined himself almost entirely to those articles of food. He accepted, notwithstanding, a pair of she-goats from Earnscliff, which fed on the moor, and supplied him with milk.

When Earnscliff found his gift had been received, he soon afterwards paid the hermit a visit. The old man was seated on a broad flat stone near his garden door, which was the seat of science he usually occupied when disposed to receive his patients or clients. The inside of his hut, and that of his garden, he kept as sacred from human intrusion as the natives of Otaheite do their Morai;—apparently he would have deemed it polluted by the step of any human being. When he shut himself up in his habitation, no entreaty could prevail upon him to make himself visible, or to give audience to any one whomsoever.

Earnscliff had been fishing in a small river at some distance. He had his rod in his hand, and his basket, filled with trout, at his shoulder. He sate down upon a stone nearly opposite to the Dwarf, who, familiarized with his presence, took no farther notice of him than by elevating his huge mis-shapen head for the purpose of staring at him, and then again sinking it upon his bosom, as if in profound meditation. Earnscliff looked around him, and observed that the hermit had increased his accommodations by the construction of a shed for the reception of his goats.

"You labour hard, Elshie," he said, willing to lead this singular being into conversation.

"Labour," re-echoed the Dwarf, "is the mildest evil of a lot so miserable as that of mankind; better to labour like me, than sport like you."

"I cannot defend the humanity of our ordinary rural sports, Elshie, and yet——"

"And yet," interrupted the Dwarf, "they are better than your ordinary business; better to exercise idle and wanton cruelty on mute fishes than on your fellow-creatures. Yet why should I say so? Why should not the whole human herd butt, gore, and gorge upon each other, till all are extirpated but one huge and over-fed Behemoth, and he, when he had throttled and gnawed the bones of all his fellows—he, when his prey failed him, to be roaring whole days for lack of food, and, finally, to die, inch by inch, of famine—it were a consummation worthy of the race!"

"Your deeds are better, Elshie, than your words," answered Earnscliff; "you labour to preserve the race whom your misanthropy slanders."

"I do; but why?—Hearken. You are one on whom I look with the least loathing, and I care not, if, contrary to my wont, I waste a few words in compassion to your infatuated blindness. If I cannot send disease into families, and murrain among the herds, can I attain the same end so well as by prolonging the lives of those who can serve the purpose of destruction as effectually?—

If Alice of Bower had died in winter, would young Ruthwin have been slain for her love the last spring?—Who thought of penning their cattle beneath the tower when the Red Reiver of Westburnflat was deemed to be on his death-bed?—My draughts, my skill, recovered him. And, now, who dare leave his herd upon the lea without a watch, or go to bed without unchaining the sleuth-hound?"

"I own," answered Earnscliff, "you did little good to society by the last of these cures. But, to balance the evil, there is my friend Hobbie, honest Hobbie of the Heugh-foot, your skill relieved him last winter in a fever that might have cost him his life."

"Thus think the children of clay in their ignorance," said the Dwarf, smiling maliciously, "and thus they speak in their folly. Have you marked the young cub of a wild cat that has been domesticated, how sportive, how playful, how gentle,—but trust him with your game, your lambs, your poultry, his inbred ferocity breaks forth; he gripes, tears, ravages, and devours."

"Such is the animal's instinct," answered Earnscliff; "but what has that to do with Hobbie?"

"It is his emblem—it is his picture," retorted the Recluse. "He is at present tame, quiet, and domesticated, for lack of opportunity to exercise his inborn propensities; but let the trumpet of war sound—let the young blood-hound snuff blood, he will be as ferocious as the wildest of his Border ancestors that ever fired a helpless peasant's abode. Can you deny, that even at present he often urges you to take bloody revenge for an injury received when you were a boy?"—Earnscliff started; the Recluse appeared not to observe his surprise, and proceeded—"The trumpet *will* blow, the young blood-hound *will* lap blood, and I will laugh and say, For this I have preserved thee!" He paused, and continued,—"Such are my cures;—their object, their purpose, perpetuating the mass of misery, and playing even in this desert my part in the general tragedy. Were *you* on your sick bed, I might, in compassion, send you a cup of poison."

"I am much obliged to you, Elshie, and certainly shall not fail to consult you, with so comfortable a hope from your assistance."

"Do not flatter yourself too far," replied the Hermit, "with the hope that I will positively yield to the frailty of pity. Why should I snatch a dupe, so well fitted to endure the miseries of life as you are, from the wretchedness which his own visions, and the villainy of the world, are preparing for him? Why should I play the compassionate Indian, and knocking out the brains of the captive with my tomahawk, at once spoil the three days' amusement of my kindred tribe, at the very moment when the brands were lighted, the pincers heated, the cauldrons boiling, the knives sharpened, to tear, scorch, seethe, and scarify the intended victim?"

"A dreadful picture you present to me of life, Elshie; but I am not daunted by it," returned Earnscliff. "We are sent here, in one sense, to bear and to suffer; but, in another, to do and to enjoy. The active day has its evening of repose; even patient sufferance has its alleviations, where there is a consolatory sense of duty discharged."

"I spurn at the slavish and bestial doctrine," said the Dwarf, his eyes kindling with insane fury,—"I spurn at it, as worthy only of the beasts that perish; but I will waste no more words with you."

He rose hastily; but, ere he withdrew into the hut, he added, with great vehemence, "Yet, lest you still think my apparent benefits to mankind flow from the stupid and servile source, called love of our fellow-creatures, know, that were there a man who had annihilated my soul's dearest hope—who had torn my heart to mammocks, and seared my brain till it glowed like a volcano, and were that man's fortune and life in my power as completely as this frail potsherd," (he snatched up an earthen cup which stood beside him,) "I would not dash him into atoms thus"—(he flung the vessel with fury against the wall,)—"No!" (he spoke more composedly, but with the utmost bitterness,) "I would pamper him with wealth and power to inflame his evil passions, and to fulfil his evil designs; he should lack no means of vice and villainy; he should be the centre of a whirlpool that itself should know neither rest nor peace, but boil with unceasing fury, while it wrecked every goodly ship that approached its limits! he should be an earthquake capable of shaking the very land in which he dwelt, and rendering all its inhabitants friendless, outcast, and miserable—as I am!"

The wretched being rushed into his hut as he uttered these last words, shutting the door with furious violence, and rapidly drawing two bolts, one after another, as if to exclude the intrusion of any one of that hated race, who had thus lashed his soul to frenzy. Earnscliff left the moor with mingled sensations of pity and horror, pondering what strange and melancholy cause could have reduced to so miserable a state of mind, a man whose language argued him to be of rank and education much superior to the vulgar. He was also surprised to see how much particular information a person who had lived in that country so short a time, and in so recluse a manner, had been able to collect respecting the dispositions and private affairs of the inhabitants.

"It is no wonder," he said to himself, "that with such extent of information, such a mode of life, so uncouth a figure, and sentiments so virulently misanthropic, this unfortunate should be regarded by the vulgar as in league with the Enemy of Mankind."

CHAPTER V

> The bleakest rock upon the loneliest heath
> Feels, in its barrenness, some touch of spring;
> And, in the April dew, or beam of May,
> Its moss and lichen freshen and revive;
> And thus the heart, most sear'd to human pleasure,
> Melts at the tear, joys in the smile, of woman.
>
> BEAUMONT

As the season advanced, the weather became more genial, and the Recluse was more frequently found occupying the broad flat stone in the front of his mansion. As he sate there one day, about the hour of noon, a party of gentlemen and ladies, well mounted, and numerously attended, swept across the heath at some distance from his dwelling. Dogs, hawks, and led-horses, swelled the retinue, and the air resounded at intervals with the cheer of the hunters, and the sound of horns blown by the attendants. The Recluse was about to retire

into his mansion at the sight of a train so joyous, when three young ladies, with their attendants, who had made a circuit, and detached themselves from their party, in order to gratify their curiosity by a sight of the Wise Wight of Mucklestane-Moor, came suddenly up, ere he could effect his purpose. The first shrieked, and put her hands before her eyes, at sight of an object so unusually deformed. The second, with a hysterical giggle, which she intended should disguise her terrors, asked the Recluse, whether he could tell their fortune. The third, who was best mounted, best dressed, and incomparably the best-looking of the three, advanced, as if to cover the incivility of her companions.

"We have lost the right path that leads through these morasses, and our party have gone forward without us," said the young lady. "Seeing you, father, at the door of your house, we have turned this way to——"

"Hush!" interrupted the Dwarf; "so young, and already so artful! You came—you know you came, to exult in the consciousness of your own youth, wealth, and beauty, by contrasting them with age, poverty, and deformity. It is a fit employment for the daughter of your father; but oh, how unlike the child of your mother!"

"Did you, then, know my parents, and do you know me?"

"Yes; this is the first time you have crossed my waking eyes, but I have seen you in my dreams."

"Your dreams?"

"Ay, Isabel Vere. What hast thou, or thine, to do with my waking thoughts?"

"Your waking thoughts, sir," said the second of Miss Vere's companions, with a sort of mock gravity, "are fixed, doubtless, upon wisdom; folly can only intrude on your sleeping moments."

"Over thine," retorted the Dwarf, more splenetically than became a philosopher or hermit, "folly exercises an unlimited empire, asleep or awake."

"Lord bless us!" said the lady, "he 's a prophet, sure enough."

"As surely," continued the Recluse, "as thou art a woman. A woman!—I should have said a lady—a fine lady. You asked me to tell your fortune—it is a simple one; an endless chase through life after follies not worth catching, and, when caught, successively thrown away—a chase, pursued from the days of tottering infancy to those of old age upon his crutches. Toys and merry-makings in childhood—love and its absurdities in youth—spadille and basto in age, shall succeed each other as objects of pursuit—flowers and butterflies in spring—butterflies and thistle-down in summer—withered leaves in autumn and winter—all pursued, all caught, all flung aside.—Stand apart; your fortune is said."

"All *caught*, however," retorted the laughing fair one, who was a cousin of Miss Vere's; "that 's something, Nancy," she continued, turning to the timid damsel who had first approached the Dwarf; "will you ask your fortune?"

"Not for worlds," said she, drawing back; "I have heard enough of yours."

"Well, then," said Miss Ilderton, offering money to the Dwarf, "I'll pay for mine, as if it were spoken by an oracle to a princess."

"Truth," said the soothsayer, "can neither be bought nor sold;" and he pushed back her proffered offering with morose disdain.

"Well, then," said the lady, "I 'll keep my money, Mr Elshender, to assist me in the chase I am to pursue."

"You will need it," replied the cynic; "without it, few pursue successfully, and fewer are themselves pursued. Stop!" he said to Miss Vere, as her companions moved off, "with you I have more to say. You have what your companions would wish to have, or be thought to have—beauty, wealth, station, accomplishments."

"Forgive my following my companions, father; I am proof both to flattery and fortune-telling."

"Stay," continued the Dwarf, with his hand on her horse's rein, "I am no common soothsayer, and I am no flatterer. All the advantages I have detailed, all and each of them have their corresponding evils—unsuccessful love, crossed affections, the gloom of a convent, or an odious alliance. I, who wish ill to all mankind, cannot wish more evil to you, so much is your course of life crossed by it."

"And if it be, father, let me enjoy the readiest solace of adversity while prosperity is in my power. You are old; you are poor; your habitation is far from human aid, were you ill, or in want; your situation, in many respects, exposes you to the suspicions of the vulgar, which are too apt to break out into actions of brutality. Let me think I have mended the lot of one human being! Accept of such assistance as I have power to offer; do this for my sake, if not for your own, that when these evils arise, which you prophesy perhaps too truly, I may not have to reflect, that the hours of my happier time have been passed altogether in vain."

The old man answered with a broken voice, and almost without addressing himself to the young lady,—

"Yes, 'tis thus thou shouldst think—'tis thus thou shouldst speak, if ever human speech and thought kept touch with each other! They do not—they do not—Alas! they cannot. And yet—wait here an instant—stir not till my return." He went to his little garden, and returned with a half-blown rose. "Thou hast made me shed a tear, the first which has wet my eyelids for many a year; for that good deed receive this token of gratitude. It is but a common rose; preserve it, however, and do not part with it. Come to me in your hour of adversity. Shew me that rose, or but one leaf of it, were it withered as my heart is—if it should be in my fiercest and wildest movements of rage against a hateful world, still it will recall gentler thoughts to my bosom, and perhaps afford happier prospects to thine. But no message," he exclaimed, rising into his usual mood of misanthropy,—"no go-between! Come thyself; and the heart and the doors that are shut against every other earthly being, shall open to thee and to thy sorrows. And now pass on."

He let go the bridle-rein, and the young lady rode on, after expressing her thanks to this singular being, as well as her surprise at the extraordinary nature of his address would permit, often turning back to look at the Dwarf, who still remained at the door of his habitation, and watched her progress over the moor towards her father's castle of Ellieslaw, until the brow of the hill hid the party from his sight.

The ladies, meantime, jested with Miss Vere on

the strange interview they had just had with the far-famed Wizard of the Moor. "Isabella has all the luck at home and abroad! Her hawk strikes down the black-cock; her eyes wound the gallant; no chance for her poor companions and kinswomen; even the conjuror cannot escape the force of her charms. You should, in compassion, cease to be such an engrosser, my dear Isabel, or at least set up shop, and sell off all the goods you do not mean to keep for your own use."

"You shall have them all," replied Miss Vere, "and the conjuror to boot, at a very easy rate."

"No! Nancy shall have the conjuror," said Miss Ilderton, "to supply deficiencies; she 's not quite a witch herself, you know."

"Lord, sister," answered the younger Miss Ilderton, "what could I do with so frightful a monster! I kept my eyes shut, after once glancing at him; and, I protest, I thought I saw him still, though I winked as close as ever I could."

"That 's a pity," said her sister; "ever while you live, Nancy, choose an admirer whose faults can be hid by winking at them. Well, then, I must take him myself, I suppose, and put him into mamma's Japan cabinet, in order to shew that Scotland can produce a specimen of mortal clay moulded into a form ten thousand times uglier than the imaginations of Canton and Pekin, fertile as they are in monsters, have immortalized in porcelain."

"There is something," said Miss Vere, "so melancholy in the situation of this poor man, that I cannot enter into your mirth, Lucy, so readily as usual. If he has no resources, how is he to exist in this waste country, living, as he does, at such a distance from mankind? and if he has the means of securing occasional assistance, will not the very suspicion that he is possessed of them, expose him to plunder and assassination by some of our unsettled neighbours?"

"But you forget that they say he is a warlock," said Nancy Ilderton.

"And, if his magic diabolical should fail him," rejoined her sister, "I would have him trust to his magic natural, and thrust his enormous head, and most preternatural visage, out at his door or window, full in view of the assailants. The boldest robber that ever rode would hardly bide a second glance of him. Well, I wish I had the use of that Gorgon head of his for only one half hour."

"For what purpose, Lucy?" said Miss Vere.

"O! I would frighten out of the castle that dark, stiff, and stately Sir Frederick Langley, that is so great a favourite with your father, and so little a favourite of yours. I protest I shall be obliged to the Wizard as long as I live, if it were only for the half hour's relief from that man's company which we have gained by deviating from the party to visit Elshie."

"What would you say, then," said Miss Vere, in a low tone, so as not to be heard by the younger sister, who rode before them, the narrow path not admitting of their moving all three abreast,— "What would you say, my dearest Lucy, if it were proposed to you to endure his company for life?"

"Say? I would say, *No, no, no*, three times, each louder than another, till they should hear me at Carlisle."

"And Sir Frederick would say then, nineteen nay-says are half a grant."

"That," replied Miss Lucy, "depends entirely on the manner in which the nay-says are said. Mine should have not one grain of concession in them, I promise you."

"But if your father," said Miss Vere, "were to say, — Thus do, or ——"

"I would stand to the consequences of his *or*, were he the most cruel father that ever was recorded in romance, to fill up the alternative."

"And what if he threatened you with a Catholic aunt, an abbess, and a cloister?"

"Then," said Miss Ilderton, "I would threaten him with a Protestant son-in-law, and be glad of an opportunity to disobey him for conscience sake. And now that Nancy is out of hearing, let me really say, I think you would be excusable before God and man for resisting this preposterous match by every means in your power. A proud, dark, ambitious man; a caballer against the state; infamous for his avarice and severity; a bad son, a bad brother, unkind and ungenerous to all his relatives— Isabel, I would die rather than have him."

"Don't let my father hear you give me such advice," said Miss Vere, "or adieu, my dear Lucy, to Ellieslaw-Castle."

"And adieu to Ellieslaw-Castle, with all my heart," said her friend, "if I once saw you fairly out of it, and settled under some kinder protector than he whom nature has given you. O, if my poor father had been in his former health, how gladly would he have received and sheltered you, till this ridiculous and cruel persecution were blown over!"

"Would to God it had been so, my dear Lucy!" answered Isabella; "but I fear, that, in your father's weak state of health, he would be altogether unable to protect me against the means which would be immediately used for reclaiming the poor fugitive."

"I fear so, indeed," replied Miss Ilderton; "but we will consider and devise something. Now that your father and his guests seem so deeply engaged in some mysterious plot, to judge from the passing and returning of messages, from the strange faces which appear and disappear without being announced by their names, from the collecting and cleaning of arms, and the anxious gloom and bustle which seem to agitate every male in the castle, it may not be impossible for us (always in case matters be driven to extremity) to shape out some little supplemental conspiracy of our own. I hope the gentlemen have not kept all the policy to themselves; and there is one associate that I would gladly admit to our counsel."

"Not Nancy?"

"O, no!" said Miss Ilderton; "Nancy, though an excellent good girl, and fondly attached to you, would make a dull conspirator — as dull as Renault and all the other subordinate plotters in Venice Preserved. No; this is a Jaffier, or Pierre, if you like the character better; and yet, though I know I shall please you, I am afraid to mention his name to you, lest I vex you at the same time. Can you not guess? Something about an eagle and a rock — it does not begin with eagle in English, but something very like it in Scotch."

"You cannot mean young Earnscliff, Lucy?" said Miss Vere, blushing deeply.

"And whom else should I mean?" said Lucy. "Jaffiers and Pierres are very scarce in this coun-

try, I take it, though one could find Renaults and Bedamars enow."

"How can you talk so wildly, Lucy? Your plays and romances have positively turned your brain. You know, that, independent of my father's consent, without which I never will marry any one, and which, in the case you point at, would never be granted; independent, too, of our knowing nothing of young Earnscliff's inclinations, but by your own wild conjectures and fancies — besides all this, there is the fatal brawl!"

"When his father was killed?" said Lucy. "But that was very long ago; and I hope we have outlived the time of bloody feud, when a quarrel was carried down between two families from father to son, like a Spanish game at chess, and a murder or two committed in every generation, just to keep the matter from going to sleep. We do with our quarrels now-a-days as with our clothes; cut them out for ourselves, and wear them out in our own day, and should no more think of resenting our fathers' feuds, than of wearing their slashed doublets and trunk-hose."

"You treat this far too lightly, Lucy," answered Miss Vere.

"Not a bit, my dear Isabella," said Lucy. "Consider, your father, though present in the unhappy affray, is never supposed to have struck the fatal blow; besides, in former times, in case of mutual slaughter between clans, subsequent alliances were so far from being excluded, that the hand of a daughter or a sister, was the most frequent gage of reconciliation. You laugh at my skill in romance; but, I assure you, should your history be written, like that of many a less distressed and less deserving heroine, the well-judging reader would set you down for the lady and the love of Earnscliff, from the very obstacle which you suppose so insurmountable."

"But these are not the days of romance, but of sad reality, for there stands the castle of Ellieslaw."

"And there stands Sir Frederick Langley at the gate, waiting to assist the ladies from their palfreys. I would as lief touch a toad; I will disappoint him, and take old Horsington the groom for my master of the horse."

So saying, the lively young lady switched her palfrey forward, and passing Sir Frederick with a familiar nod as he stood ready to take her horse's rein, she cantered on and jumped into the arms of the old groom. Fain would Isabella have done the same had she dared; but her father stood near, displeasure already darkening on a countenance peculiarly qualified to express the harsher passions, and she was compelled to receive the unwelcome assiduities of her detested suitor.

CHAPTER VI

Let not us that are squires of the night's body be called thieves of the day's booty; let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, minions of the moon.

Henry the Fourth, Part I.

The Solitary had consumed the remainder of that day in which he had the interview with the young ladies, within the precincts of his garden. Evening again found him seated on his favourite stone. The sun setting red, and among seas of rolling clouds, threw a gloomy lustre over the moor, and gave a deeper purple to the broad outline of heathy mountains which surrounded this desolate spot. The Dwarf sate watching the clouds as they lowered above each other in masses of conglomerated vapours, and, as a strong lurid beam of the sinking luminary darted full on his solitary and uncouth figure, he might well have seemed the demon of the storm which was gathering, or some gnome summoned forth from the recesses of the earth by the subterranean signals of its approach. As he sate thus, with his dark eye turned towards the scowling and blackening heaven, a horseman rode rapidly up to him, and stopping, as if to let his horse breathe for an instant, made a sort of obeisance to the anchoret, with an air betwixt effrontery and embarrassment.

The figure of the rider was thin, tall, and slender, but remarkably athletic, bony, and sinewy; like one who had all his life followed those violent exercises which prevent the human form from increasing in bulk, while they harden and confirm by habit its muscular powers. His face, sharp-featured, sun-burnt, and freckled, had a sinister expression of violence, impudence, and cunning, each of which seemed alternately to predominate over the others. Sandy-coloured hair, and reddish eye-brows, from under which looked forth his sharp grey eyes, completed the inauspicious outline of the horseman's physiognomy. He had pistols in his holsters, and another pair peeped from his belt, though he had taken some pains to conceal them by buttoning his doublet. He wore a rusted steel head-piece; a buff jacket of rather an antique cast; gloves, of which that for the right hand was covered with small scales of iron, like an ancient gauntlet; and a long broadsword completed his equipage.

"So," said the Dwarf, "rapine and murder once more on horseback."

"On horseback?" said the bandit; "ay, ay, Elshie, your leechcraft has set me on the bonny bay again."

"And all those promises of amendment which you made during your illness forgotten?" continued Elshender.

"All clear away, with the water-saps and panada," returned the unabashed convalescent. "Ye ken, Elshie, for they say ye are weel acquent wi' the gentleman,

> 'When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be,
> When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he.'"

"Thou say 'st true," said the Solitary; "as well divide a wolf from his appetite for carnage, or a raven from her scent of slaughter, as thee from thy accursed propensities."

"Why, what would you have me to do? It 's born with me — lies in my very blude and bane. Why, man, the lads of Westburnflat, for ten lang descents, have been rievers and lifters. They have all drunk hard, lived high, taking deep revenge for light offence, and never wanted gear for the winning."

"Right; and thou art as thorough-bred a wolf," said the Dwarf, "as ever leapt a lamb-fold at night. On what hell's errand art thou bound now?"

"Can your skill not guess?"

"Thus far I know," said the Dwarf, "that thy purpose is bad, thy deed will be worse, and the issue worst of all."

"And you like me the better for it, Father Elshie, eh?" said Westburnflat; "you always said you did."

"I have cause to like all," answered the Solitary, "that are scourges to their fellow-creatures, and thou art a bloody one."

"No—I say not guilty to that—never bluidy unless there's resistance, and that sets a man's bristles up, ye ken. And this is nae great matter, after a'; just to cut the comb of a young cock that has been crawing a little ower crousely."

"Not young Earnscliff?" said the Solitary, with some emotion.

"No; not young Earnscliff—not young Earnscliff *yet;* but his time may come, if he will not take warning, and get him back to the burrow-town that he's fit for, and no keep skelping about here, destroying the few deer that are left in the country, and pretending to act as a magistrate, and writing letters to the great folk at Auld Reekie, about the disturbed state of the land. Let him take care o' himsell."

"Then it must be Hobbie of the Heugh-foot," said Elshie. "What harm has the lad done you?"

"Harm! nae great harm; but I hear he says I staid away from the Ba'spiel on Fastern's E'en, for fear of him; and it was only for fear of the Country Keeper, for there was a warrant against me. I'll stand Hobbie's feud, and a' his clan's. But it's not so much for that, as to gie him a lesson not to let his tongue gallop ower freely about his betters. I trow he will hae lost the best pen-feather o' his wing before to-morrow morning.—Farewell, Elshie; there's some canny boys waiting for me down amang the shaws, owerby; I will see you as I come back, and bring ye a blithe tale in return for your leech-craft."

Ere the Dwarf could collect himself to reply, the Reiver of Westburnflat set spurs to his horse. The animal, starting at one of the stones which lay scattered about, flew from the path. The rider exercised his spurs without moderation or mercy. The horse became furious, reared, kicked, plunged, and bolted like a deer, with all his four feet off the ground at once. It was in vain; the unrelenting rider sate as if he had been a part of the horse which he bestrode; and, after a short but furious contest, compelled the subdued animal to proceed upon the path at a rate which soon carried him out of sight of the Solitary.

"That villain," exclaimed the Dwarf,—"that cool-blooded, hardened, unrelenting ruffian,—that wretch, whose every thought is infected with crimes,—has thewes and sinews, limbs, strength, and activity enough, to compel a nobler animal than himself to carry him to the place where he is to perpetrate his wickedness; while I, had I the weakness to wish to put his wretched victim on his guard, and to save the helpless family, would see my good intentions frustrated by the decrepitude which chains me to the spot.—Why should I wish it were otherwise? What have my screech-owl voice, my hideous form, and my mis-shapen features, to do with the fairer workmanship of nature? Do not men receive even my benefits with shrinking horror and ill-suppressed disgust? And why should I interest myself in a race which accounts me a prodigy and an outcast, and which has treated me as such? No; by all the ingratitude which I have reaped—by all the wrongs which I have sustained—by my imprisonment, my stripes, my chains, I will wrestle down my feelings of rebellious humanity! I will not be the fool I have been, to swerve from my principles whenever there was an appeal, forsooth, to my feelings; as if I, towards whom none shew sympathy, ought to have sympathy with any one. Let Destiny drive forth her scythed car through the overwhelmed and trembling mass of humanity! Shall I be the idiot to throw this decrepit form, this mis-shapen lump of mortality, under her wheels, that the Dwarf, the Wizard, the Hunch-back, may save from destruction some fair form or some active frame, and all the world clap their hands at the exchange? No, never!—And yet this Elliot—this Hobbie, so young and gallant, so frank, so—I will think of it no longer. I cannot aid him if I would, and I am resolved—firmly resolved, that I would not aid him, if a wish were the pledge of his safety!"

Having thus ended his soliloquy, he retreated into his hut for shelter from the storm which was fast approaching, and now began to burst in large and heavy drops of rain. The last rays of the sun now disappeared entirely, and two or three claps of distant thunder followed each other at brief intervals, echoing and re-echoing among the range of heathy fells like the sound of a distant engagement.

CHAPTER VII.

Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be torn!—
* * * * * * *
Return to thy dwelling; all lonely return;
For the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood,
And a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

CAMPBELL.

The night continued sullen and stormy; but morning rose as if refreshed by the rains. Even the Mucklestane-Moor, with its broad bleak swells of barren grounds, interspersed with marshy pools of water, seemed to smile under the serene influence of the sky, just as good-humour can spread a certain inexpressible charm over the plainest human countenance. The heath was in its thickest and deepest bloom. The bees, which the Solitary had added to his rural establishment, were abroad and on the wing, and filled the air with the murmurs of their industry. As the old man crept out of his little hut, his two she-goats came to meet him, and licked his hands in gratitude for the vegetables with which he supplied them from his garden. "You, at least," he said—"you, at least, see no differences in form which can alter your feelings to a benefactor—to you, the finest shape that ever statuary moulded would be an object of indifference or of alarm, should it present itself instead of the mis-shapen trunk to whose services you are accustomed. While I was in the world, did I ever meet with such a return of gratitude? No; the domestic whom I had bred from infancy made mouths at me as he stood behind my chair; the friend whom I had supported with my fortune, and for whose sake I had even stained——(he stopped with a strong convulsive shudder,) even he thought me more fit for the society of lunatics—for their disgraceful restraints—for their cruel privations, than for communication with the rest of humanity. Hubert alone—and Hubert too will one day aban-

don me. All are of a piece, one mass of wickedness, selfishness, and ingratitude—wretches, who sin even in their devotions; and of such hardness of heart, that they do not, without hypocrisy, even thank the Deity himself for his warm sun and pure air."

As he was plunged in these gloomy soliloquies, he heard the tramp of a horse on the other side of his enclosure, and a strong clear bass voice singing with the liveliness inspired by a light heart,

Canny Hobbie Elliot, canny Hobbie now,
Canny Hobbie Elliot, I'se gang alang wi' you.

At the same moment, a large deer greyhound sprung over the hermit's fence. It is well known to the sportsmen in these wilds, that the appearance and scent of the goat so much resemble those of their usual objects of chase, that the best-broke greyhounds will sometimes fly upon them. The dog in question instantly pulled down and throttled one of the hermit's she-goats, while Hobbie Elliot, who came up, and jumped from his horse for the purpose, was unable to extricate the harmless animal from the fangs of his attendant until it was expiring. The Dwarf eyed, for a few moments, the convulsive starts of his dying favourite, until the poor goat stretched out her limbs with the twitches and shivering fit of the last agony. He then started into an excess of frenzy, and unsheathing a long sharp knife, or dagger, which he wore under his coat, he was about to lanch it at the dog, when Hobbie, perceiving his purpose, interposed, and caught hold of his hand, exclaiming, "Let a be the hound, man—let a be the hound!—Na, na, Killbuck maunna be guided that gate, neither."

The Dwarf turned his rage on the young farmer; and, by a sudden effort, far more powerful than Hobbie expected from such a person, freed his wrist from his grasp, and offered the dagger at his heart. All this was done in the twinkling of an eye, and the incensed Recluse might have completed his vengeance by plunging the weapon in Elliot's bosom, had he not been checked by an internal impulse which made him hurl the knife to a distance.

"No," he exclaimed, as he thus voluntarily deprived himself of the means of gratifying his rage; "not again—not again!"

Hobbie retreated a step or two in great surprise, discomposure, and disdain, at having been placed in such danger by an object apparently so contemptible.

"The deil's in the body for strength and bitterness!" were the first words that escaped him, which he followed up with an apology for the accident that had given rise to their disagreement. "I am no justifying Killbuck a'thegither neither, and I am sure it is as vexing to me as to you, Elshie, that the mischance should hae happened; but I'll send you twa goats and twa fat gimmers, man, to make a' straight again. A wise man like you shouldna bear malice against a poor dumb thing; ye see that a goat's like first-cousin to a deer, sae he acted but according to his nature after a'. Had it been a pet-lamb, there wad hae been mair to be said. Ye suld keep sheep, Elshie, and no goats, where there's sae mony deer-hounds about—but I'll send ye baith."

"Wretch!" said the Hermit, "your cruelty has destroyed one of the only creatures in existence that would look on me with kindness!"

"Dear Elshie," answered Hobbie, "I'm wae ye suld hae cause to say sae; I'm sure it wasna wi' my will. And yet, it's true, I should hae minded your goats, and coupled up the dogs. I'm sure I would rather they had worried the primest wether in my faulds. Come, man, forget and forgie. I'm e'en as vexed as ye can be—But I am a bridegroom, ye see, and that puts a' things out o' my head, I think. There's the marriage-dinner, or gude part o't, that my twa brithers are bringing on a sled round by the Riders' Slack, three goodly bucks as ever ran on Dallomlea, as the sang says; they couldna come the straight road for the saft grund. I wad send ye a bit venison, but ye wadna take it weel maybe, for Killbuck catched it."

During this long speech, in which the good-natured Borderer endeavoured to propitiate the offended Dwarf by every argument he could think of, he heard him with his eyes bent on the ground, as if in the deepest meditation, and at length broke forth—"Nature?—yes! it is indeed in the usual beaten path of Nature. The strong gripe and throttle the weak; the rich depress and despoil the needy; the happy (those who are idiots enough to think themselves happy) insult the misery and diminish the consolation of the wretched. Go hence, thou who hast contrived to give an additional pang to the most miserable of human beings—thou who hast deprived me of what I half considered as a source of comfort. Go hence, and enjoy the happiness prepared for thee at home!"

"Never stir," said Hobbie, "if I wadna take you wi' me, man, if ye wad but say it wad divert ye to be at the bridal on Monday. There will be a hundred strapping Elliots to ride the brouze—the like's no been seen sin' the days of auld Martin of the Preakin-tower—I wad send the sled for ye wi' a canny powny."

"Is it to me you propose once more to mix in the society of the common herd?" said the Recluse, with an air of deep disgust.

"Commons!" retorted Hobbie, "nae siccan commons neither; the Elliots hae been lang kend a gentle race."

"Hence! begone!" reiterated the Dwarf: "may the same evil luck attend thee that thou hast left behind with me! If I go not with you myself, see if you can escape what my attendants, Wrath and Misery, have brought to thy threshold before thee."

"I wish ye wadna speak that gate," said Hobbie. "Ye ken yoursell, Elshie, naebody judges you to be ower canny; now, I'll tell ye just ae word for a'—ye hae spoken as muckle as wussing ill to me and mine; now, if ony mischance happen to Grace, which God forbid, or to mysell, or to the poor dumb tyke; or if I be skaithed and injured in body, gudes, or gear, I'll no forget wha it is that it's owing to."

"Out, hind!" exclaimed the Dwarf; "home! home to your dwelling, and think on me when you find what has befallen there."

"Aweel, aweel," said Hobbie, mounting his horse, "it serves naething to strive wi' cripples,—they are aye cankered; but I'll just tell ye ae thing, neighbour, that if things be otherwise than weel wi' Grace Armstrong, I'se gie you a scouther, if there be a tar-barrel in the five parishes."

So saying, he rode off; and Elshie, after looking at him with a scornful and indignant laugh, took

spade and mattock, and occupied himself in digging a grave for his deceased favourite.

A low whistle, and the words, "Hisht, Elshie, hisht!" disturbed him in this melancholy occupation. He looked up, and the Red Reiver of West burnflat was before him. Like Banquo's murderer, there was blood on his face, as well as upon the rowels of his spurs and the sides of his overridden horse.

"How now, ruffian?" demanded the Dwarf, "is thy job chared?"

"Ay, ay, doubt not that, Elshie," answered the freebooter; "when I ride, my foes may moan. They have had mair light than comfort at the Heugh-foot this morning; there 's a toom byre and a wide, and a wail and a cry for the bonny bride."

"The bride?"

"Ay; Charlie Cheat-the-Woodie, as we ca' him, that's Charlie Foster of Tinning Beck, has promised to keep her in Cumberland till the blast blaw by. She saw me, and kend me in the splore, for the mask fell frae my face for a blink. I am thinking it wad concern my safety if she were to come back here, for there 's mony o' the Elliots, and they band weel thegither for right or wrang. Now, what I chiefly come to ask your rede in, is how to make her sure?"

"Wouldst thou murder her, then?"

"Umph! no, no; that I would not do, if I could help it. But they say they can whiles get folk cannily away to the plantations from some of the out-ports, and something to boot for them that brings a bonny wench. They 're wanted beyond seas thae female cattle, and they're no that scarce here. But I think o' doing better for this lassie. There 's a leddy, that, unless she be a' the better bairn, is to be sent to foreign parts whether she will or no; now, I think of sending Grace to wait on her—she 's a bonny lassie. Hobbie will hae a merry morning when he comes hame, and misses baith bride and gear."

"Ay; and do you not pity him?" said the Recluse.

"Wad he pity me were I gacing up the Castle-hill at Jeddart;[1] And yet I rue something for the bit lassie; but he 'll get anither, and little skaith dune—ane is as gude as anither. And now, you that like to hear o' splores, heard ye ever o'a better ane than I hae had this morning?"

"Air, ocean, and fire," said the Dwarf, speaking to himself, "the earthquake, the tempest, the volcano, are all mild and moderate, compared to the wrath of man. And what is this fellow, but one more skilled than others in executing the end of his existence?—Hear me, felon, go again where I before sent thee."

"To the Steward?"

"Ay; and tell him, Elshender the Recluse commands him to give thee gold. But, hear me, let the maiden be discharged free and uninjured; return her to her friends, and let her swear not to discover thy villainy."

"Swear?" said Westburnflat; "but what if she break her aith? Women are not famous for keeping their plight. A wise man like you should ken that. And uninjured—wha kens what may happen were she to be left lang at Tinning Beck? Charlie Cheat-the-Woodie is a rough customer. But if the gold could be made up to twenty pieces, I think I could ensure her being wi' her friends within twenty-four hours."

The Dwarf took his tablets from his pocket, marked a line on them, and tore out the leaf. "There," he said, giving the robber the leaf—"But, mark me; thou knowest I am not to be fooled by thy treachery; if thou darest to disobey my directions, thy wretched life, be sure, shall answer for it."

"I know," said the fellow, looking down, "that you have power on earth, however you came by it; you can do what nae other man can do, baith by physic and foresight; and the gold is shelled down when ye command, as fast as I have seen the ash-keys fall in a frosty morning in October. I will not disobey you."

"Begone, then, and relieve me of thy hateful presence."

The robber set spurs to his horse, and rode off without reply.

Hobbie Elliot had, in the meanwhile, pursued his journey rapidly, harassed by those oppressive and indistinct fears that all was not right, which men usually term a presentiment of misfortune. Ere he reached the top of the bank from which he could look down on his own habitation, he was met by his nurse, a person then of great consequence in all families in Scotland, whether of the higher or middling classes. The connection between them and their foster-children was considered a tie far too dearly intimate to be broken; and it usually happened, in the course of years, that the nurse became a resident in the family of her foster-son, assisting in the domestic duties, and receiving all marks of attention and regard from the heads of the family. So soon as Hobbie recognized the figure of Annaple, in her red cloak and black hood, he could not help exclaiming to himself, "What ill luck can hae brought the auld nurse sae far frae hame, her that never stirs a gun-shot frae the door-stane for ordinar?—Hout, it will just be to get crane-berries, or whortle-berries, or some such stuff, out of the moss, to make the pies and tarts for the feast on Monday.—I cannot get the words of that cankered auld cripple deil's-buckie out o' my head—the least thing makes me dread some ill news. O, Killbuck, man? were there nae deer and goats in the country besides, but ye behoved to gang and worry his creature, by a' other folk's?"

By this time Annaple, with a brow like a tragic volume, had hobbled towards him, and caught his horse by the bridle. The despair in her look was so evident, as to deprive even him of the power of asking the cause. "O, my bairn!" she cried, "gang na forward—gang na forward—it's a sight to kill ony body, let alane thee."

"In God's name, what 's the matter?" said the astonished horseman, endeavouring to extricate his bridle from the grasp of the old woman; "for Heaven's sake, let me go and see what 's the matter."

"Ohon! that I should have lived to see the day!—The steading 's a' in a low, and the bonny stack-yard lying in the red ashes, and the gear a' driven away. But gang na forward; it wad break your young heart, hinny, to see what my auld een hae seen this morning."

"And who has dared to do this? let go my bridle,

[1] The place of execution of that ancient burgh, where many of Westburnflat's profession have made their final exit.

Annaple—where is my grandmother—my sisters?—Where is Grace Armstrong?—God!—the words of the warlock are knelling in my ears!"

He sprang from his horse to rid himself of Annaple's interruption, and, ascending the hill with great speed, soon came in view of the spectacle with which she had threatened him. It was indeed a heart-breaking sight. The habitation which he had left in its seclusion, beside the mountain-stream, surrounded with every evidence of rustic plenty, was now a wasted and blackened ruin. From amongst the shattered and sable walls the smoke continued to rise. The turf-stack, the barn-yard, the offices stocked with cattle, all the wealth of an upland cultivator of the period, of which poor Elliot possessed no common share, had been laid waste or carried off in a single night. He stood a moment motionless, and then exclaimed, "I am ruined—ruined to the ground!—But curse on the warld's gear—Had it not been the week before the bridal—But I am nae babe, to sit down and greet about it. If I can but find Grace, and my grandmother, and my sisters weel, I can go to the wars in Flanders, as my gude-sire did, under the Bellenden banner, wi' auld Buccleuch. At ony rate, I will keep up a heart, or they will lose theirs a' thegither."

Manfully strode Hobbie down the hill, resolved to suppress his own despair, and administer consolation which he did not feel. The neighbouring inhabitants of the dell, particularly those of his own name, had already assembled. The younger part were in arms and clamorous for revenge, although they knew not upon whom; the elder were taking measures for the relief of the distressed family. Annaple's cottage, which was situated down the brook, at some distance from the scene of mischief, had been hastily adapted for the temporary accommodation of the old lady, and her daughters, with such articles as had been contributed by the neighbours, for very little was saved from the wreck.

"Are we to stand here a' day, sirs," exclaimed one tall young man, "and look at the burnt wa's of our kinsman's house? Every wreath of the reek is a blast of shame upon us! Let us to horse, and take the chase.—Who has the nearest blood-hound?"

"It 's young Earnscliff," answered another, "and he 's been on and away wi' six horse lang syne, to see if he can track them."

"Let us follow him then, and raise the country, and mak mair help as we ride, and then have at the Cumberland reivers! Take, burn, and slay—they that lie nearest us shall smart first."

"Whisht! haud your tongues, daft callants," said an old man, "ye dinna ken what ye speak about. What! wad ye raise war atween twa pacificated countries?"

"And what signifies deaving us wi' tales about our fathers," retorted the young man, "if we 're to sit and see our friends' houses burnt ower their heads, and no put out hand to revenge them? Our fathers did not do that, I trow?"

"I am no saying ony thing against revenging Hobbie's wrang, puir chield; but we maun take the law wi' us in thae days, Simon," answered the more prudent elder.

"And besides," said another old man, "I dinna believe there 's ane now living that kens the lawful mode of following a fray across the Border. Tam o' Whittram kend a' about it; but he died in the hard winter."

"Ay," said a third, "he was at the great gathering, when they chased as far as Thirlwall; it was the year after the fight of Philiphaugh."

"Hout," exclaimed another of these discording counsellors, "there 's nae great skill needed; just put a lighted peat on the end of a spear, or hay-fork, or siclike, and blaw a horn, and cry the gathering-word, and then it 's lawful to follow gear into England, and recover it by the strong hand, or to take gear frae some other Englishman, providing ye lift nae mair than 's been lifted frae you. That 's the auld Border law, made at Dundrennan, in the days of the Black Douglas. Deil ane need doubt it. It 's as clear as the sun."

"Come away, then, lads," cried Simon, "get to your geldings, and we 'll take auld Cuddie the muckle tasker wi' us; he kens the value o' the stock and plenishing that 's been lost. Hobbie's stalls and stakes shall be fou again or night; and if we canna big up the auld house sae soon, we'se lay an English ane as low as Heugh-foot is—and that 's fair play, a' the warld ower."

This animating proposal was received with great applause by the younger part of the assemblage, when a whisper ran among them, "There 's Hobbie himsell, puir fallow! we 'll be guided by him."

The principal sufferer, having now reached the bottom of the hill, pushed on through the crowd, unable, from the tumultuous state of his feelings, to do more than receive and return the grasps of the friendly hands by which his neighbours and kinsmen mutely expressed their sympathy in his misfortune. While he pressed Simon of Hackburn's hand, his anxiety at length found words. "Thank ye, Simon—thank ye, neighbours—I ken what ye wad a' say. But where are they?—Where are——" He stopped, as if afraid even to name the objects of his inquiry; and with a similar feeling, his kinsmen, without reply, pointed to the hut, into which Hobbie precipitated himself with the desperate air of one who is resolved to know the worst at once. A general and powerful expression of sympathy accompanied him. "Ah, puir fallow—puir Hobbie!"

"He 'll learn the warst o't now!"

"But I trust Earnscliff will get some speerings o' the puir lassie."

Such were the exclamations of the group, who, having no acknowledged leader to direct their motions, passively awaited the return of the sufferer, and determined to be guided by his directions.

The meeting between Hobbie and his family was in the highest degree affecting. His sisters threw themselves upon him, and almost stifled him with their caresses, as if to prevent his looking round to distinguish the absence of one yet more beloved.

"God help thee, my son! He can help when worldly trust is a broken reed."—Such was the welcome of the matron to her unfortunate grandson. He looked eagerly round, holding two of his sisters by the hand, while the third hung about his neck—"I see you—I count you—my grandmother, Lilias, Jean, and Annot; but where is——" (he hesitated, and then continued, as if with an effort,) "Where is Grace? Surely this is not a time to hide hersell frae me—there 's nae time for daffing now."

"O, brother!" and "Our poor Grace!" was the only answer his questions could procure, till his grandmother rose up, and gently disengaged him from the weeping girls, led him to a seat, and with the affecting serenity which sincere piety, like oil sprinkled on the waves, can throw over the most acute feelings, she said, "My bairn, when thy grandfather was killed in the wars, and left me with six orphans around me, with scarce bread to eat, or a roof to cover us, I had strength,—not of mine own—but I had strength given me to say, The Lord's will be done!—My son, our peaceful house was last night broken into by moss-troopers, armed and masked; they have taken and destroyed all, and carried off our dear Grace. Pray for strength to say, His will be done!"

"Mother! mother! urge me not—I cannot—not now—I am a sinful man, and of a hardened race. Masked—armed—Grace carried off! Gie me my sword, and my father's knapsack—I will have vengeance, if I should go to the pit of darkness to seek it!"

"O my bairn, my bairn! be patient under the rod. Who knows when He may lift his hand off from us? Young Earnscliff, Heaven bless him, has taen the chase, with Davie of Stenhouse, and the first comers. I cried to let house and plenishing burn, and follow the reivers to recover Grace, and Earnscliff and his men were ower the Fell within three hours after the deed. God bless him! he's a real Earnscliff; he's his father's true son—a leal friend."

"A true friend indeed; God bless him!" exclaimed Hobbie; "let's on and away, and take the chase after him."

"O, my child, before you run on danger, let me hear you but say, His will be done!"

"Urge me not, mother—not now." He was rushing out, when, looking back, he observed his grandmother make a mute attitude of affliction. He returned hastily, threw himself into her arms, and said, "Yes, mother, I *can* say, His will be done, since it will comfort you."

"May He go forth—may He go forth with you, my dear bairn; and O, may He give you cause to say on your return, His name be praised!"

"Farewell, mother!—farewell, my dear sisters!" exclaimed Elliot, and rushed out of the house.

CHAPTER VIII.

Now horse and hattock, cried the Laird,—
Now horse and hattock, speedilie;
They that winna ride for Telfer's kye,
Let them never look in the face o' me.
Border Ballad.

"Horse! horse! and spear!" exclaimed Hobbie to his kinsmen. Many a ready foot was in the stirrup; and, while Elliot hastily collected arms and accoutrements, (no easy matter in such a confusion,) the glen resounded with the approbation of his younger friends.

"Ay, ay!" exclaimed Simon of Hackburn, "that's the gate to take it, Hobbie. Let women sit and greet at hame, men must do as they have been done by; it's the Scripture says 't."

"Haud your tongue, sir," said one of the seniors, sternly; "dinna abuse the Word that gate, ye dinna ken what ye speak about."

"Hae ye ony tidings?—Hae ye ony speerings, Hobbie?—O callants, dinna be ower hasty," said old Dick of the Dingle.

"What signifies preaching to us, e'enow?" said Simon; "if ye canna make help yoursell, dinna keep back them that can."

"Whisht, sir; wad ye take vengeance or ye ken wha has wrang'd ye?"

"D' ye think we dinna ken the road to England as weel as our fathers before us?—All evil comes out o' thereaway—it's an auld saying and a true; and we 'll e'en away there, as if the devil was blawing us south."

"We 'll follow the track o' Earnscliff's horses ower the waste," cried one Elliot.

"I'll prick them out through the blindest moor in the Border, an there had been a fair held there the day before," said Hugh, the blacksmith of Ringleburn, "for I aye shoe his horse wi' my ain hand."

"Lay on the deer-hounds," cried another; "where are they?"

"Hout, man, the sun's been lang up, and the dew is aff the grund—the scent will never lie."

Hobbie instantly whistled on his hounds, which were roving about the ruins of their old habitation, and filling the air with their doleful howls.

"Now, Killbuck," said Hobbie, "try thy skill this day"—and then, as if a light had suddenly broke on him,—"that ill-faur'd goblin spak something o' this! He may ken mair o 't, either by villains on earth, or devils below—I 'll hae it frae him, if I should cut it out o' his mis-shapen bouk wi' my whinger." He then hastily gave directions to his comrades: "Four o' ye, wi' Simon, haud right forward to Græmes'-gap. If they 're English, they 'll be for being back that way. The rest disperse by twasome and threesome through the waste, and meet me at the Trysting-pool. Tell my brothers, when they come up, to follow and meet us there. Poor lads, they will hae hearts weelnigh as sair as mine; little think they what a sorrowful house they are bringing their venison to! I 'll ride ower Mucklestane-Moor mysell."

"And if I were you," said Dick of the Dingle, "I would speak to Canny Elshie. He can tell you whatever betides in this land, if he 's sae minded."

"He *shall* tell me," said Hobbie, who was busy putting his arms in order, "what he kens o' this night's job, or I shall right weel ken wherefore he does not."

"Ay, but speak him fair, my bonny man—speak him fair, Hobbie; the like o' him will no bear thrawing. They converse sae muckle wi' thae fractious ghaists and evil spirits, that it clean spoils their temper."

"Let me alane to guide him," answered Hobbie; "there 's that in my breast this day, that would ower-maister a' the warlocks on earth, and a' the devils in hell."

And being now fully equipped, he threw himself on his horse, and spurred him at a rapid pace against the steep ascent.

Elliot speedily surmounted the hill, rode down the other side at the same rate, crossed a wood, and traversed a long glen, ere he at length regained Mucklestane-Moor. As he was obliged, in the course of his journey, to relax his speed in consideration of the labour which his horse might still have to undergo, he had time to consider maturely

in what manner he should address the Dwarf, in order to extract from him the knowledge which he supposed him to be in possession of concerning the authors of his misfortunes. Hobbie, though blunt, plain of speech, and hot of disposition, like most of his countrymen, was by no means deficient in the shrewdness which is also their characteristic. He reflected, that from what he had observed on the memorable night when the Dwarf was first seen, and from the conduct of that mysterious being ever since, he was likely to be rendered even more obstinate in his sullenness by threats and violence.

"I 'll speak him fair," he said, "as auld Dickon advised me. Though folk say he has a league wi' Satan, he canna be sic an incarnate devil as no to take some pity in a case like mine; and folk threep he 'll whiles do good, charitable sort o' things. I 'll keep my heart doun as well as I can, and stroke him wi' the hair; and if the warst come to the warst, it's but wringing the head o' him about at last."

In this disposition of accommodation he approached the hut of the Solitary.

The old man was not upon his seat of audience, nor could Hobbie perceive him in his garden, or enclosures.

"He 's gotten into his very keep," said Hobbie, "maybe to be out o' the gate; but I 'se pu' it doun about his lugs, if I canna win at him otherwise."

Having thus communed with himself, he raised his voice, and invoked Elshie in a tone as supplicating as his conflicting feelings would permit. "Elshie, my gude friend!" No reply. "Elshie, canny Father Elshie!" The Dwarf remained mute. "Sorrow be in the crooked carcass of thee!" said the Borderer between his teeth; and then again attempting a soothing tone,—"Good Father Elshie, a most miserable creature desires some counsel of your wisdom."

"The better!" answered the shrill and discordant voice of the Dwarf through a very small window, resembling an arrow-slit, which he had constructed near the door of his dwelling, and through which he could see any one who approached it, without the possibility of their looking in upon him.

"The better!" said Hobbie impatiently; "what is the better, Elshie? Do you not hear me tell you I am the most miserable wretch living?"

"And do you not hear me tell you it is so much the better? and did I not tell you this morning, when you thought yourself so happy, what an evening was coming upon you?"

"That ye did e'en," replied Hobbie, "and that gars me come to you for advice now; they that foresaw the trouble maun ken the cure."

"I know no cure for earthly trouble," returned the Dwarf; "or, if I did, why should I help others, when none hath aided me? Have I not lost wealth, that would have bought all thy barren hills a hundred times over? rank, to which thine is as that of a peasant? society, where there was an interchange of all that was amiable—of all that was intellectual? Have I not lost all this? Am I not residing here, the veriest outcast on the face of Nature, in the most hideous and most solitary of her retreats, myself more hideous than all that is around me? And why should other worms complain to me when they are trodden on, since I am myself lying crushed and writhing under the chariot-wheel?"

"Ye may have lost all this," answered Hobbie, in the bitterness of emotion; "land and friends, goods and gear; ye may hae lost them a',—but ye ne'er can hae sae sair a heart as mine, for ye ne'er lost nae Grace Armstrong. And now my last hopes are gane, and I shall ne'er see her mair."

This he said in the tone of deepest emotion—and there followed a long pause, for the mention of his bride's name had overcome the more angry and irritable feelings of poor Hobbie. Ere he had again addressed the Solitary, the bony hand and long fingers of the latter, holding a large leathern bag, was thrust forth at the small window, and as it unclutched the burden, and let it drop with a clang upon the ground, his harsh voice again addressed Elliot.

"There—there lies a salve for every human ill; so, at least, each human wretch readily thinks.—Begone; return twice as wealthy as thou wert before yesterday, and torment me no more with questions, complaints, or thanks; they are alike odious to me."

"It 's a' gowd, by Heaven!" said Elliot, having glanced at the contents; and then again addressing the Hermit, "Muckle obliged for your good-will; and I wad blithely gie you a bond for some o' the siller, or a wadset ower the lands o' Wideopen. But I dinna ken, Elshie; to be free wi' you, I dinna like to use siller unless I kend it was decently come by; and maybe it might turn into sclate-stanes, and cheat some poor man."

"Ignorant idiot!" retorted the Dwarf; "the trash is as genuine poison as ever was dug out of the bowels of the earth. Take it—use it, and may it thrive with you as it hath done with me!"

"But I tell you," said Elliot, "it wasna about the gear that I was consulting you,—it was a braw barn-yard, doubtless, and thirty head of finer cattle there werena on this side of the Catrail; but let the gear gang,—if ye could gie me but speerings o' puir Grace, I would be content to be your slave for life, in ony thing that didna touch my salvation. O, Elshie, speak, man, speak!"

"Well, then," answered the Dwarf, as if worn out by his importunity, "since thou hast not enough of woes of thine own, but must needs seek to burden thyself with those of a partner, seek her whom thou hast lost in the *West*."

"In the *West*? That 's a wide word."

"It is the last," said the Dwarf, "which I design to utter;" and he drew the shutters of his window, leaving Hobbie to make the most of the hint he had given.

The west! the west!—thought Elliot; the country is pretty quiet down that way, unless it were Jock o' the Todholes; and he 's ower auld now for the like o' thae jobs.—West!—By my life, it must be Westburnflat. "Elshie, just tell me one word. Am I right? Is it Westburnflat? If I am wrang, say sae. I wadna like to wyte an innocent neighbour wi' violence—No answer?—It must be the Red Reiver—I didna think he wad hae ventured on me, neither, and sae mony kin as there 's o' us—I am thinking he 'll hae some better backing than his Cumberland friends.—Fareweel to you, Elshie, and mony thanks—I downa be fashed wi' the siller e'en now, for I maun awa' to meet my friends at the Trysting-place—Sae, if ye carena to open the window, ye can fetch it in after I 'm awa'."

Still there was no reply.

"He 's deaf, or he 's daft, or he 's baith; but I hae nae time to stay to claver wi' him."

And off rode Hobbie Elliot towards the place of rendezvous which he had named to his friends.

Four or five riders were already gathered at the Trysting-pool. They stood in close consultation together, while their horses were permitted to graze among the poplars which overhung the broad still pool. A more numerous party were seen coming from the southward. It proved to be Earnscliff and his party, who had followed the track of the cattle as far as the English border, but had halted on the information that a considerable force was drawn together under some of the jacobite gentlemen in that district, and there were tidings of insurrection in different parts of Scotland. This took away from the act which had been perpetrated the appearance of private animosity, or love of plunder; and Earnscliff was now disposed to regard it as a symptom of civil war. The young gentleman greeted Hobbie with the most sincere sympathy, and informed him of the news he had received.

"Then, may I never stir frae the bit," said Elliot, "if auld Ellieslaw is not at the bottom o' the haill villainy! Ye see he 's leagued wi' the Cumberland Catholics; and that agrees weel wi' what Elshie hinted about Westburnflat, for Ellieslaw aye protected him, and he will want to harry and disarm the country about his ain hand before he breaks out."

Some now remembered that the party of ruffians had been heard to say they were acting for James VIII. and were charged to disarm all rebels. Others had heard Westburnflat boast, in drinking parties, that Ellieslaw would soon be in arms for the Jacobite cause, and that he himself was to hold a command under him, and that they would be bad neighbours for young Earnscliff, and all that stood out for the established government. The result was a strong belief that Westburnflat had headed the party under Ellieslaw's orders, and they resolved to proceed instantly to the house of the former, and, if possible, to secure his person. They were by this time joined by so many of their dispersed friends, that their number amounted to upwards of twenty horsemen, well mounted, and tolerably, though variously, armed.

A brook, which issued from a narrow glen among the hills, entered, at Westburnflat, upon the open marshy level, which, expanding about half a mile in every direction, gives name to the spot. In this place the character of the stream becomes changed, and, from being a lively, brisk-running mountain-torrent, it stagnates, like a blue swollen snake, in dull deep windings, through the swampy level. On the side of the stream, and nearly about the centre of the plain, arose the tower of Westburnflat, one of the few remaining strongholds formerly so numerous upon the Borders. The ground upon which it stood was gently elevated above the marsh for the space of about a hundred yards, affording an esplanade of dry turf, which extended itself in the immediate neighbourhood of the tower; but, beyond which, the surface presented to strangers was that of an impassable and dangerous bog. The owner of the tower and his inmates alone knew the winding and intricate paths, which, leading over ground that was comparatively sound, admitted visiters to his residence. But among the party which were assembled under Earnscliff's directions, there was more than one person qualified to act as a guide. For although the owner's character and habits of life were generally known, yet the laxity of feeling with respect to property prevented his being looked on with the abhorrence with which he must have been regarded in a more civilized country. He was considered, among his more peaceable neighbours, pretty much as a gambler, cock-fighter, or horse-jockey, would be regarded at the present day; a person, of course, whose habits were to be condemned, and his society, in general, avoided, yet who could not be considered as marked with the indelible infamy attached to his profession, where laws have been habitually observed. And their indignation was awakened against him upon this occasion, not so much upon account of the general nature of the transaction, which was just such as was to be expected from this marauder, as that the violence had been perpetrated upon a neighbour against whom he had no cause of quarrel, — against a friend of their own, — above all, against one of the name of Elliot, to which clan most of them belonged. It was not, therefore, wonderful, that there should be several in the band pretty well acquainted with the locality of his habitation, and capable of giving such directions and guidance as soon placed the whole party on the open space of firm ground in front of the Tower of Westburnflat.

CHAPTER IX.

So spak the knicht; the geaunt sed,
Lead forth with the, the sely maid,
And mak me quite of the and sche;
For glaunsing ee, or brow so brent,
Or cheek with rose and lilye blent,
Me lists not ficht with the.
Romance of the Falcon.

The tower, before which the party now stood, was a small square building of the most gloomy aspect. The walls were of great thickness, and the windows, or slits which served the purpose of windows, seemed rather calculated to afford the defenders the means of employing missile weapons, than for admitting air or light to the apartments within. A small battlement projected over the walls on every side, and afforded farther advantage of defence by its niched parapet, within which arose a steep roof, flagged with grey stones. A single turret at one angle, defended by a door studded with huge iron nails, rose above the battlement, and gave access to the roof from within, by the spiral staircase which it enclosed. It seemed to the party that their motions were watched by some one concealed within this turret; and they were confirmed in their belief, when, through a narrow loophole, a female hand was seen to wave a handkerchief, as if by way of signal to them. Hobbie was almost out of his senses with joy and eagerness.

"It was Grace's hand and arm," he said; "I can swear to it amang a thousand. There is not the like of it on this side of the Lowdens — We 'll have her out, lads, if we should carry off the Tower of Westburnflat stane by stane."

Earnscliff, though he doubted the possibility of recognizing a fair maiden's hand at such a distance from the eye of the lover, would say nothing to

damp his friend's animated hopes, and it was resolved to summon the garrison.

The shout of the party, and the winding of one or two horns, at length brought to a loophole, which flanked the entrance, the haggard face of an old woman.

"That 's the Reiver's mother," said one of the Elliots; "she's ten times waur than himsell, and is wyted for muckle of the ill he does about the country."

"Wha are ye? What d' ye want here?" were the queries of the respectable progenitor.

"We are seeking William Græme of Westburnflat," said Earnscliff.

"He 's no at hame," returned the old dame.

"When did he leave home?" pursued Earnscliff.

"I canna tell," said the portress.

"When will he return?" said Hobbie Elliot.

"I dinna ken naething about it," replied the inexorable guardian of the keep.

"Is there any body within the tower with you?" again demanded Earnscliff.

"Naebody but mysell and baudrons," said the old woman.

"Then open the gate and admit us," said Earnscliff; "I am a justice of peace, and in search of the evidence of a felony."

"Deil be in their fingers that draws a bolt for ye," retorted the portress; "for mine shall never do it. Thinkna ye shame o' yoursells, to come here siccan a band o' ye, wi' your swords, and spears, and steel-caps, to frighten a lone widow woman?"

"Our information," said Earnscliff, "is positive; we are seeking goods which have been forcibly carried off, to a great amount."

"And a young woman, that's been cruelly made prisoner, that 's worth mair than a' the gear, twice told," said Hobbie.

"And I warn you," continued Earnscliff, "that your only way to prove your son's innocence is to give us quiet admittance to search the house."

"And what will ye do, if I carena to thraw the keys, or draw the bolts, or open the grate to sic a clamjamfrie?" said the old dame scoffingly.

"Force our way with the king's keys, and break the neck of every living soul we find in the house, if ye dinna gie it ower forthwith!" menaced the incensed Hobbie.

"Threatened folks live lang," said the hag, in the same tone of irony; "there 's the iron grate—try your skeel on 't, lads—it has kept out as gude men as you, or now."

So saying, she laughed, and withdrew from the aperture through which she had held the parley.

The besiegers now opened a serious consultation. The immense thickness of the walls, and the small size of the windows, might, for a time, have even resisted cannon-shot. The entrance was secured, first, by a strong grated door, composed entirely of hammered iron, of such ponderous strength as seemed calculated to resist any force that could be brought against it. "Pinches or forehammers will never pick upon 't," said Hugh, the blacksmith of Ringleburn; "ye might as weel batter at it wi' pipe-staples."

Within the doorway, and at the distance of nine feet, which was the solid thickness of the wall, there was a second door of oak, crossed, both breadth and lengthways, with clenched bars of iron, and studded full of broad-headed nails. Besides all these defences, they were by no means confident in the truth of the old dame's assertion, that she alone composed the garrison. The more knowing of the party had observed hoof-marks in the track by which they approached the tower, which seemed to indicate that several persons had very lately passed in that direction.

To all these difficulties was added their want of means for attacking the place. There was no hope of procuring ladders long enough to reach the battlements, and the windows, besides being very narrow, were secured with iron bars. Scaling was therefore out of the question; mining was still more so, for want of tools and gunpowder; neither were the besiegers provided with food, means of shelter, or other conveniences, which might have enabled them to convert the siege into a blockade; and there would, at any rate, have been a risk of relief from some of the marauder's comrades. Hobbie grinded and gnashed his teeth, as, walking round the fastness, he could devise no means of making a forcible entry. At length he suddenly exclaimed, "And what for no do as our fathers did lang syne? Put hand to the wark, lads. Let us cut up bushes and briers, pile them before the door and set fire to them, and smoke that auld devil's dam as if she were to be reested for bacon."

All immediately closed with this proposal, and some went to work with swords and knives to cut down the alder and hawthorn bushes which grew by the side of the sluggish stream, many of which were sufficiently decayed and dried for their purpose, while others began to collect them in a large stack, properly disposed for burning, as close to the iron-grate as they could be piled. Fire was speedily obtained from one of their guns, and Hobbie was already advancing to the pile with a kindled brand, when the surly face of the robber, and the muzzle of a musquetoon, were partially shewn at a shot-hole which flanked the entrance. "Mony thanks to ye," he said, scoffingly, "for collecting sae muckle winter eilding for us: but if ye step a foot nearer it wi' that lunt, it 's be the dearest step ye ever made in your days."

"We 'll sune see that," said Hobbie, advancing fearlessly with the torch.

The marauder snapped his piece at him, which, fortunately for our honest friend, did not go off; while Earnscliff, firing at the same moment at the narrow aperture and slight mark afforded by the robber's face, grazed the side of his head with a bullet. He had apparently calculated upon his post affording him more security, for he no sooner felt the wound, though a very slight one, than he requested a parley, and demanded to know what they meant by attacking in this fashion a peaceable and honest man, and shedding his blood in that lawless manner?

"We want your prisoner," said Earnscliff, "to be delivered up to us in safety."

"And what concern have you with her?" replied the marauder.

"That," retorted Earnscliff, "you, who are detaining her by force, have no right to inquire."

"Aweel, I think I can gie a guess," said the robber. "Weel, sirs, I am laith to enter into deadly feud with you by spilling ony of your bluid,

though Earnscliff hasna stopped to shed mine — and he can hit a mark to a groat's breadth — so, to prevent mair skaith, I am willing to deliver up the prisoner, since nae less will please you."

"And Hobbie's gear?" cried Simon of Hackburn. "D' ye think you 're to be free to plunder the faulds and byres of a gentle Elliot, as if they were an auld wife's hen's-cavey?"

"As I live by bread," replied Willie of Westburnflat — "As I live by bread, I have not a single cloot o' them! They 're a' ower the march lang syne; there 's no a horn o' them about the tower. But I 'll see what o' them can be gotten back, and I 'll take this day twa days to meet Hobbie at the Castleton wi' twa friends on ilka side, and see to mak an agreement about a' the wrang he can wyte me wi."

"Ay, ay," said Elliot, "that will do weel eneugh." And then aside to his kinsman, "Murrain on the gear! Lordsake, man! say nought about them. Let us but get puir Grace out o' that auld hellicat's clutches."

"Will ye gie me your word, Earnscliff," said the marauder, who still lingered at the shot-hole, "your faith and troth, with hand and glove, that I am free to come and free to gae, with five minutes to open the grate, and five minutes to steek it and to draw the bolts? less winna do, for they want creishing sairly. Will ye do this?"

"You shall have full time," said Earnscliff; "I plight my faith and troth, my hand and my glove."

"Wait there a moment, then," said Westburnflat; "or hear ye, I wad rather ye wad fa' back a pistol-shot from the door. It 's no that I mistrust your word, Earnscliff; but it 's best to be sure."

O, friend, thought Hobbie to himself, as he drew back, an I had you but on Turner's-holm,[1] and naebody by but twa honest lads to see fair play, I wad make ye wish ye had broken your leg ere ye had touched beast or body that belonged to me!

"He has a white feather in his wing this same Westburnflat, after a'," said Simon of Hackburn, somewhat scandalized by his ready surrender.— "He 'll ne 'er fill his father's boots."

In the meanwhile, the inner door of the tower was opened, and the mother of the freebooter appeared in the space betwixt that and the outer grate. Willie himself was next seen, leading forth a female, and the old woman, carefully bolting the grate behind them, remained on the post as a sort of sentinel.

"Ony ane or twa o' ye come forward," said the outlaw, "and take her frae my hand haill and sound."

Hobbie advanced eagerly, to meet his betrothed bride. Earnscliff followed more slowly, to guard against treachery. Suddenly Hobbie slackened his pace in the deepest mortification, while that of Earnscliff was hastened by impatient surprise. It was not Grace Armstrong but Miss Isabella Vere, whose liberation had been effected by their appearance before the tower.

"Where is Grace? where is Grace Armstrong?" exclaimed Hobbie, in the extremity of wrath and indignation.

"Not in my hands," answered Westburnflat; "ye may search the tower, if ye misdoubt me."

"You false villain, you shall account for her, or die on the spot," said Elliot, presenting his gun.

But his companions, who now came up, instantly disarmed him of his weapon, exclaiming, all at once, "Hand and glove! faith and troth! Haud a care, Hobbie; we maun keep our faith wi' Westburnflat, were he the greatest rogue ever rode."

Thus protected, the outlaw recovered his audacity, which had been somewhat daunted by the menacing gesture of Elliot.

"I have kept my word, sirs," he said, "and I look to have nae wrang amang ye. If this is no the prisoner ye sought," he said, addressing Earnscliff, "ye 'll render her back to me again. I am answerable for her to those that aught her."

"For God's sake, Mr Earnscliff, protect me!" said Miss Vere clinging to her deliverer; "do not you abandon one whom the whole world seems to have abandoned."

"Fear nothing," whispered Earnscliff, "I will protect you with my life." Then turning to Westburnflat, "Villain!" he said, "how dared you insult this lady?"

"For that matter, Earnscliff," answered the freebooter, "I can answer to them that has better right to ask me than you have; but if *you* come with an armed force, and take her awa' from them that her friends lodged her wi', how will you answer *that*?— But it 's your ain affair— Nae single man can keep a tower against twenty— A' the men o' the Mearns downa do mair than they dow."

"He lies most falsely," said Isabella; "he carried me off by violence from my father."

"Maybe he only wanted ye to think sae, hinny," replied the robber; "but it 's nae business o' mine, let it be as it may.— So ye winna resign her back to me?"

"Back to you, fellow! Surely no," answered Earnscliff; "I will protect Miss Vere, and escort her safely wherever she is pleased to be conveyed."

"Ay, ay, maybe you and her hae settled that already," said Willie of Westburnflat.

"And Grace?" interrupted Hobbie, shaking himself loose from the friends who had been preaching to him the sanctity of the safe-conduct, upon the faith of which the freebooter had ventured from his tower,—"Where 's Grace?" and he rushed on the marauder, sword in hand.

Westburnflat, thus pressed, after calling out, "Godsake, Hobbie, hear me a gliff!" fairly turned his back and fled. His mother stood ready to open and shut the grate; but Hobbie struck at the freebooter as he entered with so much force, that the sword made a considerable cleft in the lintel of the vaulted door, which is still shewn as a memorial of the superior strength of those who lived in the days of yore. Ere Hobbie could repeat the blow, the door was shut and secured, and he was compelled to retreat to his companions, who were now preparing to break up the siege of Westburnflat. They insisted upon his accompanying them in their return.

"Ye hae broken truce already," said old Dick of the Dingle; "an we takna the better care, ye 'll play mair gowk's tricks, and make yoursell the

[1] There is a level meadow on the very margin of the two kingdoms, called Turner's-holm, just where the brook called Crissop joins the Liddel. It is said to have derived its name as being a place frequently assigned for tourneys, during the ancient Border times.

laughing-stock of the haill country, besides having your friends charged with slaughter under trust. Bide till the meeting at Castleton, as ye hae greed; and if he disna make ye amends, then we 'll hae it out o' his heart's blood. But let us gang reasonably to wark and keep our tryst, and I 'se warrant we get back Grace, and the kye an' a'."

This cold-blooded reasoning went ill down with the unfortunate lover ; but, as he could only obtain the assistance of his neighbours and kinsmen on their own terms, he was compelled to acquiesce in their notions of good faith and regular procedure.

Earnscliff now requested the assistance of a few of the party to convey Miss Vere to her father's castle of Ellieslaw, to which she was peremptory in desiring to be conducted. This was readily granted; and five or six young men agreed to attend him as an escort. Hobbie was not of the number. Almost heart-broken by the events of the day, and his final disappointment, he returned moodily home to take such measures as he could for the sustenance and protection of his family, and to arrange with his neighbours the farther steps which should be adopted for the recovery of Grace Armstrong. The rest of the party dispersed in different directions, as soon as they had crossed the morass. The outlaw and his mother watched them from the tower, until they entirely disappeared.

CHAPTER X.

I left my ladye 's bower last night—
It was clad in wreaths of snaw.—
I 'll seek it when the sun is bright,
And sweet the roses blaw.

Old Ballad.

Incensed at what he deemed the coldness of his friends, in a cause which interested him so nearly, Hobbie had shaken himself free of their company, and was now on his solitary road homeward. "The fiend founder thee !" said he, as he spurred impatiently his over-fatigued and stumbling horse ; "thou art like a' the rest o' them. Hae I not bred thee, and fed thee, and dressed thee wi' mine ain hand, and wouldst thou snapper now and break my neck at my utmost need ? But thou 'rt e'en like the lave—the farthest off o' them a' is my cousin ten times removed, and day or night I wad hae served them wi' my best blood ; and now, I think they shew mair regard to the common thief of Westburnflat than to their ain kinsman. But I should see the lights now in Heugh-foot—Wae 's me !" he continued, recollecting himself, "there will neither coal nor candle-light shine in the Heugh-foot ony mair ! An it werena for my mother and sisters, and poor Grace, I could find in my heart to set spurs to the beast, and loup ower the scaur into the water to make an end o 't a'."—In this disconsolate mood he turned his horse's bridle towards the cottage in which his family had found refuge.

As he approached the door, he heard whispering and tittering amongst his sisters. "The deevil 's in the women," said poor Hobbie ; "they would nicker, and laugh, and giggle, if their best friend was lying a corp—and yet I am glad they can keep up their hearts sae weel, poor silly things ; but the dirdum fa's on me, to be sure, and no on them."

While he thus meditated, he was engaged in fastening up his horse in a shed. "Thou maun do without horse-sheet and surcingle now, lad," he said, addressing the animal ; "you and me hae had a downcome alike ; we had better hae fa'en in the deepest pool o' Tarras."

He was interrupted by the youngest of his sisters, who came running out, and, speaking in a constrained voice, as if to stifle some emotion, called out to him, "What are ye doing there, Hobbie, fiddling about the naig, and there 's ane frae Cumberland been waiting here for you this hour and mair ? Haste ye in, man ; I 'll take off the saddle."

"Ane frae Cumberland !" exclaimed Elliot ; and putting the bridle of his horse into the hand of his sister, he rushed into the cottage. "Where is he ? where is he ?" he exclaimed, glancing eagerly around, and seeing only females ; "Did he bring news of Grace ?"

"He doughtna bide an instant langer," said the elder sister, still with a suppressed laugh.

"Hout fie, bairns !" said the old lady, with something of a good-humoured reproof, "ye shouldna vex your billy Hobbie that way.—Look round, my bairn, and see if there isna ane here mair than ye left this morning."

Hobbie looked eagerly round. "There 's you, and the three titties."

"There 's four of us now, Hobbie, lad," said the youngest, who at this moment entered.

In an instant Hobbie had in his arms Grace Armstrong, who, with one of his sisters' plaids around her, had passed unnoticed at his first entrance. "How dared you do this ?" said Hobbie.

"It wasna my fault," said Grace, endeavouring to cover her face with her hands to hide at once her blushes, and escape the storm of hearty kisses with which her bridegroom punished her simple stratagem,—"It wasna my fault, Hobbie ; ye should kiss Jeanie and the rest o' them, for they hae the wyte o 't."

"And so I will," said Hobbie, and embraced and kissed his sisters and grandmother a hundred times, while the whole party half-laughed, half-cried, in the extremity of their joy. "I am the happiest man," said Hobbie, throwing himself down on a seat, almost exhausted,—"I am the happiest man in the world !"

"Then, O my dear bairn," said the good old dame, who lost no opportunity of teaching her lessons of religion at those moments when the heart was best open to receive it,—"Then, O my son, give praise to Him that brings smiles out o' tears and joy out o' grief, as He brought light out o' darkness, and the world out o' naething. Was it not my word, that if ye could say His will be done, ye might hae cause to say His name be praised ?"

"It was—it was your word, grannie ; and I do praise Him for His mercy, and for leaving me a good parent when my ain were gane," said honest Hobbie, taking her hand, "that puts me in mind to think of Him, baith in happiness and distress."

There was a solemn pause of one or two minutes employed in the exercise of mental devotion, which expressed, in purity and sincerity, the gratitude of the affectionate family to that Providence who had unexpectedly restored to their embraces the friend whom they had lost.

Hobbie's first inquiries were concerning the

adventures which Grace had undergone. They were told at length, but amounted in substance to this:—That she was awaked by the noise which the ruffians made in breaking into the house, and by the resistance made by one or two of the servants, which was soon overpowered; that, dressing herself hastily, she ran down stairs, and having seen, in the scuffle, Westburnflat's vizard drop off, imprudently named him by his name, and besought him for mercy; that the ruffian instantly stopped her mouta, dragged her from the house, and placed her on horseback, behind one of his associates.

"I'll break the accursed neck of him," said Hobbie, "if there werena another Græme in the land but himsell!"

She proceeded to say, that she was carried southward along with the party, and the spoil which they drove before them, until they had crossed the Border. Suddenly a person, known to her as a kinsman of Westburnflat, came riding very fast after the marauders, and told their leader, that his cousin had learnt from a sure hand that no luck would come of it, unless the lass was restored to her friends. After some discussion, the chief of the party seemed to acquiesce. Grace was placed behind her new guardian, who pursued in silence, and with great speed, the least frequented path to the Heugh-foot, and ere evening closed, set down the fatigued and terrified damsel within a quarter of a mile of the dwelling of her friends. Many and sincere were the congratulations which passed on all sides.

As these emotions subsided, less pleasing considerations began to intrude themselves.

"This is a miserable place for ye a'," said Hobbie, looking around him; "I can sleep weel eneugh mysell outby beside the naig, as I hae done mony a lang night on the hills; but how ye are to put yoursells up, I canna see! And what 's waur, I canna mend it; and what 's waur than a', the morn may come, and the day after that, without your being a bit better off."

"It was a cowardly cruel thing," said one of the sisters, looking round, "to harry a puir family to the bare wa 's this gate."

"And leave us neither stirk nor stot," said the youngest brother, who now entered, "nor sheep nor lamb, nor aught that eats grass and corn."

"If they had ony quarrel wi' us," said Harry, the second brother, "were we na ready to have fought it out? And that we should have been a' frae hame, too,—ane and a' upon the hill—Odd, an we had been at hame, Will Græme's stamach shouldna hae wanted its morning; but it 's biding him, is it na, Hobbie?"

"Our neighbours hae taen a day at the Castleton to gree wi' him at the sight o' men," said Hobbie, mournfully; "they behoved to have it a' their ain gate, or there was nae help to be got at their hands."

"To gree wi' him!" exclaimed both his brothers at once, "after siccan an act of stouthrife as hasna been heard o' in the country since the auld riding days!"

"Very true, billies, and my blood was e'en boiling at it; but——the sight o' Grace Armstrong has settled it brawly."

"But the stocking, Hobbie?" said John Elliot; "we 're utterly ruined. Harry and I hae been to gather what was on the outby land, and there 's scarce a cloot left. I kenna how we 're to carry on—We maun a' gang to the wars, I think. Westburnflat hasna the means, e'en if he had the will, to make up our loss; there 's nae mends to be got out o' him, but what ye take out o' his banes. He has na a four-footed creature but the vicious blood thing he rides on, and that 's sair trashed wi' his night wark. We are ruined stoop and roop."

Hobbie cast a mournful glance on Grace Armstrong, who returned it with a downcast look and a gentle sigh.

"Dinna be cast down, bairns," said the grandmother, "we hae gude friends that winna forsake us in adversity. There 's Sir Thomas Kittleloof is my third cousin by the mother's side, and he has come by a hantle siller, and been made a knight-baronet into the bargain, for being ane o' the com misioners at the Union."

"He wadna gie a bodle to save us frae famishing," said Hobbie: "and, if he did, the bread that I bought wi 't would stick in my throat, when I thought it was part of the price of puir auld Scotland's crown and independence."

"There 's the Laird o' Dunder, ane o' the auldest families in Tiviotdale."

"He 's in the tolbooth, mother—he 's in the Heart of Mid-Louden for a thousand merk he borrowed from Saunders Wyliecoat the writer."

"Poor man!" exclaimed Mrs Elliot, "can we no send him something, Hobbie?"

"Ye forget, grannie, ye forget we want help oursells," said Hobbie, somewhat peevishly.

"Troth did I, hinny," replied the good-natured lady, "just at the instant; it 's sae natural to think on ane 's blude relations before themsells.—But there 's young Earnscliff."

"He has ower little o' his ain; and siccan a name to keep up, it wad be a shame," said Hobbie, "to burden him wi' our distress. And I 'll tell ye, grannie, it 's needless to sit rhyming ower the style of a' your kith, kin, and allies, as if there was a charm in their braw names to do us good; the grandees hae forgotten us, and those of our ain degree hae just little eneugh to gang on wi' themsells; ne 'er a friend hae we that can, or will, help us to stock the farm again."

"Then, Hobbie, we maun trust in Him that can raise up friends and fortune out o' the bare moor, as they say."

Hobbie sprung upon his feet. "Ye are right, grannie!" he exclaimed; "ye are right. I do ken a friend on the bare moor, that baith can and will help us—The turns o' this day hae dung my head clean hirdie-girdie. I left as muckle gowd lying on Mucklestane-Moor this morning as would plenish the house and stock the Heugh-foot twice ower, and I am certain sure Elshie wadna grudge us the use of it."

"Elshie!" said his grandmother in astonishment; "what Elshie do you mean?"

"What Elshie should I mean, but canny Elshie, the Wight o' Mucklestane," replied Hobbie.

"God forfend, my bairn, you should gang to fetch water out o' broken cisterns, or seek for relief frae them that deal wi' the Evil One! There was never luck in their gifts, nor grace in their paths. And the haill country kens that body Elshie 's an unco man. O, if there was the law, and the douce quiet administration of justice, that

makes a kingdom flourish in righteousness, the like o' them suldna be suffered to live! The wizard and the witch are the abomination and the evil thing in the land."

"Troth, mother," answered Hobbie, "ye may say what ye like, but I am in the mind that witches and warlocks havena half the power they had lang syne; at least, sure am I, that ae ill-deviser, like auld Ellieslaw, or ae ill-doer, like that d—d villain Westburnflat, is a greater plague and abomination in a country-side than a haill curnie o' the warst witches that ever capered on a broom-stick, or played cantrips on Fastern's E'en. It wad hae been lang or Elshie had burnt down my house and barns, and I am determined to try if he will do aught to build them up again. He 's weel kend a skilfu' man ower a' the country, as far as Brough under Stanmore."

"Bide a wee, my bairn; mind his benefits havena thriven wi' a' body. Jock Howden died o' the very same disorder Elshie pretended to cure him of, about the fa' o' the leaf; and though he helped Lambside's cow weel out o' the moor-ill, yet the louping-ill 's been sairer amang his sheep than ony season before. And then I have heard he uses sic words abusing human nature, that 's like a fleeing in the face of Providence; and ye mind ye said yoursell, the first time ye ever saw him, that he was mair like a bogle than a living thing."

"Hout, mother," said Hobbie, "Elshie 's no that bad a chield; he 's a grewsome spectacle for a crooked disciple, to be sure, and a rough talker, but his bark is waur than his bite; sae, if I had anes something to eat, for I havena had a morsel ower my throat this day, I wad streek mysell down for twa or three hours aside the beast, and be on and awa to Mucklestane wi' the first skreigh o' morning."

"And what for no the night, Hobbie," said Harry, "and I will ride wi' ye?"

"My naig is tired," said Hobbie.

"Ye may take mine, then," said John.

"But I am a wee thing wearied mysell."

"You wearied?" said Harry; "shame on ye! I have kend ye keep the saddle four-and-twenty hours thegither, and ne'er sic a word as weariness in your wame."

"The night 's very dark," said Hobbie, rising and looking through the casement of the cottage; "and, to speak truth, and shame the deil, though Elshie 's a real honest fallow, yet somegate I would rather take day-light wi' me when I gang to visit him."

This frank avowal put a stop to farther argument; and Hobbie, having thus compromised matters between the rashness of his brother's counsel, and the timid cautions which he received from his grandmother, refreshed himself with such food as the cottage afforded; and, after a cordial salutation all round, retired to the shed, and stretched himself beside his trusty palfrey. His brothers shared between them some trusses of clean straw, disposed in the stall usually occupied by old Annaple's cow; and the females arranged themselves for repose as well as the accommodations of the cottage would permit.

With the first dawn of morning, Hobbie arose; and, having rubbed down and saddled his horse, he set forth to Mucklestane-moor. He avoided the company of either of his brothers, from an idea that the Dwarf was most propitious to those who visited him alone.

"The creature," said he to himself, as he went along, "is no neighbourly; ae body at a time is fully mair than he weel can abide. I wonder if he 's looked out o' the crib o' him to gather up the bag o' siller. If he hasna done that, it will hae been a braw windfa' for somebody, and I 'll be finely flung. Come, Tarras," said he to his horse, striking him at the same time with his spur, "make mair fit, man; we maun be first on the field if we can."

He was now on the heath, which began to be illuminated by the beams of the rising sun; the gentle declivity which he was descending presented him a distinct, though distant view of the Dwarf's dwelling. The door opened, and Hobbie witnessed with his own eyes that phenomenon which he had frequently heard mentioned. Two human figures (if that of the Dwarf could be termed such) issued from the solitary abode of the Recluse, and stood as if in converse together in the open air. The taller form then stooped, as if taking something up which lay beside the door of the hut, then both moved forward a little way, and again halted, as in deep conference. All Hobbie's superstitious terrors revived on witnessing this spectacle. That the Dwarf would open his dwelling to a mortal guest, was as improbable as that any one would choose voluntarily to be his nocturnal visiter; and, under full conviction that he beheld a wizard holding intercourse with his familiar spirit, Hobbie pulled in at once his breath and his bridle, resolved not to incur the indignation of either by a hasty intrusion on their conference. They were probably aware of his approach, for he had not halted for a moment before the Dwarf returned to his cottage; and the taller figure who had accompanied him, glided round the enclosure of the garden, and seemed to disappear from the eyes of the admiring Hobbie.

"Saw ever mortal the like o' that!" said Elliot; "but my case is desperate, sae, if he were Beelzebub himsell, I'se venture down the brae on him."

Yet, notwithstanding his assumed courage, he slackened his pace, when, nearly upon the very spot where he had last seen the tall figure, he discerned, as if lurking among the long heather, a small black rough-looking object, like a terrier dog.

"He has nae dog that ever I heard of," said Hobbie, "but mony a deil about his hand — Lord forgie me for saying sic a word!— It keeps its grund, be what it like —I 'm judging it 's a badger; but whae kens what shapes thae bogles will take to fright a body? it will maybe start up like a lion or a crocodile when I come nearer. I'se e'en drive a stane at it, for if it change its shape when I 'm ower near, Tarras will never stand it; and it will be ower muckle to hae him and the deil to fight wi' baith at ance."

He therefore cautiously threw a stone at the object, which continued motionless. "It 's nae living thing, after a'," said Hobbie, approaching, "but the very bag o' siller he flung out o' the window yesterday! and that other queer lang creature has just brought it sae muckle farther on the way to me. He then advanced and lifted the heavy fur pouch, which was quite full of gold. "Mercy on us!" said Hobbie, whose heart fluttered between glee at the revival of his hopes and prospects in

life, and suspicion of the purpose for which this assistance was afforded him — "Mercy on us! it 's an awfu' thing to touch what has been sae lately in the claws of something no canny. I canna shake mysell loose o' the belief that there has been some jookery paukery of Satan's in a' this; but I am determined to conduct mysell like an honest man and a good Christian, come o't what will."

He advanced accordingly to the cottage door, and having knocked repeatedly without receiving any answer, he at length elevated his voice and addressed the inmate of the hut. "Elshie! Father Elshie! I ken ye 're within doors, and wauking, for I saw ye at the door-cheek as I cam ower the bent; will ye come out and speak just a gliff to ane that has mony thanks to gie ye?—It was a' true ye tell'd me about Westburnflat; but he 's sent back Grace safe and skaithless, sae there 's nae ill happened yet but what may be suffered or sustained. Wad ye but come out a gliff, man, or but say ye 're listening? Aweel, since ye winna answer, I'se e'en proceed wi' my tale. Ye see I hae been thinking it wad be a sair thing on twa young folk, like Grace and me, to put aff our marriage for mony years till I was abroad and came back again wi' some gear; and they say folk maunna take booty in the wars as they did lang syne, and the queen's pay is a sma' matter; there 's nae gathering gear on that — and then my grandame 's auld — and my sisters wad sit peengin' at the ingle-side for want o' me to ding them about — and Earnscliff, or the neighbourhood, or maybe your ain sell, Elshie, might want some good turn that Hob Elliot could do ye — and it 's a pity that the auld house o' the Heugh-foot should be wrecked a'thegither. Sae I was thinking —— but deil hae me, that I should say sae," continued he, checking himself, "if I can bring mysell to ask a favour of ane that winna sae muckle as ware a word on me, to tell me if he hears me speaking till him."

"Say what thou wilt — do what thou wilt," answered the Dwarf from his cabin, "but begone, and leave me at peace."

"Weel, weel," replied Elliot, "since ye are willing to hear me, I'se make my tale short. Since ye are sae kind as to say ye are content to lend me as muckle siller as will stock and plenish the Heugh-foot, I am content, on my part, to accept the courtesy wi' mony kind thanks; and troth, I think it will be as safe in my hands as yours, if ye leave it flung about in that gate for the first loon body to lift, forbye the risk o' bad neighbours that can win through steekit doors and lockfast places, as I can tell to my cost. I say, since ye hae sae muckle consideration for me, I'se be blithe to accept your kindness; and my mother and me (she 's a liferenter, and I am fiar, o' the lands o' Wideopen) would grant you a wadset, or an heritable bond, for the siller, and to pay the annual-rent half-yearly; and Saunders Wyliecoat to draw the bond, and you to be at nae charge wi' the writings."

"Cut short thy jargon, and begone," said the Dwarf; "thy loquacious bull-headed honesty makes thee a more intolerable plague than the light-fingered courtier who would take a man's all without troubling him with either thanks, explanation, or apology. Hence, I say, thou art one of those tame slaves whose word is as good as their bond. Keep the money, principal and interest, until I demand it of thee."

"But," continued the pertinacious Borderer, "we are a' life-like and death-like, Elshie, and there really should be some black and white on this transaction. Sae just make me a minute, or missive, in ony form ye like, and I'se write it fair ower, and subscribe it before famous witnesses. Only, Elshie, I wad wuss ye to pit naething in 't that may be prejudicial to my salvation; for I 'll hae the minister to read it ower, and it wad only be exposing yoursell to nae purpose. And now I 'm ganging awa, for ye 'll be wearied o' my cracks, and I am wearied wi' cracking without an answer — and I 'se bring ye a bit o' bride's-cake ane o' thae days, and maybe bring Grace to see you. Ye wad like to see Grace, man, for as dour as ye are — Eh, Lord! I wish he may be weel, that was a sair grane! or, maybe he thought I was speaking of heavenly grace, and no of Grace Armstrong. Poor man, I am very doubtfu' o' his condition; but I am sure he is as kind to me as if I were his son, and a queer-looking father I wad hae had, if that had been e 'en sae."

Hobbie now relieved his benefactor of his presence, and rode blithely home to display his treasure, and consult upon the means of repairing the damage which his fortune had sustained through the aggression of the Red Reiver of Westburnflat.

CHAPTER XI.

> Three ruffians seized me yester morn,
> Alas! a maiden most forlorn;
> They choked my cries with wicked might,
> And bound me on a palfrey white:
> As sure as Heaven shall pity me,
> I cannot tell what men they be.
>
> *Christabelle.*

The course of our story must here revert a little, to detail the circumstances which had placed Miss Vere in the unpleasant situation from which she was unexpectedly, and indeed unintentionally liberated, by the appearance of Earnscliff and Elliot, with their friends and followers, before the Tower of Westburnflat.

On the morning preceding the night in which Hobbie's house was plundered and burnt, Miss Vere was requested by her father to accompany him in a walk through a distant part of the romantic grounds which lay round his castle of Ellieslaw. "To hear was to obey," in the true style of Oriental despotism; but Isabella trembled in silence while she followed her father through rough paths, now winding by the side of the river, now ascending the cliffs which serve for its banks. A single servant, selected perhaps for his stupidity, was the only person who attended them. From her father's silence, Isabella little doubted that he had chosen this distant and sequestered scene to resume the argument which they had so frequently maintained upon the subject of Sir Frederick's addresses, and that he was meditating in what manner he should most effectually impress upon her the necessity of receiving him as her suitor. But her fears seemed for some time to be unfounded. The only sentences which her father from time to time addressed to her, respected the beauties of the romantic landscape through which

they strolled, and which varied its features at every step. To these observations, although they seemed to come from a heart occupied by more gloomy as well as more important cares, Isabella endeavoured to answer in a manner as free and unconstrained as it was possible for her to assume, amid the involuntary apprehensions which crowded upon her imagination.

Sustaining with mutual difficulty a desultory conversation, they at length gained the centre of a small wood, composed of large oaks, intermingled with birches, mountain-ashes, hazel, holly, and a variety of underwood. The boughs of the tall trees met closely above and the underwood filled up each interval between their trunks below. The spot on which they stood was rather more open; still, however, embowered under the natural arcade of tall trees, and darkened on the sides for a space around by a great and lively growth of copse-wood and bushes.

"And here, Isabella," said Mr Vere, as he pursued the conversation, so often resumed, so often dropped, "here I would erect an altar to Friendship."

"To Friendship, sir!" said Miss Vere; "and why on this gloomy and sequestered spot, rather than elsewhere?"

"O, the propriety of the *locale* is easily vindicated," replied her father, with a sneer. "You know, Miss Vere, (for you, I am well aware, are a learned young lady,) you know, that the Romans were not satisfied with embodying, for the purpose of worship, each useful quality and moral virtue to which they could give a name; but they, moreover, worshipped the same under each variety of titles and attributes which could give a distinct shade, or individual character, to the virtue in question. Now, for example, the Friendship to whom a temple should be here dedicated, is not Masculine Friendship, which abhors and despises duplicity, art, and disguise; but Female Friendship, which consists in little else than a mutual disposition on the part of the friends, as they call themselves, to abet each other in obscure fraud and petty intrigue."

"You are severe, sir," said Miss Vere.

"Only just," said her father; "a humble copier I am from nature, with the advantage of contemplating two such excellent studies as Lucy Ilderton and yourself."

"If I have been unfortunate enough to offend, sir, I can conscientiously excuse Miss Ilderton from being either my counsellor or confidant."

"Indeed! how came you, then," said Mr Vere, "by the flippancy of speech, and pertness of argument, by which you have disgusted Sir Frederick, and given me of late such deep offence?"

"If my manner has been so unfortunate as to displease you, sir, it is impossible for me to apologize too deeply, or too sincerely; but I cannot confess the same contrition for having answered Sir Frederick flippantly when he pressed me rudely. Since he forgot I was a lady, it was time to shew him that I am at least a woman."

"Reserve, then, your pertness for those who press you on the topic, Isabella," said her father coldly; "for my part, I am weary of the subject, and will never speak upon it again."

"God bless you, my dear father," said Isabella, seizing his reluctant hand; "there is nothing you can impose on me, save the task of listening to this man's persecution, that I will call, or think, a hardship."

"You are very obliging, Miss Vere, when it happens to suit you to be dutiful," said her unrelenting father, forcing himself at the same time from the affectionate grasp of her hand; "but henceforward, child, I shall save myself the trouble of offering you unpleasant advice on any topic. You must look to yourself."

At this moment four ruffians rushed upon them. Mr Vere and his servant drew their hangers, which it was the fashion of the time to wear, and attempted to defend themselves and protect Isabella. But while each of them was engaged by an antagonist, she was forced into the thicket by the two remaining villains, who placed her and themselves on horses which stood ready behind the copse-wood. They mounted at the same time, and, placing her between them, set off at a round gallop, holding the reins of her horse on each side. By many an obscure and winding path, over dale and down, through moss and moor, she was conveyed to the tower of Westburnflat, where she remained strictly watched, but not otherwise ill-treated, under the guardianship of the old woman, to whose son that retreat belonged. No entreaties could prevail upon the hag to give Miss Vere any information on the object of her being carried forcibly off, and confined in this secluded place. The arrival of Earnscliff, with a strong party of horsemen, before the tower, alarmed the robber. As he had already directed Grace Armstrong to be restored to her friends, it did not occur to him that this unwelcome visit was on her account; and seeing at the head of the party, Earnscliff, whose attachment to Miss Vere was whispered in the country, he doubted not that her liberation was the sole object of the attack upon his fastness. The dread of personal consequences compelled him to deliver up his prisoner in the manner we have already related.

At the moment the tramp of horses was heard which carried off the daughter of Ellieslaw, her father fell to the earth, and his servant, a stout young fellow, who was gaining ground on the ruffian with whom he had been engaged, left the combat to come to his master's assistance, little doubting that he had received a mortal wound. Both the villains immediately desisted from farther combat, and, retreating into the thicket, mounted their horses, and went off at full speed after their companions. Meantime, Dixon had the satisfaction to find Mr Vere not only alive, but unwounded. He had overreached himself, and stumbled, it seemed, over the root of a tree, in making too eager a blow at his antagonist. The despair he felt at his daughter's disappearance, was, in Dixon's phrase, such as would have melted the heart of a whin stane, and he was so much exhausted by his feelings, and the vain researches which he made to discover the track of the ravishers, that a considerable time elapsed ere he reached home, and communicated the alarm to his domestics.

All his conduct and gestures were those of a desperate man.

"Speak not to me, Sir Frederick," he said impatiently; "you are no father—she was my child, an ungrateful one, I fear, but still my child—my only child. Where is Miss Ilderton? she must know something of this. It corresponds with what

I was informed of her schemes. Go, Dixon, call Ratcliffe here—Let him come without a minute's delay."

The person he had named at this moment entered the room.

"I say, Dixon," continued Mr Vere, in an altered tone, "let Mr Ratcliffe know, I beg the favour of his company on particular business.—Ah! my dear sir," he proceeded, as if noticing him for the first time, "you are the very man whose advice can be of the utmost service to me in this cruel extremity."

"What has happened, Mr Vere, to discompose you?" said Mr Ratcliffe, gravely; and while the Laird of Ellieslaw details to him, with the most animated gestures of grief and indignation, the singular adventure of the morning, we shall take the oppportunity to inform our readers of the relative circumstances in which these gentlemen stood to each other.

In early youth, Mr Vere of Ellieslaw had been remarkable for a career of dissipation, which, in advanced life, he had exchanged for the no less destructive career of dark and turbulent ambition. In both cases he had gratified the predominant passion without respect to the diminution of his private fortune, although, where such inducements were wanting, he was deemed close, avaricious, and grasping. His affairs being much embarrassed by his earlier extravagance, he went to England, where he was understood to have formed a very advantageous matrimonial connection. He was many years absent from his family estate. Suddenly and unexpectedly he returned a widower, bringing with him his daughter, then a girl of about ten years old. From this moment his expense seemed unbounded, in the eyes of the simple inhabitants of his native mountains. It was supposed he must necessarily have plunged himself deeply in debt. Yet he continued to live in the same lavish expense, until some months before the commencement of our narrative, when the public opinion of his embarrassed circumstances was confirmed, by the residence of Mr Ratcliffe at Ellieslaw Castle, who, by the tacit consent, though obviously to the great displeasure, of the lord of the mansion, seemed, from the moment of his arrival, to assume and exercise a predominant and unaccountable influence in the management of his private affairs.

Mr Ratcliffe was a grave, steady, reserved man, in an advanced period of life. To those with whom he had occasion to speak upon business, he appeared uncommonly well versed in all its forms. With others he held little communication; but in any casual intercourse or conversation, displayed the powers of an active and well-informed mind. For some time before taking up his final residence at the castle, he had been an occasional visiter there, and was at such times treated by Mr Vere (contrary to his general practice towards those who were inferior to him in rank) with marked attention, and even deference. Yet his arrival always appeared to be an embarrassment to his host, and his departure a relief; so that, when he became a constant inmate of the family, it was impossible not to observe indications of the displeasure with which Mr Vere regarded his presence. Indeed, their intercourse formed a singular mixture of confidence and constraint. Mr Vere's most important affairs were regulated by Mr Ratcliffe; and although he was none of those indulgent men of fortune, who, too indolent to manage their own business, are glad to devolve it upon another, yet, in many instances, he was observed to give up his own judgment, and submit to the contrary opinions which Mr Ratcliffe did not hesitate distinctly to express.

Nothing seemed to vex Mr Vere more than when strangers indicated any observation of the state of tutelage under which he appeared to labour. When it was noticed by Sir Frederick, or any of his intimates, he sometimes repelled their remarks haughtily and indignantly, and sometimes endeavoured to evade them, by saying, with a forced laugh, "That Ratcliffe knew his own importance, but that he was the most honest and skilful fellow in the world; and that it would be impossible for him to manage his English affairs without his advice and assistance." Such was the person who entered the room at the moment Mr Vere was summoning him to his presence, and who now heard with surprise, mingled with obvious incredulity, the hasty narrative of what had befallen Isabella.

Her father concluded, addressing Sir Frederick and the other gentlemen, who stood around in astonishment, "And now, my friends, you see the most unhappy father in Scotland. Lend me your assistance, gentlemen—give me your advice, Mr Ratcliffe. I am incapable of acting, or thinking, under the unexpected violence of such a blow."

"Let us take our horses, call our attendants, and scour the country in pursuit of the villains," said Sir Frederick.

"Is there no one whom you can suspect," said Ratcliffe, gravely, "of having some motive for this strange crime? These are not the days of romance, when ladies are carried off merely for their beauty."

"I fear," said Mr Vere, "I can too well account for this strange incident. Read this letter, which Miss Lucy Ilderton thought fit to address from my house of Ellieslaw to young Mr Earnscliff, whom, of all men, I have a hereditary right to call my enemy. You see she writes to him as the confidant of a passion which he has the assurance to entertain for my daughter; tells him she serves his cause with her friend very ardently, but that he has a friend in the garrison who serves him yet more effectually. Look particularly at the pencilled passages, Mr Ratcliffe, where this meddling girl recommends bold measures, with an assurance that his suit would be successful any where beyond the bounds of the barony of Ellieslaw."

"And you argue, from this romantic letter of a very romantic young lady, Mr Vere," said Ratcliffe, "that young Earnscliff has carried off your daughter, and committed a very great and criminal act of violence, on no better advice and assurance than that of Miss Lucy Ilderton?"

"What else can I think?" said Ellieslaw.

"What else *can* you think?" said Sir Frederick; "or who else could have any motive for committing such a crime?"

"Were that the best mode of fixing the guilt," said Mr Ratcliffe, calmly, "there might easily be pointed out persons to whom such actions are more congenial, and who have also sufficient motives of instigation. Supposing it were judged advisable to remove Miss Vere to some place in which constraint might be exercised upon her inclinations to a degree which cannot at present be attempted under the roof of Ellieslaw Castle—What says Sir Frederick Langley to that supposition?"

"I say," returned Sir Frederick, "that although Mr Vere may choose to endure in Mr Ratcliffe freedoms totally inconsistent with his situation in life, I will not permit such licence of innuendo, by word or look, to be extended to me, with impunity."

"And I say," said young Mareschal of Mareschal-Wells, who was also a guest at the castle, "that you are all stark-mad to be standing wrangling here, instead of going in pursuit of the ruffians."

"I have ordered off the domestics already in the track most likely to overtake them," said Mr Vere; "if you will favour me with your company, we will follow them, and assist in the search."

The efforts of the party were totally unsuccessful, probably because Ellieslaw directed the pursuit to proceed in the direction of Earnscliff-Tower, under the supposition that the owner would prove to be the author of the violence, so that they followed a direction diametrically opposite to that in which the ruffians had actually proceeded. In the evening they returned, harassed and out of spirits. But other guests had, in the meanwhile, arrived at the castle; and, after the recent loss sustained by the owner had been related, wondered at, and lamented, the recollection of it was, for the present, drowned in the discussion of deep political intrigues, of which the crisis and explosion were momentarily looked for.

Several of the gentlemen who took part in this divan were Catholics, and all of them stanch Jacobites, whose hopes were at present at the highest pitch, as an invasion, in favour of the Pretender, was daily expected from France, which Scotland, between the defenceless state of its garrisons and fortified places, and the general disaffection of the inhabitants, was rather prepared to welcome than to resist. Ratcliffe, who neither sought to assist at their consultations on this subject, nor was invited to do so, had, in the meanwhile, retired to his own apartment. Miss Ilderton was sequestered from society in a sort of honourable confinement, "until," said Mr Vere, "she should be safely conveyed home to her father's house," an opportunity for which occurred on the following day.

The domestics could not help thinking it remarkable how soon the loss of Miss Vere, and the strange manner in which it had happened, seemed to be forgotten by the other guests at the castle. They knew not, that those the most interested in her fate were well acquainted with the cause of her being carried off, and the place of her retreat; and that the others, in the anxious and doubtful moments which preceded the breaking forth of a conspiracy, were little accessible to any feelings but what arose immediately out of their own machinations.

CHAPTER XII.

Some one way, some another—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her?

THE researches after Miss Vere were (for the sake of appearances, perhaps) resumed on the succeeding day, with similar bad success, and the party were returning towards Ellieslaw in the evening.

"It is singular," said Mareschal to Ratcliffe, "that four horsemen and a female prisoner should have passed through the country without leaving the slightest trace of their passage. One would think they had traversed the air, or sunk through the ground."

"Men may often," answered Ratcliffe, "arrive at the knowledge of that which *is*, from discovering that which is *not*. We have now scoured every road, path, and track leading from the castle, in all the various points of the compass, saving only that intricate and difficult pass which leads southward down the Westburn, and through the morasses."

"And why have we not examined that?" said Mareschal.

"O, Mr Vere can best answer that question," replied his companion dryly.

"Then I will ask it instantly," said Mareschal; and, addressing Mr Vere, "I am informed, sir," said he, "there is a path we have not examined, leading by Westburnflat."

"O," said Sir Frederick, laughing, "we know the owner of Westburnflat well—a wild lad, that knows little difference between his neighbour's goods and his own; but, withal, very honest to his principles: He would disturb nothing belonging to Ellieslaw."

"Besides," said Mr Vere, smiling mysteriously, "he had other tow on his distaff last night. Have you not heard young Elliot of the Heugh-foot has had his house burnt, and his cattle driven away, because he refused to give up his arms to some honest men that think of starting for the king?"

The company smiled upon each other, as at hearing of an exploit which favoured their own views.

"Yet, nevertheless," resumed Mareschal, "I think we ought to ride in this direction also, otherwise we shall certainly be blamed for our negligence."

No reasonable objection could be offered to this proposal, and the party turned their horses' heads towards Westburnflat.

They had not proceeded very far in that direction when the trampling of horses was heard, and a small body of riders were perceived advancing to meet them.

"There comes Earnscliff," said Mareschal; "I know his bright bay with the star in his front."

"And there is my daughter along with him," exclaimed Vere, furiously. "Who shall call my suspicions false or injurious now? Gentlemen—friends—lend me the assistance of your swords for the recovery of my child."

He unsheathed his weapon, and was imitated by Sir Frederick and several of the party, who prepared to charge those that were advancing towards them. But the greater part hesitated.

"They come to us in all peace and security," said Mareschal-Wells; "let us first hear what account they give us of this mysterious affair. If Miss Vere has sustained the slightest insult or injury from Earnscliff, I will be the first to revenge her; but let us hear what they say."

"You do me wrong by your suspicions, Mareschal," continued Vere; "you are the last I would have expected to hear express them."

"You injure yourself, Ellieslaw, by your violence, though the cause may excuse it."

He then advanced a little before the rest, and

called out, with a loud voice,—"Stand, Mr Earnscliff; or do you and Miss Vere advance alone to meet us. You are charged with having carried that lady off from her father's house; and we are here in arms to shed our best blood for her recovery, and for bringing to justice those who have injured her."

"And who would do that more willingly than I, Mr Mareschal?" said Earnscliff, haughtily,—"than I, who had the satisfaction this morning to liberate her from the dungeon in which I found her confined, and who am now escorting her back to the castle of Ellieslaw?"

"Is this so, Miss Vere?" said Mareschal.

"It is," answered Isabella, eagerly,—"it is so; for Heaven's sake sheathe your swords. I will swear by all that is sacred, that I was carried off by ruffians, whose persons and object were alike unknown to me, and am now restored to freedom by means of this gentleman's gallant interference."

"By whom, and wherefore, could this have been done?" pursued Mareschal.—"Had you no knowledge of the place to which you were conveyed?—Earnscliff, where did you find this lady?"

But ere either question could be answered, Ellieslaw advanced, and, returning his sword to the scabbard, cut short the conference.

"When I know," he said, "exactly how much I owe to Mr Earnscliff, he may rely on suitable acknowledgments; meantime," taking the bridle of Miss Vere's horse, "thus far I thank him for replacing my daughter in the power of her natural guardian."

A sullen bend of the head was returned by Earnscliff with equal haughtiness; and Ellieslaw, turning back with his daughter upon the road to his own house, appeared engaged with her in a conference so earnest, that the rest of the company judged it improper to intrude by approaching them too nearly. In the meantime, Earnscliff, as he took leave of the other gentlemen, belonging to Ellieslaw's party, said aloud, "Although I am unconscious of any circumstance in my conduct that can authorize such a suspicion, I cannot but observe, that Mr Vere seems to believe that I have had some hand in the atrocious violence which has been offered to his daughter. I request you, gentlemen, to take notice of my explicit denial of a charge so dishonourable; and that, although I can pardon the bewildering feelings of a father in such a moment, yet, if any other gentleman" (he looked hard at Sir Frederick Langley) "thinks my word and that of Miss Vere, with the evidence of my friends who accompany me, too slight for my exculpation, I will be happy—most happy—to repel the charge, as becomes a man who counts his honour dearer than his life."

"And I 'll be his second," said Simon of Hackburn, "and take up ony twa o' ye, gentle or semple, laird or loon; it 's a' ane to Simon."

"Who is that rough-looking fellow?" said Sir Frederick Langley, "and what has he to do with the quarrels of gentlemen?"

"I 'se be a lad frae the Hie Te'iot," said Simon, "and I 'se quarrel wi' ony body I like, except the king, or the laird I live under."

"Come," said Mareschal, "let us have no brawls.—Mr Earnscliff, although we do not think alike in some things, I trust we may be opponents, even enemies, if fortune will have it so, without losing our respect for birth, fair-play, and each other. I believe you as innocent of this matter as I am myself; and I will pledge myself that my cousin Ellieslaw, as soon as the perplexity attending these sudden events has left his judgment to its free exercise, shall handsomely acknowledge the very important service you have this day rendered him."

"To have served your cousin is a sufficient reward in itself.—Good evening, gentlemen," continued Earnscliff, "I see most of your party are already on their way to Ellieslaw."

Then saluting Mareschal with courtesy, and the rest of the party with indifference, Earnscliff turned his horse and rode towards the Heugh-foot, to concert measures with Hobbie Elliot for farther researches after his bride, of whose restoration to her friends he was still ignorant.

"There he goes," said Mareschal; "he is a fine, gallant young fellow, upon my soul; and yet I should like well to have a thrust with him on the green turf. I was reckoned at college nearly his equal with the foils, and I should like to try him at sharps."

"In my opinion," answered Sir Frederick Langley, "we have done very ill in having suffered him, and those men who are with him, to go off without taking away their arms; for the Whigs are very likely to draw to a head under such a sprightly young fellow as that."

"For shame, Sir Frederick!" exclaimed Mareschal; "do you think that Ellieslaw could, in honour, consent to any violence being offered to Earnscliff, when he entered his bounds only to bring back his daughter? or, if he were to be of your opinion, do you think that I, and the rest of these gentlemen, would disgrace ourselves by assisting in such a transaction? No, no, fair play and auld Scotland for ever! When the sword is drawn, I will be as ready to use it as any man; but while it is in the sheath, let us behave like gentlemen and neighbours."

Soon after this colloquy they reached the castle, when Ellieslaw, who had been arrived a few minutes before, met them in the court-yard.

"How is Miss Vere? and have you learned the cause of her being carried off?" asked Mareschal hastily.

"She is retired to her apartment greatly fatigued; and I cannot expect much light upon her adventure till her spirits are somewhat recruited," replied her father. "She and I were not the less obliged to you, Mareschal, and to my other friends, for their kind inquiries. But I must suppress the father's feelings for a while to give myself up to those of the patriot. You know this is the day fixed for our final decision—time presses—our friends are arriving, and I have opened house, not only for the gentry, but for the under spur-leathers whom we must necessarily employ. We have, therefore, little time to prepare to meet them.—Look over these lists, Marchie (an abbreviation by which Mareschal-Wells was known among his friends.) Do you, Sir Frederick, read these letters from Lothian and the west—all is ripe for the sickle, and we have but to summon out the reapers."

"With all my heart," said Mareschal; "the more mischief the better sport."

Sir Frederick looked grave and disconcerted.

"Walk aside with me, my good friend," said

Ellieslaw to the sombre baronet; "I have something for your private ear, with which I know you will be gratified."

They walked into the house, leaving Ratcliffe and Mareschal standing together in the court.

"And so," said Ratcliffe, "the gentlemen of your political persuasion think the downfall of this government so certain, that they disdain even to throw a decent disguise over the machinations of their party?"

"Faith, Mr Ratcliffe," answered Mareschal, "the actions and sentiments of *your* friends may require to be veiled, but I am better pleased that ours can go barefaced."

"And is it possible," continued Ratcliffe, "that you, who, notwithstanding your thoughtlessness and heat of temper (I beg pardon, Mr Mareschal, I am a plain man)—that you, who, notwithstanding these constitutional defects, possess natural good sense and acquired information, should be infatuated enough to embroil yourself in such desperate proceedings? How does your head feel when you are engaged in these dangerous conferences?"

"Not quite so secure on my shoulders," answered Mareschal, "as if I were talking of hunting and hawking. I am not of so indifferent a mould as my cousin Ellieslaw, who speaks treason as if it were a child's nursery rhymes, and loses and recovers that sweet girl, his daughter, with a good deal less emotion on both occasions, than would have affected me had I lost and recovered a greyhound puppy. My temper is not quite so inflexible, nor my hate against government so inveterate, as to blind me to the full danger of the attempt."

"Then why involve yourself in it?" said Ratcliffe.

"Why, I love this poor exiled king with all my heart; and my father was an old Killiecrankie-man, and I long to see some amends on the Unionist courtiers, that have bought and sold old Scotland, whose crown has been so long independent."

"And for the sake of these shadows," said his monitor, "you are going to involve your country in war, and yourself in trouble?"

"*I* involve? No!—but, trouble for troubie, I had rather it came to-morrow than a month hence. *Come*, I know, it will; and, as your country folks say, better soon than syne—it will never find me younger—and as for hanging, as Sir John Falstaff says, I can become a gallows as well as another. You know the end of the old ballad;

> "Sae dauntonly, sae wantonly,
> Sae rantingly gaed he,
> He play'd a spring, and danced a round,
> Beneath the gallows tree."

"Mr Mareschal, I am sorry for you," said his grave adviser.

"I am obliged to you, Mr Ratcliffe; but I would not have you judge of our enterprise by my way of vindicating it; there are wiser heads than mine at the work."

"Wiser heads than yours may lie as low," said Ratcliffe, in a warning tone.

"Perhaps so; but no lighter heart shall; and, to prevent it being made heavier by your remonstrances, I will bid you adieu, Mr Ratcliffe, till dinner-time, when you shall see that my apprehensions have not spoiled my appetite."

CHAPTER XIII.

> To face the garment of rebellion
> With some fine colour, that may please the eye
> Of fickle changelings, and poor discontents,
> Which gape and rub the elbow at the news
> Of hurlyburly innovation.
>
> *Henry the Fourth, Part II.*

THERE had been great preparations made at Ellieslaw Castle for the entertainment on this important day, when not only the gentlemen of note in the neighbourhood, attached to the Jacobite interest, were expected to rendezvous, but also many subordinate malcontents, whom difficulty of circumstances, love of change, resentment against England, or any of the numerous causes which inflamed men's passions at the time, rendered apt to join in perilous enterprise. The men of rank and substance were not many in number; for almost all the large proprietors stood aloof, and most of the smaller gentry and yeomanry were of the Presbyterian persuasion, and therefore, however displeased with the Union, unwilling to engage in a Jacobite conspiracy. But there were some gentlemen of property, who, either from early principle, from religious motives, or sharing the ambitious views of Ellieslaw, had given countenance to his scheme; and there were, also, some fiery young men, like Mareschal, desirous of signalizing themselves by engaging in a dangerous enterprise, by which they hoped to vindicate the independence of their country. The other members of the party were persons of inferior rank and desperate fortunes, who were now ready to rise in that part of the country, as they did afterwards in the year 1715, under Forster and Derwentwater, when a troop, commanded by a Border gentleman, named Douglas, consisted almost entirely of freebooters, among whom the notorious Luck-in-a-bag, as he was called, held a distinguished command. We think it necessary to mention these particulars, applicable solely to the province in which our scene lies; because, unquestionably, the Jacobite party in the other parts of the kingdom, consisted of much more formidable as well as much more respectable materials.

One long table extended itself down the ample hall of Ellieslaw Castle, which was still left much in the state in which it had been one hundred years before, stretching, that is, in gloomy length, along the whole side of the castle, vaulted with ribbed arches of freestone, the groins of which sprung from projecting figures, that, carved into all the wild forms which the fantastic imagination of a Gothic architect could devise, grinned, frowned, and gnashed their tusks, at the assembly below. Long narrow windows lighted the banqueting room on both sides, filled up with stained glass, through which the sun emitted a dusky and discoloured light. A banner, which tradition averred to have been taken from the English at the battle of Sark, waved over the chair in which Ellieslaw presided, as if to inflame the courage of the guests, by reminding them of ancient victories over their neighbours. He himself, a portly figure, dressed on this occasion with uncommon care, and with features, which, though of a stern and sinister expression, might well be termed handsome, looked the old feudal baron extremely well. Sir Frederick Langley was placed on

his right hand, and Mr Mareschal of Mareschal-Wells on his left. Some gentlemen of consideration, with their sons, brothers, and nephews, were seated at the upper end of the table, and among these Mr Ratcliffe had his place. Beneath the salt-cellar (a massive piece of plate which occupied the midst of the table) sate the *sine nomine turba*, men whose vanity was gratified by holding even this subordinate space at the social board, while the distinction observed in ranking them was a salvo to the pride of their superiors. That the lower house was not very select must be admitted, since Willie of Westburnflat was one of the party. The unabashed audacity of this fellow, in daring to present himself in the house of a gentleman, to whom he had just offered so flagrant an insult, can only be accounted for by supposing him conscious that his share in carrying off Miss Vere was a secret, safe in her possession and that of her father.

Before this numerous and miscellaneous party was placed a dinner, consisting, not indeed of the delicacies of the season, as the newspapers express it, but of viands, ample, solid, and sumptuous, under which the very board groaned. But the mirth was not in proportion to the good cheer. The lower end of the table were, for some time, chilled by constraint and respect, on finding themselves members of so august an assembly; and those who were placed around it had those feelings of awe with which P. P., clerk of the parish, describes himself oppressed, when he first uplifted the psalm in presence of those persons of high worship, the wise Mr Justice Freeman, the good Lady Jones, and the great Sir Thomas Truby. This ceremonious frost, however, soon gave way before the incentives to merriment, which were liberally supplied, and as liberally consumed by the guests of the lower description. They became talkative, loud, and even clamorous in their mirth.

But it was not in the power of wine or brandy to elevate the spirits of those who held the higher places at the banquet. They experienced the chilling revulsion of spirits which often takes place, when men are called upon to take a desperate resolution, after having placed themselves in circumstances where it is alike difficult to advance or to recede. The precipice looked deeper and more dangerous as they approached the brink, and each waited with an inward emotion of awe, expecting which of his confederates would set the example by plunging himself down. This inward sensation of fear and reluctance acted differently, according to the various habits and characters of the company. One looked grave; another looked silly; a third gazed with apprehension on the empty seats at the higher end of the table, designed for members of the conspiracy whose prudence had prevailed over their political zeal, and who had absented themselves from their consultations at this critical period; and some seemed to be reckoning up in their minds the comparative rank and prospects of those who were present and absent. Sir Frederick Langley was reserved, moody, and discontented. Ellieslaw himself made such forced efforts to raise the spirits of the company, as plainly marked the flagging of his own. Ratcliffe watched the scene with the composure of a vigilant but uninterested spectator. Mareschal alone, true to the thoughtless vivacity of his character, eat and drank, laughed and jested, and seemed even to find amusement in the embarrassment of the company.

"What has damped our noble courage this morning?" he exclaimed. "We seem to be met at a funeral, where the chief mourners must not speak above their breath, while the mutes and the saulies (looking to the lower end of the table) are carousing below. Ellieslaw, when will you *lift*?[1] where sleeps your spirit, man? and what has quelled the high hope of the Knight of Langley-dale?"

"You speak like a madman," said Ellieslaw; "do you not see how many are absent?"

"And what of that?" said Mareschal. "Did you not know before, that one-half of the world are better talkers than doers? For my part, I am much encouraged by seeing at least two-thirds of our friends true to the rendezvous, though I suspect one-half of these came to secure the dinner in case of the worst."

"There is no news from the coast which can amount to certainty of the King's arrival," said another of the company, in that tone of subdued and tremulous whisper which implies a failure of resolution.

"Not a line from the Earl of D——, nor a single gentleman from the southern side of the Border," said a third.

"Who is he that wishes for more men from England," exclaimed Mareschal, in a theatrical tone of affected heroism,

> 'My cousin Ellieslaw? No, my fair cousin,
> If we are doom'd to die' ——"

"For God's sake," said Ellieslaw, "spare us your folly at present, Mareschal."

"Well, then," said his kinsman, "I'll bestow my wisdom upon you instead, such as it is. If we have gone forward like fools, do not let us go back like cowards. We have done enough to draw upon us both the suspicion and vengeance of the government; do not let us give up before we have done something to deserve it. What, will no one speak? Then I'll leap the ditch the first." And, starting up, he filled a beer-glass to the brim with claret, and waving his hand, commanded all to follow his example, and to rise up from their seats. All obeyed—the more qualified guests as if passively, the others with enthusiasm. "Then, my friends, I give you the pledge of the day,—The independence of Scotland, and the health of our lawful sovereign, King James the Eighth, now landed in Lothian, and, as I trust and believe, in full possession of his ancient capital!"

He quaffed off the wine, and threw the glass over his head.

"It should never," he said, "be profaned by a meaner toast."

All followed his example, and, amid the crash of glasses and the shouts of the company, pledged themselves to stand or fall with the principles and political interest which their toast expressed.

"You have leaped the ditch with a witness," said Ellieslaw, apart to Mareschal; "but I believe it is all for the best: at all events, we cannot now retreat from our undertaking. One man alone" (looking at Ratcliffe) "has refused the pledge; but of that by and by."

[1] To *lift*, meaning to lift the coffin, is the common expression for commencing a funeral.

Then, rising up, he addressed the company in a style of inflammatory invective against the government and its measures, but especially the Union; a treaty, by means of which, he affirmed, Scotland had been at once cheated of her independence, her commerce, and her honour, and laid as a fettered slave at the foot of the rival, against whom, through such a length of ages, through so many dangers, and by so much blood, she had honourably defended her rights. This was touching a theme which found a responsive chord in the bosom of every man present.

"Our commerce is destroyed," hollowed old John Rewcastle, a Jedburgh smuggler, from the lower end of the table.

"Our agriculture is ruined," said the Laird of Broken-girth-flow, a territory, which, since the days of Adam, had borne nothing but ling and whortle-berries.

"Our religion is cut up, root and branch," said the pimple-nosed pastor of the Episcopal meeting-house at Kirkwhistle.

"We shall shortly neither dare shoot a deer nor kiss a wench, without a certificate from the presbytery and kirk-treasurer," said Mareschal-Wells.

"Or make a brandy jeroboam in a frosty morning, without licence from a commissioner of excise," said the smuggler.

"Or ride over the fell in a moonless night," said Westburnflat, "without asking leave of young Earnscliff, or some Englified justice of the peace: thae were gude days on the Border when there was neither peace nor justice heard of."

"Let us remember our wrongs at Darien and Glencoe," continued Ellieslaw, "and take arms for the protection of our rights, our fortunes, our lives, and our families."

"Think upon genuine episcopal ordination, without which there can be no lawful clergy," said the divine.

"Think of the piracies committed on our East-Indian trade by Green and the English thieves," said William Willieson, half-owner, and sole skipper of a brig that made four voyages annually between Cockpool and Whitehaven.

"Remember your liberties," rejoined Mareschal, who seemed to take a mischievous delight in precipitating the movements of the enthusiasm which he had excited, like a roguish boy, who, having lifted the sluice of a mill-dam, enjoys the clatter of the wheels which he has put in motion, without thinking of the mischief he may have occasioned. "Remember your liberties," he exclaimed; "confound cess, press, and presbytery, and the memory of old Willie that first brought them upon us!"

"Damn the gauger!" echoed old John Rewcastle; "I 'll cleave him wi' my ain hand."

"And confound the country-keeper and the constable!" reechoed Westburnflat; "I 'll weize a brace of balls through them before morning."

"We are agreed, then," said Ellieslaw, when the shouts had somewhat subsided, "to bear this state of things no longer?"

"We are agreed to a man," answered his guests.

"Not literally so," said Mr Ratcliffe; "for though I cannot hope to assuage the violent symptoms which seem so suddenly to have seized upon the company, yet I beg to observe, that so far as the opinion of a single member goes, I do not entirely coincide in the list of grievances which has been announced, and that I do utterly protest against the frantic measures which you seem disposed to adopt for removing them. I can easily suppose much of what has been spoken may have arisen out of the heat of the moment, or have been said perhaps in jest. But there are some jests of a nature very apt to transpire; and you ought to remember, gentlemen, that stone-walls have ears."

"Stone-walls may have ears," returned Ellieslaw, eyeing him with a look of triumphant malignity, "but domestic spies, Mr Ratcliffe, will soon find themselves without any, if any such dares to continue his abode in a family where his coming was an unauthorized intrusion, where his conduct has been that of a presumptuous meddler, and from which his exit shall be that of a baffled knave, if he does not know how to take a hint."

"Mr Vere," returned Ratcliffe, with calm contempt, "I am fully aware, that as soon as my presence becomes useless to you, which it must through the rash step you are about to adopt, it will immediately become unsafe to myself, as it has always been hateful to you. But I have one protection, and it is a strong one; for you would not willingly hear me detail before gentlemen, and men of honour, the singular circumstances in which our connection took its rise. As to the rest, I rejoice at its conclusion; and as I think that Mr Mareschal and some other gentlemen, will guarantee the safety of my ears and of my throat (for which last I have more reason to be apprehensive) during the course of the night, I shall not leave your castle till to-morrow morning."

"Be it so, sir," replied Mr Vere; "you are entirely safe from my resentment, because you are beneath it, and not because I am afraid of your disclosing any family secrets, although, for your own sake, I warn you to beware how you do so. Your agency and intermediation can be of little consequence to one who will win or lose all, as lawful right or unjust usurpation shall succeed in the struggle that is about to ensue. Farewell, sir."

Ratcliffe arose, and cast upon him a look, which Vere seemed to sustain with difficulty, and, bowing to those around him, left the room.

This conversation made an impression on many of the company, which Ellieslaw hastened to dispel, by entering upon the business of the day. Their hasty deliberations went to organize an immediate insurrection. Ellieslaw, Mareschal, and Sir Frederick Langley, were chosen leaders, with powers to direct their farther measures. A place of rendezvous was appointed, at which all agreed to meet early on the ensuing day, with such followers and friends to the cause as each could collect around him. Several of the guests retired to make the necessary preparations; and Ellieslaw made a formal apology to the others, who, with Westburnflat and the old smuggler, continued to ply the bottle stanchly, for leaving the head of the table, as he must necessarily hold a separate and sober conference with the coadjutors whom they had associated with him in the command. The apology was the more readily accepted, as he prayed them, at the same time, to continue to amuse themselves with such refreshments as the cellars of the castle afforded. Shouts of applause followed their retreat; and the names of Vere, Langley, and, above all, of Mareschal, were thundered forth in chorus,

and bathed with copious bumpers repeatedly, during the remainder of the evening.

When the principal conspirators had retired into a separate apartment, they gazed on each other for a minute with a sort of embarrassment, which, in Sir Frederick's dark features, amounted to an expression of discontented sullenness. Mareschal was the first to break the pause, saying, with a loud burst of laughter,—"Well! we are fairly embarked now, gentlemen—*vogue la galère!*"

"We may thank you for the plunge," said Ellieslaw.

"Yes; but I don't know how far you will thank me," answered Mareschal, "when I shew you this letter, which I received just before we sat down. My servant told me it was delivered by a man he had never seen before, who went off at the gallop, after charging him to put it into my own hand."

Ellieslaw impatiently opened the letter, and read aloud—

Edinburgh, ——.

HOND. SIR,

Having obligations to your family, which shall be nameless, and learning that you are one of the company of adventurers doing business for the house of James and Company, late merchants in London, now in Dunkirk, I think it right to send you this early and private information, that the vessels you expected have been driven off the coast, without having been able to break bulk, or to land any part of their cargo; and that the west-country partners have resolved to withdraw their name from the firm, as it must prove a losing concern. Having good hope you will avail yourself of this early information, to do what is needful for your own security, I rest your humble servant,

NIHIL NAMELESS.

For RALPH MARESCHAL, *of Mareschal-Wells*
—These, with care and speed.

Sir Frederick's jaw dropped, and his countenance blackened, as the letter was read, and Ellieslaw exclaimed,—"Why, this affects the very mainspring of our enterprise. If the French fleet, with the King on board, has been chased off by the English, as this d—d scrawl seems to intimate, where are we?"

"Just where we were this morning, I think," said Mareschal, still laughing.

"Pardon me, and a truce to your ill-timed mirth, Mr Mareschal; this morning we were not committed publicly, as we now stand committed by your own mad act, when you had a letter in your pocket apprizing you that our undertaking was desperate."

"Ay, ay, I expected you would say so. But, in the first place, my friend Nihil Nameless and his letter may be all a flam; and, moreover, I would have you know that I am tired of a party that does nothing but form bold resolutions over night, and sleep them away with their wine before morning. The government are now unprovided of men and ammunition; in a few weeks they will have enough of both: the country is now in a flame against them; in a few weeks, betwixt the effects of self-interest, of fear, and of lukewarm indifference, which are already so visible, this first fervour will be as cold as Christmas. So, as I was determined to go the vole, I have taken care you shall dip as deep as I; it signifies nothing plunging. You are fairly in the bog, and must struggle through."

"You are mistaken with respect to one of us, Mr Mareschal," said Sir Frederick Langley; and, applying himself to the bell, he desired the person who entered to order his servants and horses instantly.

"You must not leave us, Sir Frederick," said Ellieslaw; "we have our musters to go over."

"I will go to-night, Mr Vere," said Sir Frederick, "and write you my intentions in this matter when I am at home."

"Ay," said Mareschal, "and send them by a troop of horse from Carlisle to make us prisoners? Look ye, Sir Frederick, I for one will neither be deserted nor betrayed; and if you leave Ellieslaw Castle to-night, it shall be by passing over my dead body."

"For shame! Mareschal," said Mr Vere, "how can you so hastily misinterpret our friend's intentions? I am sure Sir Frederick can only be jesting with us; for, were he not too honourable to dream of deserting the cause, he cannot but remember the full proofs we have of his accession to it, and his eager activity in advancing it. He cannot but be conscious, besides, that the first information will be readily received by government, and that if the question be, which can first lodge intelligence of the affair, we can easily save a few hours on him."

"You should say *you*, and not we, when you talk of priorities in such a race of treachery; for my part, I won't enter my horse for such a plate," said Mareschal; and added betwixt his teeth, "A pretty pair of fellows to trust a man's neck with!"

"I am not to be intimidated from doing what I think proper," said Sir Frederick Langley; "and my first step shall be to leave Ellieslaw. I have no reason to keep faith with one" (looking at Vere) "who has kept none with me."

"In what respect," said Ellieslaw, silencing, with a motion of his hand, his impetuous kinsman —"how have I disappointed you, Sir Frederick?"

"In the nearest and most tender point—you have trifled with me concerning our proposed alliance, which you well knew was the gage of our political undertaking. This carrying off and this bringing back of Miss Vere,—the cold reception I have met with from her, and the excuses with which you cover it, I believe to be mere evasions, that you may yourself retain possession of the estates which are her's by right, and make me, in the meanwhile, a tool in your desperate enterprise, by holding out hopes and expectations which you are resolved never to realize."

"Sir Frederick, I protest, by all that is sacred——"

"I will listen to no protestations; I have been cheated with them too long," answered Sir Frederick.

"If you leave us," said Ellieslaw, "you cannot but know both your ruin and ours is certain; all depends on our adhering together."

"Leave me to take care of myself," returned the knight; "but were what you say true, I would rather perish than be fooled any farther."

"Can nothing—no surety convince you of my sincerity?" said Ellieslaw, anxiously; "this morning I should have repelled your unjust suspicions as an insult; but situated as we now are——"

"You feel yourself compelled to be sincere?" retorted Sir Frederick. "If you would have me think so, there is but one way to convince me of it—let your daughter bestow her hand on me this evening."

"So soon?—impossible," answered Vere; "think of her late alarm—of our present undertaking."

"I will listen to nothing but to her consent, plighted at the altar. You have a chapel in the castle—Doctor Hobbler is present among the company—this proof of your good faith to-night, and we are again joined in heart and hand. If you refuse me when it is so much for your advantage to consent, how shall I trust you to-morrow, when I shall stand committed in your undertaking, and unable to retract?"

"And am I to understand, that, if you can be made my son-in-law to-night, our friendship is renewed?" said Ellieslaw.

"Most infallibly, and most inviolably," replied Sir Frederick.

"Then," said Vere, "though what you ask is premature, indelicate, and unjust towards my character, yet, Sir Frederick, give me your hand—my daughter shall be your wife."

"This night?"

"This very night," replied Ellieslaw, "before the clock strikes twelve."

"With her own consent, I trust," said Mareschal; "for I promise you both, gentlemen, I will not stand tamely by, and see any violence put on the will of my pretty kinswoman."

"Another pest in this hot-headed fellow," muttered Ellieslaw; and then aloud, "With her own consent? For what do you take me, Mareschal, that you should suppose your interference necessary to protect my daughter against her father? Depend upon it, she has no repugnance to Sir Frederick Langley."

"Or rather to be called Lady Langley? faith, like enough—there are many women might be of her mind; and I beg your pardon, but these sudden demands and concessions alarmed me a little on her account."

"It is only the suddenness of the proposal that embarrasses me," said Ellieslaw; "but perhaps if she is found intractable, Sir Frederick will consider——"

"I will consider nothing, Mr Vere—your daughter's hand to-night, or I depart, were it at midnight—there is my ultimatum."

"I embrace it," said Ellieslaw, "and I will leave you to talk upon our military preparations, while I go to prepare my daughter for so sudden a change of condition."

So saying, he left the company.

CHAPTER XIV.

He brings Earl Osmond to receive my vows.
O dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty Osmond.
Tancred and Sigismunda.

Mr Vere, whom long practice of dissimulation had enabled to model his very gait and footsteps to aid the purposes of deception, walked along the stone passage, and up the first flight of steps towards Miss Vere's apartment, with the alert, firm, and steady pace of one, who is bound, indeed, upon important business, but who entertains no doubt he can terminate his affairs satisfactorily. But when out of hearing of the gentlemen whom he had left, his step became so slow and irresolute, as to correspond with his doubts and his fears. At length he paused in an antechamber to collect his ideas, and form his plan of argument, before approaching his daughter.

"In what more hopeless and inextricable dilemma was ever an unfortunate man involved!"—Such was the tenor of his reflections.—"If we now fall to pieces by disunion, there can be little doubt that the government will take my life as the prime agitator of the insurrection. Or, grant I could stoop to save myself by a hasty submission, am I not, even in that case, utterly ruined? I have broken irreconcileably with Ratcliffe, and can have nothing to expect from that quarter but insult and persecution. I must wander forth an impoverished and dishonoured man, without even the means of sustaining life, far less wealth sufficient to counterbalance the infamy which my countrymen, both those whom I desert and those whom I join, will attach to the name of the political renegade. It is not to be thought of. And yet, what choice remains between this lot and the ignominious scaffold? Nothing can save me but reconciliation with these men; and, to accomplish this, I have promised to Langley that Isabella shall marry him ere midnight, and to Mareschal, that she shall do so without compulsion. I have but one remedy betwixt me and ruin—her consent to take a suitor whom she dislikes, upon such short notice as would disgust her, even were he a favoured lover—But I must trust to the romantic generosity of her disposition; and let me paint the necessity of her obedience ever so strongly, I cannot overcharge its reality."

Having finished this sad chain of reflections upon his perilous condition, he entered his daughter's apartment with every nerve bent up to the support of the argument which he was about to sustain. Though a deceitful and ambitious man, he was not so devoid of natural affection but that he was shocked at the part he was about to act, in practising on the feelings of a dutiful and affectionate child; but the recollections, that, if he succeeded, his daughter would only be trepanned into an advantageous match, and that, if he failed, he himself was a lost man, were quite sufficient to drown all scruples.

He found Miss Vere seated by the window of her dressing-room, her head reclining on her hand, and either sunk in slumber, or so deeply engaged in meditation, that she did not here the noise he made at his entrance. He approached with his features composed to a deep expression of sorrow and sympathy, and, sitting down beside her, solicited her attention by quietly taking her hand, a motion which he did not fail to accompany with a deep sigh.

"My father!" said Isabella, with a sort of start which expressed at least as much fear, as joy or affection.

"Yes, Isabella," said Vere, "your unhappy father, who comes now as a penitent to crave forgiveness of his daughter for an injury done to her in the excess of his affection, and then to take leave of her for ever."

"Sir? Offence to me! Take leave for ever! What does all this mean?" said Miss Vere.

"Yes, Isabella, I am serious. But first let me ask you, have you no suspicion that I may have been privy to the strange chance which befell you yesterday morning?"

"You, sir?" answered Isabella, stammering between a consciousness that he had guessed her thoughts justly, and the shame as well as fear which forbade her to acknowledge a suspicion so degrading and so unnatural.

"Yes!" he continued, "your hesitation confesses that you entertained such an opinion, and I have now the painful task of acknowledging that your suspicions have done me no injustice. But listen to my motives. In an evil hour I countenanced the addresses of Sir Frederick Langley, conceiving it impossible that you could have any permanent objections to a match where the advantages were, in most respects, on your side. In a worse, I entered with him into measures calculated to restore our banished monarch, and the independence of my country. He has taken advantage of my unguarded confidence, and now has my life at his disposal."

"Your life, sir!" said Isabella, faintly.

"Yes, Isabella," continued her father, "the life of him who gave life to you. So soon as I foresaw the excesses into which his headlong passion (for, to do him justice, I believe his unreasonable conduct arises from excess of attachment to you) was likely to hurry him, I endeavoured, by finding a plausible pretext for your absence for some weeks, to extricate myself from the dilemma in which I am placed. For this purpose I wished, in case your objections to the match continued insurmountable, to have sent you privately for a few months to the convent of your maternal aunt at Paris. By a series of mistakes you have been brought from the place of secrecy and security which I had destined for your temporary abode. Fate has baffled my last chance of escape, and I have only to give you my blessing, and send you from the castle with Mr Ratcliffe, who now leaves it; my own fate will soon be decided."

"Good Heaven, sir! can this be possible?" exclaimed Isabella. "O, why was I freed from the restraint in which you placed me? or why did you not impart your pleasure to me?"

"Think an instant, Isabella. Would you have had me prejudice, in your opinion, the friend I was most desirous of serving, by communicating to you the injurious eagerness with which he pursued his object? Could I do so honourably, having promised to assist his suit?—But it is all over. I and Mareschal have made up our minds to die like men; it only remains to send you from hence under a safe escort."

"Great powers! and is there no remedy?" said the terrified young woman.

"None, my child," answered Vere, gently, "unless one which you would not advise your father to adopt—to be the first to betray his friends."

"O, no! no!" she answered, abhorrently yet hastily, as if to reject the temptation which the alternative presented to her. "But is there no other hope—through flight—through mediation—through supplication?—I will bend my knee to Sir Frederick!"

"It would be a fruitless degradation: he is determined on his course, and I am equally resolved to stand the hazard of my fate. On one condition only he will turn aside from his purpose, and that condition my lips shall never utter to you."

"Name it, I conjure you, my dear father!" exclaimed Isabella. "What *can* he ask that we ought not to grant, to prevent the hideous catastrophe with which you are threatened?"

"That, Isabella," said Vere, solemnly, "you shall never know, until your father's head has rolled on the bloody scaffold; then, indeed, you will learn there was one sacrifice by which he might have been saved."

"And why not speak it now?" said Isabella; "do you fear I would flinch from the sacrifice of fortune for your preservation? or would you bequeath me the bitter legacy of life-long remorse, so oft as I shall think that you perished, while there remained one mode of preventing the dreadful misfortune that overhangs you?"

"Then, my child," said Vere, "since you press me to name what I would a thousand times rather leave in silence, I must inform you that he will accept for ransom nothing but your hand in marriage, and that conferred before midnight this very evening!"

"This evening, sir!" said the young lady, struck with horror at the proposal—"and to such a man!—A man!—a monster, who could wish to win the daughter by threatening the life of the father—it is indeed impossible."

"You say right, my child," answered her father, "it is indeed impossible; nor have I either the right or the wish to exact such a sacrifice—It is the course of nature that the old should die and be forgot, and the young should live and be happy."

"My father die, and his child can save him!—but no—no—my dear father, pardon me, it is impossible; you only wish to guide me to your wishes. I know your object is what you think my happiness, and this dreadful tale is only told to influence my conduct and subdue my scruples."

"My daughter," replied Ellieslaw, in a tone where offended authority seemed to struggle with parental affection, "my child suspects me of inventing a false tale to work upon her feelings! Even this I must bear, and even from this unworthy suspicion I must descend to vindicate myself. You know the stainless honour of your cousin Mareschal—mark what I shall write to him, and judge from his answer, if the danger in which we stand is not real, and whether I have not used every means to avert it."

He sate down, wrote a few lines hastily, and handed them to Isabella, who, after repeated and painful efforts, cleared her eyes and head sufficiently to discern their purport.

"Dear cousin," said the billet, "I find my daughter, as I expected, in despair at the untimely and premature urgency of Sir Frederick Langley. She cannot even comprehend the peril in which we stand, or how much we are in his power—Use your influence with him, for Heaven's sake, to modify proposals, to the acceptance of which I cannot, and will not, urge my child against all her own feelings, as well as those of delicacy and propriety, and oblige your loving cousin,—R. V."

In the agitation of the moment, when her swimming eyes and dizzy brain could hardly comprehend the sense of what she looked upon, it is not surpris-

ing that Miss Vere should have omitted to remark that this letter seemed to rest her scruples rather upon the form and time of the proposed union, than on a rooted dislike to the suitor proposed to her. Mr Vere rang the bell, and gave the letter to a servant to be delivered to Mr Mareschal, and, rising from his chair, continued to traverse the apartment in silence and in great agitation until the answer was returned. He glanced it over, and wrung the hand of his daughter as he gave it to her. The tenor was as follows : —

" My dear kinsman, I have already urged the knight on the point you mention, and I find him as fixed as Cheviot. I am truly sorry my fair cousin should be pressed to give up any of her maidenly rights. Sir Frederick consents, however, to leave the castle with me the instant the ceremony is performed, and we will raise our followers and begin the fray. Thus there is great hope the bridegroom may be knocked on the head before he and the bride can meet again, so Bell has a fair chance to be Lady Langley *à très bon marché*. For the rest, I can only say, that if she can make up her mind to the alliance at all — it is no time for mere maiden ceremony — my pretty cousin must needs consent to marry in haste, or we shall all repent at leisure, or rather have very little leisure to repent ; which is all at present from him who rests your affectionate kinsman,—R. M."

" P.S.—Tell Isabella that I would rather cut the knight's throat after all, and end the dilemma that way, than see her constrained to marry him against her will."

When Isabella had read this letter, it dropped from her hand, and she would, at the same time, have fallen from her chair, had she not been supported by her father.

" My God, my child will die !" exclaimed Vere, the feelings of nature overcoming, even in *his* breast, the sentiments of selfish policy ; " look up, Isabella — look up, my child — come what will, you shall not be the sacrifice — I will fall myself with the consciousness I leave you happy—My child may weep on my grave, but she shall not — not in this instance —reproach my memory." He called a servant.—" Go, bid Ratcliffe come hither directly."

During this interval, Miss Vere became deadly pale, clenched her hands, pressing the palms strongly together, closed her eyes, and drew her lips with strong compression, as if the severe constraint which she put upon her internal feelings extended even to her muscular organization. Then raising her head, and drawing in her breath strongly ere she spoke, she said with firmness, —" Father, I consent to the marriage."

" You shall not — you shall not, — my child — my dear child — you shall not embrace certain misery to free me from uncertain danger."

So exclaimed Ellieslaw ; and, strange and inconsistent beings that we are ! he expressed the real though momentary feelings of his heart.

" Father," repeated Isabella, " I will consent to this marriage."

" No, my child, no — not now at least — we will humble ourselves to obtain delay from him ; and yet, Isabella, could you overcome a dislike which has no real foundation, think, in other respects, what a match ! — wealth — rank — importance."

" Father," reiterated Isabella, " I have consented."

It seemed as if she had lost the power of saying any thing else, or even of varying the phrase which, with such effort, she had compelled herself to utter.

" Heaven bless thee, my child ! — Heaven bless thee ! — And it *will* bless thee with riches, with pleasure, with power."

Miss Vere faintly entreated to be left by herself for the rest of the evening.

" But will you not receive Sir Frederick ?" said her father anxiously.

" I will meet him," she replied, " I will meet him — when I must, and where I must ; but spare me now."

" Be it so, my dearest ; you shall know no restraint that I can save you from. Do not think too hardly of Sir Frederick for this,— it is an excess of passion."

Isabella waved her hand impatiently.

" Forgive me, my child — I go — Heaven bless thee. At eleven — if you call me not before — at eleven I come to seek you."

When he left Isabella she dropt upon her knees —" Heaven aid me to support the resolution I have taken — Heaven only can — O, poor Earnscliff ! who shall comfort him ? and with what contempt will he pronounce her name, who listened to him to-day and gave herself to another at night ! But let him despise me — better so than that he should know the truth—Let him despise me ; if it will but lessen his grief, I should feel comfort in the loss of his esteem."

She wept bitterly ; attempting in vain, from time to time, to commence the prayer for which she had sunk on her knees, but unable to calm her spirits sufficiently for the exercise of devotion. As she remained in this agony of mind, the door of her apartment was slowly opened.

CHAPTER XV.

> The darksome cave they enter, where they found
> The woful man, low sitting on the ground,
> Musing full sadly in his sullen mind.
>
> *Faëry Queen.*

The intruder on Miss Vere's sorrows was Ratcliffe. Ellieslaw had, in the agitation of his mind, forgotten to countermand the order he had given to call him thither, so that he opened the door with the words, " You sent for me, Mr Vere." Then looking around—" Miss Vere, alone ! on the ground ! and in tears !"

" Leave me—leave me, Mr Ratcliffe," said the unhappy young lady.

" I must not leave you," said Ratcliffe ; " I have been repeatedly requesting admittance to take my leave of you, and have been refused, until your father himself sent for me. Blame me not, if I am bold and intrusive ; I have a duty to discharge which makes me so."

" I cannot listen to you — I cannot speak to you, Mr Ratcliffe ; take my best wishes, and for God's sake leave me."

" Tell me only," said Ratcliffe, " is it true that this monstrous match is to go forward, and this very night ? I heard the servants proclaim it as I was on the great staircase — I heard the directions given to clear out the chapel."

"Spare me, Mr Ratcliffe," replied the luckless bride; "and from the state in which you see me, judge of the cruelty of these questions."

"Married! to Sir Frederick Langley! and this night! It must not—cannot—shall not be."

"It *must* be, Mr Ratcliffe, or my father is ruined."

"Ah! I understand," answered Ratcliffe; "and you have sacrificed yourself to save him who—But let the virtue of the child atone for the faults of the father—it is no time to rake them up. What *can* be done? Time presses—I know but one remedy—with four-and-twenty hours I might find many—Miss Vere, you must implore the protection of the only human being who has it in his power to control the course of events which threatens to hurry you before it."

"And what human being," answered Miss Vere, "has such power?"

"Start not when I name him," said Ratcliffe, coming near her, and speaking in a low but distinct voice. "It is he who is called Elshender the Recluse of Mucklestane-Moor."

"You are mad, Mr Ratcliffe, or you mean to insult my misery by an ill-timed jest!"

"I am as much in my senses, young lady," answered her adviser, "as you are; and I am no idle jester, far less with misery, least of all with your misery. I swear to you that this being (who is other far than what he seems) actually possesses the means of redeeming you from this hateful union."

"And of ensuring my father's safety?"

"Yes! even that," said Ratcliffe, "if you plead his cause with him—yet how to obtain admittance to the Recluse."

"Fear not that," said Miss Vere, suddenly recollecting the incident of the rose; "I remember he desired me to call upon him for aid in my extremity, and gave me this flower as a token. Ere it faded away entirely, I would need, he said, his assistance: is it possible his words can have been aught but the ravings of insanity?"

"Doubt it not—fear it not—but above all," said Ratcliffe, "let us lose no time—Are you at liberty, and unwatched?"

"I believe so," said Isabella; "but what would you have me to do?"

"Leave the castle instantly," said Ratcliffe, "and throw yourself at the feet of this extraordinary man, who, in circumstances that seem to argue the extremity of the most contemptible poverty, possesses yet an almost absolute influence over your fate.—Guests and servants are deep in their carouse—the leaders sitting in conclave on their treasonable schemes—my horse stands ready in the stable—I will saddle one for you, and meet you at the little garden-gate—O, let no doubt of my prudence or fidelity prevent your taking the only step in your power to escape the dreadful fate which must attend the wife of Sir Frederick Langley."

"Mr Ratcliffe," said Miss Vere, "you have always been esteemed a man of honour and probity, and a drowning wretch will always catch at the feeblest twig,—I will trust you—I will follow your advice—I will meet you at the garden-gate."

She bolted the outer-door of her apartment as soon as Mr Ratcliffe left her, and descended to the garden by a separate stair of communication which opened to her dressing-room. On the way she felt inclined to retract the consent she had so hastily given to a plan so hopeless and extravagant. But as she passed in her descent a private door which entered into the chapel from the back stair, she heard the voice of the female servants as they were employed in the task of cleaning it.

"Married! and to sae bad a man—Ewhow, sirs! ony thing rather than that."

"They are right—they are right," said Miss Vere, "any thing rather than that."

She hurried to the garden. Mr Ratcliffe was true to his appointment—the horses stood saddled at the garden-gate, and in a few minutes they were advancing rapidly towards the hut of the Solitary.

While the ground was favourable, the speed of their journey was such as to prevent much communication; but when a steep ascent compelled them to slacken their pace, a new cause of apprehension occurred to Miss Vere's mind.

"Mr Ratcliffe," she said, pulling up her horse's bridle, "let us prosecute no farther a journey which nothing but the extreme agitation of my mind can vindicate my having undertaken—I am well aware that this man passes among the vulgar as being possessed of supernatural powers, and carrying on an intercourse with beings of another world; but I would have you aware I am neither to be imposed on by such follies, nor, were I to believe in their existence, durst I, with my feelings of religion, apply to this being in my distress."

"I should have thought, Miss Vere," replied Ratcliffe, "my character and habits of thinking were so well known to you, that you might have held me exculpated from crediting in such absurdity."

"But in what other mode," said Isabella, "can a being, so miserable himself in appearance, possess the power of assisting me?"

"Miss Vere," said Ratcliffe, after a momentary pause, "I am bound by a solemn oath of secrecy—You must, without farther explanation, be satisfied with my pledged assurance, that he does possess the power, if you can inspire him with the will; and that, I doubt not, you will be able to do."

"Mr Ratcliffe," said Miss Vere, "you may yourself be mistaken; you ask an unlimited degree of confidence from me."

"Recollect, Miss Vere," he replied, "that when, in your humanity, you asked me to interfere with your father in favour of Haswell and his ruined family—when you requested me to prevail on him to do a thing most abhorrent to his nature—to forgive an injury and remit a penalty—I stipulated that you should ask me no questions concerning the sources of my influence—You found no reason to distrust me then, do not distrust me now."

"But the extraordinary mode of life of this man," said Miss Vere; "his seclusion—his figure—the deepness of misanthropy which he is said to express in his language—Mr Ratcliffe, what can I think of him if he really possesses the powers you ascribe to him?"

"This man, young lady, was bred a Catholic, a sect which affords a thousand instances of those who have retired from power and affluence to voluntary privations more strict even than his."

"But he avows no religious motive," replied Miss Vere.

"No," replied Ratcliffe; "disgust with the world has operated his retreat from it without assuming

the veil of superstition. Thus far I may tell you—he was born to great wealth, which his parents designed should become greater by his union with a kinswoman, whom for that purpose they bred up in their own house. You have seen his figure; judge what the young lady must have thought of the lot to which she was destined—Yet, habituated to his appearance, she shewed no reluctance, and the friends of —— of the person whom I speak of, doubted not that the excess of his attachment, the various acquisitions of his mind, his many and amiable qualities, had overcome the natural horror which his destined bride must have entertained at an exterior so dreadfully inauspicious."

"And did they judge truly?" said Isabella.

"You shall hear. He, at least, was fully aware of his own deficiency; the sense of it haunted him like a phantom. 'I am,' was his own expression to me,—I mean to a man whom he trusted,—'I am, in spite of what you would say, a poor miserable outcast, fitter to have been smothered in the cradle than to have been brought up to scare the world in which I crawl.' The person whom he addressed in vain endeavoured to impress him with the indifference to external form, which is the natural result of philosophy, or entreat him to recall the superiority of mental talents to the more attractive attributes that are merely personal. 'I hear you,' he would reply; 'but you speak the voice of cold-blooded stoicism, or, at least, of friendly partiality. But look at every book which we have read, those excepted of that abstract philosophy which feels no responsive voice in our natural feelings. Is not personal form, such as at least can be tolerated without horror and disgust, always represented as essential to our ideas of a friend, far more a lover? Is not such a mis-shapen monster as I am, excluded, by the very fiat of Nature, from her fairest enjoyments? What but my wealth prevents all—perhaps even Letitia, or you—from shunning me as something foreign to your nature, and more odious, by bearing that distorted resemblance to humanity which we observe in the animal tribes that are more hateful to man because they seem his caricature?'"

"You repeat the sentiments of a madman," said Miss Vere.

"No," replied her conductor, "unless a morbid and excessive sensibility on such a subject can be termed insanity. Yet I will not deny that this governing feeling and apprehension carried the person who entertained it, to lengths which indicated a deranged imagination. He appeared to think that it was necessary for him, by exuberant, and not always well-chosen instances of liberality, and even profusion, to unite himself to the human race, from which he conceived himself naturally dissevered. The benefits which he bestowed, from a disposition naturally philanthropical in an uncommon degree, were exaggerated by the influence of the goading reflection, that more was necessary from him than from others,—lavishing his treasures as if to bribe mankind to receive him into their class. It is scarcely necessary to say, that the bounty which flowed from a source so capricious was often abused, and his confidence frequently betrayed. These disappointments, which occur to all, more or less, and most to such as confer benefits without just discrimination, his diseased fancy set down to the hatred and contempt excited by his personal deformity.—But I fatigue you, Miss Vere?"

"No, by no means; I—I could not prevent my attention from wandering an instant; pray proceed."

"He became at length," continued Ratcliffe, "the most ingenious self-tormentor of whom I have ever heard; the scoff of the rabble, and the sneer of the yet more brutal vulgar of his own rank, was to him agony and breaking on the wheel. He regarded the laugh of the common people whom he passed on the street, and the suppressed titter, or yet more offensive terror, of the young girls to whom he was introduced in company, as proofs of the true sense which the world entertained of him, as a prodigy unfit to be received among them on the usual terms of society, and as vindicating the wisdom of his purpose in withdrawing himself from among them. On the faith and sincerity of two persons alone, he seemed to rely implicitly—on that of his betrothed bride, and of a friend eminently gifted in personal accomplishments, who seemed, and indeed probably was, sincerely attached to him. He ought to have been so at least, for he was literally loaded with benefits by him whom you are now about to see. The parents of the subject of my story died within a short space of each other. Their death postponed the marriage, for which the day had been fixed. The lady did not seem greatly to mourn this delay,—perhaps that was not to have been expected; but she intimated no change of intention, when, after a decent interval, a second day was named for their union. The friend of whom I spoke was then a constant resident at the Hall. In an evil hour, at the earnest request and entreaty of this friend, they joined a general party, where men of different political opinions were mingled, and where they drank deep. A quarrel ensued; the friend of the Recluse drew his sword with others, and was thrown down and disarmed by a more powerful antagonist. They fell in the struggle at the feet of the Recluse, who, maimed and truncated as his form appears, possesses, nevertheless, great strength, as well as violent passions. He caught up a sword, pierced the heart of his friend's antagonist, was tried, and his life, with difficulty, redeemed from justice at the expense of a year's close imprisonment, the punishment of manslaughter. The incident affected him most deeply, the more that the deceased was a man of excellent character, and had sustained gross insult and injury ere he drew his sword. I think, from that moment, I observed—I beg pardon—The fits of morbid sensibility which had tormented this unfortunate gentleman, were rendered henceforth more acute by remorse, which he, of all men, was least capable of having incurred, or of sustaining when it became his unhappy lot. His paroxysms of agony could not be concealed from the lady to whom he was betrothed; and it must be confessed they were of an alarming and fearful nature. He comforted himself, that, at the expiry of his imprisonment, he could form with his wife and friend a society, encircled by which he might dispense with more extensive communication with the world. He was deceived; before that term elapsed, his friend and his betrothed bride were man and wife. The effects of a shock so dreadful on an ardent temperament, a disposition already soured by bitter remorse, and loosened by the indulgence of a gloomy imagination from the rest of mankind, I cannot describe to you; it was as if the last cable

at which the vessel rode had suddenly parted, and left her abandoned to all the wild fury of the tempest. He was placed under medical restraint. As a temporary measure this might have been justifiable; but his hard-hearted friend, who in consequence of his marriage, was now his nearest ally, prolonged his confinement, in order to enjoy the management of his immense estates. There was one who owed his all to the sufferer, an humble friend, but grateful and faithful. By unceasing exertion, and repeated invocation of justice, he at length succeeded in obtaining his patron's freedom, and reinstatement in the management of his own property, to which was soon added that of his intended bride, who, having died without male issue, her estates reverted to him, as heir of entail. But freedom, and wealth, were unable to restore the equipoise of his mind; to the former his grief made him indifferent—the latter only served him as far as it afforded him the means of indulging his strange and wayward fancy. He had renounced the Catholic religion, but perhaps some of its doctrines continued to influence a mind, over which remorse and misanthropy now assumed, in appearance, an unbounded authority. His life has since been that alternately of a pilgrim and a hermit, suffering the most severe privations, not indeed in ascetic devotion, but in abhorrence of mankind. Yet no man's words and actions have been at such a wide difference, nor has any hypocritical wretch ever been more ingenious in assigning good motives for his vile actions, than this unfortunate in reconciling to his abstract principles of misanthropy a conduct which flows from his natural generosity and kindness of feeling."

"Still, Mr Ratcliffe—still you describe the inconsistencies of a madman."

"By no means," replied Ratcliffe. "That the imagination of this gentleman is disordered, I will not pretend to dispute; I have already told you that it has sometimes broken out into paroxysms approaching to real mental alienation. But it is of his common state of mind that I speak; it is irregular, but not deranged; the shades are as gradual as those that divide the light of noonday from midnight. The courtier who ruins his fortune for the attainment of a title which can do him no good, or power of which he can make no suitable or creditable use, the miser who hoards his useless wealth, and the prodigal who squanders it, are all marked with a certain shade of insanity. To criminals who are guilty of enormities, when the temptation, to a sober mind, bears no proportion to the horror of the act, or the probability of detection and punishment, the same observation applies; and every violent passion, as well as anger, may be termed a short madness."

"This may be all good philosophy, Mr Ratcliffe," answered Miss Vere; "but excuse me, it by no means imboldens me to visit, at this late hour, a person whose extravagance of imagination you yourself can only palliate."

"Rather, then," said Ratcliffe, "receive my solemn assurances, that you do not incur the slightest danger. But what I have been hitherto afraid to mention for fear of alarming you, is, that now when we are within sight of his retreat, for I can discover it through the twilight, I must go no farther with you; you must proceed alone."

"Alone?—I dare not."

"You must," continued Ratcliffe; "I will remain here and wait for you."

"You will not, then, stir from this place," said Miss Vere; "yet the distance is so great, you could not hear me were I to cry for assistance."

"Fear nothing," said her guide; "or observe, at least, the utmost caution in stifling every expression of timidity. Remember that his predominant and most harassing apprehension arises from a consciousness of the hideousness of his appearance. Your path lies straight beside yon half-fallen willow; keep the left side of it; the marsh lies on the right. Farewell for a time. Remember the evil you are threatened with, and let it overcome at once your fears and scruples."

"Mr Ratcliffe," said Isabella, "farewell; if you have deceived one so unfortunate as myself, you have for ever forfeited the fair character for probity and honour to which I have trusted."

"On my life—on my soul," continued Ratcliffe, raising his voice as the distance between them increased, "you are safe—perfectly safe."

CHAPTER XVI.

——'Twas time and griefs
That framed him thus: Time, with his fairer hand,
Offering the fortunes of his former days,
The former man may make him.—Bring us to him,
And chance it as it may.

Old Play.

The sounds of Ratcliffe's voice had died on Isabella's ear; but as she frequently looked back, it was some encouragement to her to discern his form now darkening in the gloom. Ere, however, she went much farther, she lost the object in the increasing shade. The last glimmer of the twilight placed her before the hut of the Solitary. She twice extended her hand to the door, and twice she withdrew it; and when she did at length make the effort, the knock did not equal in violence the throb of her own bosom. Her next effort was louder; her third was reiterated, for the fear of not obtaining the protection from which Ratcliffe promised so much, began to overpower the terrors of his presence from whom she was to request it. At length, as she still received no answer, she repeatedly called upon the Dwarf by his assumed name, and requested him to answer and open to her.

"What miserable being is reduced," said the appalling voice of the Solitary, "to seek refuge here? Go hence; when the heath-fowl need shelter, they seek it not in the nest of the night-raven."

"I come to you, father," said Isabella, "in my hour of adversity, even as you yourself commanded, when you promised your heart and your door should be open to my distress; but I fear——"

"Ha!" said the Solitary, "then thou art Isabella Vere? Give me a token that thou art she."

"I have brought you back the rose which you gave me? it has not had time to fade ere the hard fate you foretold has come upon me!"

"And if thou hast thus redeemed thy pledge," said the Dwarf, "I will not forfeit mine. The heart and the door that are shut against every other earthly being, *shall* be open to thee and to thy sorrows."

She heard him move in his hut, and presently afterwards strike a light. One by one, bolt and bar were then withdrawn, the heart of Isabella throbbing higher as these obstacles to their meeting were successively removed. The door opened, and the Solitary stood before her, his uncouth form and features illuminated by the iron lamp which he held in his hand.

"Enter, daughter of affliction," he said,—"enter the house of misery."

She entered, and observed, with a precaution which increased her trepidation, that the Recluse's first act, after setting the lamp upon the table, was to replace the numerous bolts which secured the door of his hut. She shrunk as she heard the noise which accompanied this ominous operation, yet remembered Ratcliffe's caution, and endeavoured to suppress all appearance of apprehension. The light of the lamp was weak and uncertain; but the Solitary, without taking immediate notice of Isabella, otherwise than by motioning her to sit down on a small settle beside the fire-place, made haste to kindle some dry furze, which presently cast a blaze through the cottage. Wooden shelves, which bore a few books, some bundles of dried herbs, and one or two wooden cups and platters, were on one side of the fire; on the other were placed some ordinary tools of field-labour, mingled with those used by mechanics. Where the bed should have been, there was a wooden frame, strewed with withered moss and rushes, the couch of the ascetic. The whole space of the cottage did not exceed ten feet by six within the walls; and its only furniture, besides what we have mentioned, was a table and two stools formed of rough deals.

Within these narrow precincts Isabella now found herself enclosed with a being, whose history had nothing to reassure her, and the fearful conformation of whose hideous countenance inspired an almost superstitious terror. He occupied the seat opposite to her, and dropping his huge and shaggy eye-brows over his piercing black eyes, gazed at her in silence, as if agitated by a variety of contending feelings. On the other side sate Isabella, pale as death, her long hair uncurled by the evening damps, and falling over her shoulders and breast, as the wet streamers droop from the mast when the storm has passed away, and left the vessel stranded on the beach. The Dwarf first broke the silence with the sudden, abrupt, and alarming question,—"Woman, what evil fate has brought thee hither?"

"My father's danger, and your own command," she replied faintly, but firmly.

"And you hope for aid from me?"

"If you can bestow it," she replied, still in the same tone of mild submission.

"And how should I possess that power?" continued the Dwarf, with a bitter sneer; "Is mine the form of a redresser of wrongs? Is this the castle in which one powerful enough to be sued to by a fair suppliant is likely to hold his residence? I but mocked thee, girl, when I said I would relieve thee."

"Then must I depart, and face my fate as I best may!"

"No!" said the Dwarf, rising and interposing between her and the door, and motioning to her sternly to resume her seat—"No! you leave me not in this way; we must have farther conference. Why should one being desire aid of another? Why should not each be sufficient to itself? Look round you—I, the most despised and most decrepit on Nature's common, have required sympathy and help from no one. These stones are of my own piling; these utensils I framed with my own hands; and with this"——and he laid his hand with a fierce smile on the long dagger which he always wore beneath his garment, and unsheathed it so far that the blade glimmered clear in the fire-light—"With this," he pursued, as he thrust the weapon back into the scabbard, "I can, if necessary, defend the vital spark enclosed in this poor trunk, against the fairest and strongest that shall threaten me with injury."

It was with difficulty Isabella refrained from screaming out aloud; but she *did* refrain.

"This," continued the Recluse, "is the life of nature, solitary, self-sufficing, and independent. The wolf calls not the wolf to aid him in forming his den; and the vulture invites not another to assist her in striking down her prey."

"And when they are unable to procure themselves support," said Isabella, judiciously thinking that he would be most accessible to argument couched in his own metaphorical style, "what then is to befall them?"

"Let them starve, die, and be forgotten: it is the common lot of humanity."

"It is the lot of the wild tribes of nature," said Isabella, "but chiefly of those who are destined to support themselves by rapine, which brooks no partner; but it is not the law of nature in general; even the lower orders have confederacies for mutual defence. But mankind—the race would perish did they cease to aid each other.—From the time that the mother binds the child's head, till the moment that some kind assistant wipes the death-damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual help. All, therefore, that need aid, have right to ask it of their fellow-mortals; no one who has the power of granting can refuse it without guilt."

"And in this simple hope, poor maiden," said the Solitary, "thou hast come into the desert, to seek one whose wish it were that the league thou hast spoken of were broken for ever, and that, in very truth, the whole race should perish? Wert thou not frightened?"

"Misery," said Isabella, firmly, "is superior to fear."

"Hast thou not heard it said in thy mortal world, that I have leagued myself with other powers, deformed to the eye and malevolent to the human race as myself? Hast thou not heard this?—And dost thou seek my cell at midnight?"

"The Being I worship supports me against such idle fears," said Isabella; but the increasing agitation of her bosom belied the affected courage which her words expressed.

"Ho! ho!" said the Dwarf, "thou vauntest thyself a philosopher? Yet, shouldst thou not have thought of the danger of intrusting thyself, young and beautiful, in the power of one so spited against humanity, as to place his chief pleasure in defacing, destroying, and degrading her fairest works?"

Isabella, much alarmed, continued to answer with firmness, "Whatever injuries you may have sustained in the world, you are incapable of re-

venging them on one who never wronged you, nor, wilfully, any other."

"Ay, but maiden," he continued, his dark eyes flashing with an expression of malignity which communicated itself to his wild and distorted features, "revenge is the hungry wolf, which asks only to tear flesh and lap blood. Think you the lamb's plea of innocence would be listened to by him?"

"Man!" said Isabella, rising, and expressing herself with much dignity, "I fear not the horrible ideas with which you would impress me. I cast them from me with disdain. Be you mortal or fiend, you would not offer injury to one who sought you as a suppliant in her utmost need. You would not—you durst not."

"Thou say'st truly maiden," rejoined the Solitary; "I dare not—I would not. Begone to thy dwelling. Fear nothing with which they threaten thee. Thou hast asked my protection—thou shalt find it effectual."

"But, father, this very night I have consented to wed the man that I abhor, or I must put the seal to my father's ruin."

"This night?—at what hour?"

"Ere midnight."

"And twilight," said the Dwarf, "has already passed away. But fear nothing, there is ample time to protect thee."

"And my father?" continued Isabella, in a suppliant tone.

"Thy father," replied the Dwarf, "has been, and is, my most bitter enemy. But fear not; thy virtue shall save him. And now, begone; were I to keep thee longer by me, I might again fall into the stupid dreams concerning human worth from which I have been so fearfully awakened. But fear nothing—at the very foot of the altar I will redeem thee. Adieu, time presses, and I must act!"

He led her to the door of the hut, which he opened for her departure. She remounted her horse, which had been feeding in the outer enclosure, and pressed him forward by the light of the moon, which was now rising, to the spot where she had left Ratcliffe.

"Have you succeeded?" was his first eager question.

"I have obtained promises from him to whom you sent me; but how can he possibly accomplish them?"

"Thank God!" said Ratcliffe; "doubt not his power to fulfil his promise."

"At this moment a shrill whistle was heard to resound along the heath.

"Hark!" said Ratcliffe, "he calls me—Miss Vere, return home, and leave unbolted the posterndoor of the garden; to that which opens on the back-stairs I have a private key."

A second whistle was heard, yet more shrill and prolonged than the first.

"I come, I come," said Ratcliffe; and setting spurs to his horse, rode over the heath in the direction of the Recluse's hut. Miss Vere returned to the castle, the mettle of the animal on which she rode, and her own anxiety of mind, combining to accelerate her journey.

She obeyed Ratcliffe's directions, though without well apprehending their purpose, and leaving her horse at large in a paddock near the garden, hurried to her own apartment, which she reached without observation. She now unbolted her door, and rang her bell for lights. Her father appeared along with the servant who answered her summons.

"He had been twice," he said, "listening at her door during the two hours that had elapsed since he left her, and, not hearing her speak, had become apprehensive that she was taken ill."

"And now, my dear father," she said, "permit me to claim the promise you so kindly gave; let the last moments of freedom which I am to enjoy be mine without interruption; and protract to the last moment the respite which is allowed me."

"I will," said her father; "nor shall you be again interrupted. But this disordered dress—this dishevelled hair—do not let me find you thus when I call on you again; the sacrifice, to be beneficial, must be voluntary."

"Must it be so?" she replied; "then fear not, my father! the victim shall be adorned."

CHAPTER XVII.

This looks not like a nuptial.
Much Ado about Nothing.

The chapel in the castle of Ellieslaw, destined to be the scene of this ill-omened union, was a building of much older date than the castle itself, though that claimed considerable antiquity. Before the wars between England and Scotland had become so common and of such long duration, that the buildings along both sides of the Border were chiefly dedicated to warlike purposes, there had been a small settlement of monks at Ellieslaw, a dependency, it is believed by antiquaries, on the rich Abbey of Jedburgh. Their possessions had long passed away under the changes introduced by war and mutual ravage. A feudal castle had arisen on the ruin of their cells, and their chapel was included in its precincts.

The edifice, in its round arches and massive pillars, the simplicity of which referred their date to what has been called the Saxon architecture, presented at all times a dark and sombre appearance, and had been frequently used as the cemetery of the family of the feudal lords, as well as formerly of the monastic brethren. But it looked doubly gloomy by the effect of the few and smoky torches which were used to enlighten it on the present occasion, and which, spreading a glare of yellow light in their immediate vicinity, were surrounded beyond by a red and purple halo reflected from their own smoke, and beyond that again by a zone of darkness which magnified the extent of the chapel, while it rendered it impossible for the eye to ascertain its limits. Some injudicious ornaments, adopted in haste for the occasion, rather added to the dreariness of the scene. Old fragments of tapestry, torn from the walls of other apartments, had been hastily and partially disposed around those of the chapel, and mingled inconsistently with scutcheons and funeral emblems of the dead, which they elsewhere exhibited. On each side of the stone altar was a monument, the appearance of which formed an equally strange contrast. On the one was the figure, in stone, of some grim hermit, or monk, who had died in the odour of sanctity; he was represented as recumbent, in his cowl and

scapulaire, with his face turned upward as in the act of devotion, and his hands folded, from which his string of beads was dependent. On the other side was a tomb, in the Italian taste, composed of the most beautiful statuary marble, and accounted a model of modern art. It was erected to the memory of Isabella's mother, the late Mrs Vere of Ellieslaw, who was represented as in a dying posture, while a weeping cherub, with eyes averted, seemed in the act of extinguishing a dying lamp as emblematic of her speedy dissolution. It was, indeed, a masterpiece of art, but misplaced in the rude vault to which it had been consigned. Many were surprised, and even scandalized, that Ellieslaw, not remarkable for attention to his lady while alive, should erect after her death such a costly mausoleum in affected sorrow; others cleared him from the imputation of hypocrisy, and averred that the monument had been constructed under the direction and at the sole expense of Mr Ratcliffe.

Before these monuments the wedding guests were assembled. They were few in number; for many had left the castle to prepare for the ensuing political explosion, and Ellieslaw was, in the circumstances of the case, far from being desirous to extend invitations farther than to those near relations whose presence the custom of the country rendered indispensable. Next to the altar stood Sir Frederick Langley, dark, moody, and thoughtful, even beyond his wont, and near him, Mareschal, who was to play the part of bridesman, as it was called. The thoughtless humour of this young gentleman, on which he never deigned to place the least restraint, added to the cloud which overhung the brow of the bridegroom.

"The bride is not yet come out of her chamber," he whispered to Sir Frederick; "I trust that we must not have recourse to the violent expedients of the Romans which I read of at College. It would be hard upon my pretty cousin to be run away with twice in two days, though I know none better worth such a violent compliment."

Sir Frederick attempted to turn a deaf ear to this discourse, humming a tune, and looking another way, but Mareschal proceeded in the same wild manner.

"This delay is hard upon Dr Hobbler, who was disturbed to accelerate preparations for this joyful event when he had successfully extracted the cork of his third bottle. I hope you will keep him free of the censure of his superiors, for I take it this is beyond canonical hours.—But here come Ellieslaw and my pretty cousin — prettier than ever, I think, were it not she seems so faint and so deadly pale—Hark ye, Sir Knight, if she says not YES with right good-will, it shall be no wedding, for all that has come and gone yet."

"No wedding, sir?" returned Sir Frederick, in a loud whisper, the tone of which indicated that his angry feelings were suppressedwith difficulty.

"No—no marriage," replied Mareschal, "there's my hand and glove on't."

Sir Frederick Langley took his hand, and as he wrung it hard, said in a lower whisper, "Mareschal, you shall answer this," and then flung his hand from him.

"That I will readily do," said Mareschal, "for never word escaped my lips that my hand was not ready to guarantee.—So, speak up, my pretty cousin, and tell me if it be your free will and unbiassed resolution to accept of this gallant knight for your lord and husband; for if you have the tenth part of a scruple upon the subject, fall back, fall edge, he shall not have you."

"Are you mad, Mr Mareschal?" said Ellieslaw, who, having been this young man's guardian during his minority, often employed a tone of authority to him. "Do you suppose I would drag my daughter to the foot of the altar, were it not her own choice?"

"Tut, Ellieslaw," retorted the young gentleman, "never tell me of the contrary; her eyes are full of tears, and her cheeks are whiter than her white dress, I must insist, in the name of common humanity, that the ceremony be adjourned till to-morrow."

"She shall tell you herself, thou incorrigible intermeddler in what concerns thee not, that it is her wish the ceremony should go on—Is it not, Isabella, my dear?"

"It is," said Isabella, half fainting—"since there is no help either in God or man."

The first word alone was distinctly audible. Mareschal shrugged up his shoulders and stepped back. Ellieslaw led, or rather supported, his daughter to the altar. Sir Frederick moved forward and placed himself by her side. The clergyman opened his prayer-book, and looked to Mr Vere for the signal to commence the service.

"Proceed," said the latter.

But a voice, as if issuing from the tomb of his deceased wife, called, in such loud and harsh accents as awakened every echo in the vaulted chapel, "Forbear!"

All were mute and motionless, till a distant rustle, and the clash of swords, or something resembling it, was heard from the remote apartments. It ceased almost instantly.

"What new device is this?" said Sir Frederick, fiercely, eyeing Ellieslaw and Mareschal with a glance of malignant suspicion.

"It can be but the frolic of some intemperate guest," said Ellieslaw, though greatly confounded; "we must make large allowances for the excess of this evening's festivity. Proceed with the service."

Before the clergyman could obey, the same prohibition which they had before heard, was repeated from the same spot. The female attendants screamed, and fled from the chapel; the gentlemen laid their hands on their swords. Ere the first moment of surprise had passed by, the Dwarf stepped from behind the monument, and placed himself full in front of Mr Vere. The effect of so strange and hideous an apparition in such a place and in such circumstances, appalled all present, but seemed to annihilate the Laird of Ellieslaw, who, dropping his daughter's arm, staggered against the nearest pillar, and, clasping it with his hands as if for support, laid his brow against the column.

"Who is this fellow?" said Sir Frederick; "and what does he mean by this intrusion?"

"It is one who comes to tell you," said the Dwarf, with the peculiar acrimony which usually marked his manner, "that, in marrying that young lady, you wed neither the heiress of Ellieslaw, nor of Mauley-Hall, nor of Polverton, nor of one furrow of land, unless she marries with MY consent; and to thee that consent shall never be given.

Down—down on thy knees, and thank Heaven that thou art prevented from wedding qualities with which thou hast no concern—portionless truth, virtue, and innocence. And thou, base ingrate," he continued, addressing himself to Ellieslaw, "what is thy wretched subterfuge now? Thou, who wouldst sell thy daughter to relieve thee from danger, as in famine thou wouldst have slain and devoured her to preserve thy own vile life! Ay, hide thy face with thy hands; well mayst thou blush to look on him whose body thou didst consign to chains, his hand to guilt, and his soul to misery. Saved once more by the virtue of her who calls you father, go hence, and may the pardon and benefits I confer on thee prove literal coals of fire, till thy brain is seared and scorched like mine!"

Ellieslaw left the chapel with a gesture of mute despair.

"Follow him, Hubert Ratcliffe," said the Dwarf, "and inform him of his destiny. He will rejoice—for to breathe air and to handle gold is to him happiness."

"I understand nothing of all this," said Sir Frederick Langley; "but we are here a body of gentlemen in arms and authority for King James; and whether you really, sir, be that Sir Edward Mauley, who has been so long supposed dead in confinement, or whether you be an impostor assuming his name and title, we will use the freedom of detaining you, till your appearance here, at this moment, is better accounted for; we will have no spies among us. Seize on him, my friends."

But the domestics shrunk back in doubt and alarm. Sir Frederick himself stepped forward towards the Recluse, as if to lay hands on his person, when his progress was suddenly stopped by the glittering point of a partisan, which the sturdy hand of Hobbie Elliot presented against his bosom.

"I'll gar day-light shine through ye, if you offer to steer him!" said the stout Borderer; "stand back, or I'll strike ye through! Naebody shall lay a finger on Elshie; he's a canny neighbourly man, aye ready to make a friend help; and, though ye may think him a lamiter, yet, grippie for grippie, friend, I'll wad a wether he'll make the bluid spin frae under your nails. He's a teugh carle, Elshie! he grips like a smith's vice."

"What has brought you here, Elliot?" said Mareschal; "who called on you for interference?"

"Troth, Mareschal-Wells," answered Hobbie, "I am just come here, wi' twenty or thretty mair o' us, in my ain name and the King's—or Queen's, ca' they her? and Canny Elshie's into the bargain, to keep the peace, and pay back some ill usage Ellieslaw has gien me. A bonny breakfast the loons gae me the ither morning, and him at the bottom on't; and trow ye I wasna ready to supper him up? Ye needna lay your hands on your swords, gentlemen, the house is ours wi' little din; for the doors were open, and there had been ower muckle punch amang your folk; we took their swords and pistols as easily as ye wad shiel peacods."

Mareschal rushed out, and immediately re-entered the chapel.

"By Heaven! it is true, Sir Frederick; the house is filled with armed men, and our drunken beasts are all disarmed. Draw, and let us fight our way."

"Binna rash—binna rash," exclaimed Hobbie; "hear me a bit, hear me a bit. We mean ye nae harm; but, as ye are in arms for King James, as ye ca' him, and the prelates, we thought it right to keep up the auld neighbour war, and stand up for the t'other ane and the Kirk; but we'll no hurt a hair o' your heads, if ye like to gang hame quietly. And it will be your best way, for there's sure news come frae Loudoun, that him they ca' Bang, or Byng, or what is't, has bang'd the French ships and the new king aff the coast however; sae ye had best bide content wi' auld Nanse for want of a better Queen."

Ratcliffe, who at this moment entered, confirmed these accounts so unfavourable to the Jacobite interest. Sir Frederick, almost instantly, and without taking leave of any one, left the castle, with such of his attendants as were able to follow him.

"And what will you do Mr Mareschal?" said Ratcliffe.

"Why, faith," answered he, smiling, "I hardly know; my spirit is too great, and my fortune too small, for me to follow the example of the doughty bridegroom. It is not in my nature, and it is hardly worth my while."

"Well, then, disperse your men, and remain quiet, and this will be overlooked, as there has been no overt act."

"Hout, ay," said Elliot, "just let byganes be byganes, and a' friends again; deil ane I bear malice at but Westburnflat, and I hae gien him baith a het skin and a cauld ane. I hadna changed three blows of the broadsword wi' him before he lap the window into the castle-moat, and swattered through it like a wild-duck. He's a clever fallow, indeed! maun kilt awa wi' ae bonny lass in the morning, and another at night, less wadna serve him! but if he disna kilt himself out o' the country, I'se kilt him wi' a tow, for the Castleton meeting's clean blawn ower; his friends will no countenance him."

During the general confusion, Isabella had thrown herself at the feet of her kinsman, Sir Edward Mauley, for so we must now call the Solitary, to express at once her gratitude, and to beseech forgiveness for her father. The eyes of all began to be fixed on them, as soon as their own agitation and the bustle of the attendants had somewhat abated. Miss Vere kneeled beside the tomb of her mother, to whose statue her features exhibited a marked resemblance. She held the hand of the Dwarf, which she kissed repeatedly and bathed with tears. He stood fixed and motionless, excepting that his eyes glanced alternately on the marble figure and the living suppliant. At length, the large drops which gathered on his eye-lashes compelled him to draw his hand across them.

"I thought," he said, "that tears and I had done; but we shed them at our birth, and their spring dries not until we are in our graves. But no melting of the heart shall dissolve my resolution. I part here, at once, and for ever, with all of which the memory," (looking to the tomb,) "or the presence," (he pressed Isabella's hand,) "is dear to me. Speak not to me! attempt not to thwart my determination! it will avail nothing; you will hear of and see this lump of deformity no more. To you I shall be dead ere I am actually in my grave, and you will think of me as of a friend disencumbered from the toils and crimes of existence."

He kissed Isabella on the forehead, impressed another kiss on the brow of the statue by which

she knelt, and left the chapel followed by Ratcliffe. Isabella, almost exhausted by the emotions of the day, was carried to her apartment by her women. Most of the other guests dispersed, after having separately endeavoured to impress on all who would listen to them their disapprobation of the plots formed against the government, or their regret for having engaged in them. Hobbie Elliot assumed the command of the castle for the night, and mounted a regular guard. He boasted not a little of the alacrity with which his friends and he had obeyed a hasty summons received from Elshie through the faithful Ratcliffe. And it was a lucky chance, he said, that on that very day they had got notice that Westburnflat did not intend to keep his tryste at Castleton, but to hold them at defiance; so that a considerable party had assembled at the Heugh-foot, with the intention of paying a visit to the robber's tower on the ensuing morning, and their course was easily directed to Ellieslaw Castle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

——— Last scene of all,
To close this strange eventful history.
As You Like it.

On the next morning, Mr Ratcliffe presented Miss Vere with a letter from her father, of which the following is the tenor: —

"My dearest Child,

"The malice of a persecuting government will compel me, for my own safety, to retreat abroad, and to remain for some time in foreign parts. I do not ask you to accompany, or follow me; you will attend to my interest and your own more effectually by remaining where you are. It is unnecessary to enter into a minute detail concerning the causes of the strange events which yesterday took place. I think I have reason to complain of the usage I have received from Sir Edward Mauley, who is your nearest kinsman by the mother's side; but as he has declared you his heir, and is to put you in immediate possession of a large part of his fortune, I account it a full atonement. I am aware he has never forgiven the preference which your mother gave to my addresses, instead of complying with the terms of a sort of family compact, which absurdly and tyrannically destined her to wed her deformed relative. The shock was even sufficient to unsettle his wits, (which, indeed, were never overwell arranged,) and I had, as the husband of his nearest kinswoman and heir, the delicate task of taking care of his person and property, until he was reinstated in the management of the latter by those who, no doubt, thought they were doing him justice; although if some parts of his subsequent conduct be examined, it will appear that he ought, for his own sake, to have been left under the influence of a mild and salutary restraint.

"In one particular, however, he shewed a sense of the ties of blood, as well as of his own frailty; for while he sequestered himself closely from the world, under various names and disguises, and insisted on spreading a report of his own death, (in which to gratify him I willingly acquiesced,) he left at my disposal the rents of a great proportion of his estates, and especially all those, which, having belonged to your mother, reverted to him as a male fief. In this he may have thought that he was acting with extreme generosity, while, in the opinion of all impartial men, he will only be considered as having fulfilled a natural obligation, seeing that, in justice, if not in strict law, you must be considered as the heir of your mother, and I as your legal administrator. Instead, therefore, of considering myself as loaded with obligations to Sir Edward on this account, I think I had reason to complain that these remittances were only doled out to me at the pleasure of Mr Ratcliffe, who, moreover, exacted from me mortgages over my paternal estate of Ellieslaw for any sums which I required as an extra advance; and thus may be said to have insinuated himself into the absolute management and control of my property. Or, if all this seeming friendship was employed by Sir Edward for the purpose of obtaining a complete command of my affairs, and acquiring the power of ruining me at his pleasure, I feel myself, I must repeat, still less bound by the alleged obligation.

"About the autumn of last year, as I understand, either his own crazed imagination, or the accomplishment of some such scheme as I have hinted, brought him down to this country. His alleged motive, it seems, was a desire of seeing a monument which he had directed to be raised in the chapel over the tomb of your mother. Mr Ratcliffe, who at this time had done me the honour to make my house his own, had the complaisance to introduce him secretly into the chapel. The consequence, as he informs me, was a frenzy of several hours, during which he fled into the neighbouring moors, in one of the wildest spots of which he chose, when he was somewhat recovered, to fix his mansion, and set up for a sort of country empiric, a character which, even in his best days, he was fond of assuming. It is remarkable, that, instead of informing me of these circumstances, that I might have had the relative of my late wife taken such care of as his calamitous condition required, Mr Ratcliffe seems to have had such culpable indulgence for his irregular plans as to promise and even swear secrecy concerning them. He visited Sir Edward often, and assisted in the fantastic task he had taken upon him of constructing a hermitage. Nothing they appear to have dreaded more than a discovery of their intercourse.

"The ground was open in every direction around, and a small subterranean cave, probably sepulchral, which their researches had detected near the great granite pillar, served to conceal Ratcliffe, when any one approached his master. I think you will be of opinion, my love, that this secrecy must have had some strong motive. It is also remarkable, that while I thought my unhappy friend was residing among the Monks of La Trappe, he should have been actually living, for many months, in this bizarre disguise, within five miles of my house, and obtaining regular information of my most private movements, either by Ratcliffe, or through Westburnflat or others, whom he had the means to bribe to any extent. He makes it a crime against me that I endeavoured to establish your marriage with Sir Frederick. I acted for the best; but if Sir Edward Mauley thought otherwise, why did he not step manfully forward, express his own purpose of becoming a party to the settlements, and take that

interest which he is entitled to claim in you as heir to his great property?

"Even now, though your rash and eccentric relation is somewhat tardy in announcing his purpose, I am far from opposing my authority against his wishes, although the person he desires you to regard as your future husband be young Earnscliff, the very last whom I should have thought likely to be acceptable to him, considering a certain fatal event. But I give my free and hearty consent, providing the settlements are drawn in such an irrevocable form as may secure my child from suffering by that state of dependence, and that sudden and causeless revocation of allowances, of which I have so much reason to complain. Of Sir Frederick Langley, I augur, you will hear no more. He is not likely to claim the hand of a dowerless maiden. I therefore commit you, my dear Isabella, to the wisdom of Providence and to your own prudence, begging you to lose no time in securing those advantages, which the fickleness of your kinsman has withdrawn from me to shower upon you.

"Mr Ratcliffe mentioned Sir Edward's intention to settle a considerable sum upon me yearly, for my maintenance in foreign parts; but this my heart is too proud to accept from him. I told him I had a dear child, who, while in affluence herself, would never suffer me to be in poverty. I thought it right to intimate this to him pretty roundly, that whatever increase be settled upon you, it may be calculated so as to cover this necessary and natural encumbrance. I shall willingly settle upon you the castle and manor of Ellieslaw, to shew my parental affection and disinterested zeal for promoting your settlement in life. The annual interest of debts charged on the estate somewhat exceeds the income, even after a reasonable rent has been put upon the mansion and mains. But as all the debts are in the person of Mr Ratcliffe, as your kinsman's trustee, he will not be a troublesome creditor. And here I must make you aware, that though I have to complain of Mr Ratcliffe's conduct to me personally, I, nevertheless, believe him a just and upright man, with whom you may safely consult on your affairs, not to mention that to cherish his good opinion will be the best way to retain that of your kinsman. Remember me to Marchie—I hope he will not be troubled on account of late matters. I will write more fully from the Continent. Meanwhile, I rest your loving father,

"Richard Vere."

The above letter throws the only additional light which we have been able to procure upon the earlier part of our story. It was Hobbie's opinion, and may be that of most of our readers, that the Recluse of Mucklestane-Moor had but a kind of gloaming, or twilight understanding; and that he had neither very clear views as to what he himself wanted, nor was apt to pursue his ends by the clearest and most direct means: so that to seek the clew of his conduct, was likened, by Hobbie, to looking for a straight path through a common, over which are a hundred devious tracks, but not one distinct line of road.

When Isabella had perused the letter, her first inquiry was after her father. He had left the castle, she was informed, early in the morning, after a long interview with Mr Ratcliffe, and was already far on his way to the next port, where he might expect to find shipping for the Continent.

"Where was Sir Edward Mauley?"

No one had seen the Dwarf since the eventful scene of the preceding evening.

"Odd, if ony thing has befa'en puir Elshie," said Hobbie Elliot, "I wad rather I were harried ower again."

He immediately rode to his dwelling, and the remaining she-goat came bleating to meet him, for her milking-time was long past. The Solitary was nowhere to be seen; his door, contrary to wont, was open, his fire extinguished, and the whole hut was left in the state which it exhibited on Isabella's visit to him. It was pretty clear that the means of conveyance which had brought the Dwarf to Ellieslaw on the preceding evening, had removed him from it to some other place of abode. Hobbie returned disconsolate to the castle.

"I am doubting we hae lost Canny Elshie for gude an' a'."

"You have indeed," said Ratcliffe, producing a paper, which he put into Hobbie's hands; "but read that, and you will perceive you have been no loser by having known him."

It was a short deed of gift, by which "Sir Edward Mauley, otherwise called Elshender the Recluse, endowed Halbert or Hobbie Elliot, and Grace Armstrong, in full property, with a considerable sum borrowed by Elliot from him."

Hobbie's joy was mingled with feelings which brought tears down his rough cheeks.

"It's a queer thing," he said; "but I canna joy in the gear, unless I kend the puir body was happy that gave it me."

"Next to enjoying happiness ourselves," said Ratcliffe, "is the consciousness of having bestowed it on others. Had all my master's benefits been conferred like the present, what a different return would they have produced! But the indiscriminate profusion that would glut avarice, or supply prodigality, neither does good, nor is rewarded by gratitude. It is sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind."

"And that wad be a light har'st," said Hobbie; "but, wi' my young leddie's leave, I wad fain take down Elshie's skeps o' bees, and set them in Grace's bit flower yard at the Heugh-foot—they shall ne'er be smeekit by ony o' huz. And the puir goat, she would be negleckit about a great toun like this; and she could feed bonnily on our lily lea by the burn side, and the hounds wad ken her in a day's time, and never fash her, and Grace wad milk her ilka morning wi' her ain hand, for Elshie's sake; for though he was thrawn and cankered in his converse, he likeit dumb creatures weel."

Hobbie's requests were readily granted, not without some wonder at the natural delicacy of feeling which pointed out to him this mode of displaying his gratitude. He was delighted when Ratcliffe informed him that his benefactor should not remain ignorant of the care which he took of his favourite.

"And mind be sure and tell him that grannie and the titties, and, abune a', Grace and mysell, are weel and thriving, and that it's a' his doing—that canna but please him, ane wad think."

And Elliot and the family at Heugh-foot were, and continued to be, as fortunate and happy as his undaunted honesty, tenderness, and gallantry, so well merited.

All bar between the marriage of Earnscliff and Isabella was now removed, and the settlements which Ratcliffe produced on the part of Sir Edward

Mauley, might have satisfied the cupidity of Elliestaw himself. But Miss Vere and Ratcliffe thought it unnecessary to mention to Earnscliff that one great motive of Sir Edward, in thus loading the young pair with benefits, was to expiate his having, many years before, shed the blood of his father in a hasty brawl. If it be true, as Ratcliffe asserted, that the Dwarf's extreme misanthropy seemed to relax somewhat, under the consciousness of having diffused happiness among so many, the recollection of this circumstance might probably be one of his chief motives for refusing obstinately ever to witness their state of contentment.

Mareschal hunted, shot, and drank claret—tired of the country, went abroad, served three campaigns, came home, and married Lucy Ilderton.

Years fled over the heads of Earnscliff and his wife, and found and left them contented and happy. The scheming ambition of Sir Frederick Langley engaged him in the unfortunate insurrection of 1715. He was made prisoner at Preston, in Lancashire, with the Earl of Derwentwater, and others. His defence, and the dying speech which he made at his execution, may be found in the State Trials. Mr Vere, supplied by his daughter with an ample income, continued to reside abroad, engaged deeply in the affair of Law's bank during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and was at one time supposed to be immensely rich. But, on the bursting of that famous bubble, he was so much chagrined at being again reduced to a moderate annuity, (although he saw thousands of his companions in misfortune absolutely starving,) that vexation of mind brought on a paralytic stroke, of which he died, after lingering under its effects a few weeks.

Willie of Westburnflat fled from the wrath of Hobbie Elliot, as his betters did from the pursuit of the law. His patriotism urged him to serve his country abroad, while his reluctance to leave his native soil pressed him rather to remain in the beloved island, and collect purses, watches, and rings on the highroads at home. Fortunately for him, the first impulse prevailed, and he joined the army under Marlborough; obtained a commission, to which he was recommended by his services in collecting cattle for the commissariat; returned home after many years, with some money, (how come by Heaven only knows,)—demolished the peel-house at Westburnflat, and built, in its stead, a high narrow *onstead*, of three stories, with a chimney at each end—drank brandy with the neighbours, whom, in his younger days, he had plundered—died in his bed, and is recorded upon his tombstone at Kirkwhistle, (still extant,) as having played all the parts of a brave soldier, a discreet neighbour, and a sincere Christian.

Mr Ratcliffe resided usually with the family at Ellieslaw, but regularly every spring and autumn he absented himself for about a month. On the direction and purpose of his periodical journey he remained steadily silent; but it was well understood that he was then in attendance on his unfortunate patron. At length, on his return from one of these visits, his grave countenance, and deep mourning dress, announced to the Ellieslaw family that their benefactor was no more. Sir Edward's death made no addition to their fortune, for he had divested himself of his property during his lifetime, and chiefly in their favour. Ratcliffe, his sole confident, died at a good old age, but without ever naming the place to which his master had finally retired, or the manner of his death, or the place of his burial. It was supposed that on all these particulars his patron had enjoined him strict secrecy.

The sudden disappearance of Elshie from his extraordinary hermitage corroborated the reports which the common people had spread concerning him. Many believed that, having ventured to enter a consecrated building, contrary to his paction with the Evil One, he had been bodily carried off while on his return to his cottage; but most are of opinion that he only disappeared for a season, and continues to be seen from time to time among the hills. And retaining, according to custom, a more vivid recollection of his wild and desperate language, than of the benevolent tendency of most of his actions, he is usually identified with the malignant demon called the Man of the Moors, whose feats were quoted by Mrs Elliot to her grandsons; and, accordingly, is generally represented as bewitching the sheep, causing the ewes to *keb*, that is, to cast their lambs, or seen loosening the impending wreath of snow to precipitate its weight on such as take shelter, during the storm, beneath the bank of a torrent, or under the shelter of a deep glen. In short, the evils most dreaded and deprecated by the inhabitants of that pastoral country, are ascribed to the agency of the BLACK DWARF.

END OF THE BLACK DWARF.

A Legend of Montrose.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there 's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel 's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he 'll prent it! — Burns.

INTRODUCTION—(1829.)

The Legend of Montrose was written chiefly with a view to place before the reader the melancholy fate of John Lord Kilpont, eldest son of William Earl of Airth and Menteith, and the singular circumstances attending the birth and history of James Stewart of Ardvoirlich, by whose hand the unfortunate nobleman fell.

Our subject leads us to talk of deadly feuds, and we must begin with one still more ancient than that to which our story relates. During the reign of James IV. a great feud between the powerful families of Drummond and Murray divided Perthshire. The former, being the most numerous and powerful, cooped up eight score of the Murrays in the kirk of Monivaird, and set fire to it. The wives and the children of the ill-fated men, who had also found shelter in the church, perished by the same conflagration. One man, named David Murray, escaped by the humanity of one of the Drummonds, who received him in his arms as he leaped from amongst the flames. As King James IV. ruled with more activity than most of his predecessors, this cruel deed was severely revenged, and several of the perpetrators were beheaded at Stirling. In consequence of the prosecution against his clan, the Drummond by whose assistance David Murray had escaped, fled to Ireland, until, by means of the person whose life he had saved, he was permitted to return to Scotland, where he and his descendants were distinguished by the name of Drummond-Eirinich, or Ernoch, that is, Drummond of Ireland; and the same title was bestowed on their estate.

The Drummond-Ernoch of James the Sixth's time was a king's forester in the forest of Glenartney, and chanced to be employed there in search of venison about the year 1588, or early in 1589. This forest was adjacent to the chief haunts of the MacGregors, or a particular race of them, known by the title of MacEagh or Children of the Mist. They considered the forester's hunting in their vicinity as an aggression, or perhaps they had him at feud, for the apprehension or slaughter of some of their own name, or for some similar reason. This tribe of MacGregors were outlawed and persecuted, as the reader may see in the Introduction to Rob Roy; and every man's hand being against them, their hand was of course directed against every man. In short they surprised and slew Drummond-Ernoch, cut off his head, and carried it with them, wrapt in the corner of one of their plaids.

In the full exultation of vengeance, they stopped at the house of Ardvoirlich and demanded refreshment, which the lady, a sister of the murdered Drummond-Ernoch, (her husband being absent,) was afraid or unwilling to refuse. She caused bread and cheese to be placed before them, and gave directions for more substantial refreshments to be prepared. While she was absent with this hospitable intention, the barbarians placed the head of her brother on the table, filling the mouth with bread and cheese, and bidding him eat, for many a merry meal he had eaten in that house. The poor woman returning, and beholding this dreadful sight, shrieked aloud, and fled into the woods, where, as described in the romance, she roamed a raving maniac, and for some time secreted herself from all living society. Some remaining instinctive feeling brought her at length to steal a glance from a distance at the maidens while they milked the cows, which being observed, her husband, Ardvoirlich, had her conveyed back to her home, and detained her there till she gave birth to a child, of whom she had been pregnant; after which she was observed gradually to recover her mental faculties.

Meanwhile the outlaws had carried to the utmost their insults against the regal authority, which indeed, as exercised, they had little reason for respecting. They bore the same bloody trophy, which they had so savagely exhibited to the lady of Ardvoirlich, into the old church of Balquidder, nearly in the centre of their country, where the Laird of MacGregor and all his clan, being convened for the purpose, laid their hands successively on the dead man's head, and swore, in heathenish and barbarous manner, to defend the author of the deed. This fierce and vindictive combination gave the author's late and lamented friend, Sir Alexander Boswell, Bart. subject for a spirited poem, entitled "Clan-Alpin's Vow," which was printed, but not, I believe, published, in 1811.[1]

The fact is ascertained by a proclamation from the Privy Council, dated 4th February, 1589, directing letters of fire and sword against the MacGregors.[2] This fearful commission was executed with uncommon fury. The late excellent John Buchanan of Cambusmore shewed the author some correspondence between his ancestor, the Laird of Buchanan, and Lord Drummond, about sweeping certain valleys with their followers, on a fixed time and rendezvous, and "taking sweet revenge for the death of their cousin, Drummond-Ernoch." In spite of all, however, that could be done, the devoted tribe of MacGregor still bred up survivors to sustain and to inflict new cruelties and injuries.[3]

Meanwhile young James Stewart of Ardvoirlich grew up to manhood uncommonly tall, strong, and active, with such power in the grasp of his hand in particular, as could force the blood from beneath the nails of the persons who contended with him in this feat of strength. His temper was moody, fierce, and irascible; yet he must have had some ostensible good qualities, as he was greatly beloved by Lord Kilpont, the eldest son of the Earl of Airth and Menteith.

This gallant young nobleman joined Montrose in the setting up his standard in 1644, just before the decisive battle at Tippermuir, on the 1st September in that year. At that time, Stewart of Ardvoirlich shared the confidence of the young Lord by day, and his bed by night, when, about four or five days after the battle, Ardvoirlich, either from a fit of sudden fury or deep malice long entertained against his unsuspecting friend, stabbed Lord Kilpont to the heart, and escaped from the camp of Montrose, having killed a sentinel who attempted to detain him. Bishop Guthrie gives as a reason for this villainous action, that Lord Kilpont had rejected with abhorrence a proposal of Ardvoirlich to assassinate Montrose. But it does not appear that there is any authority for this charge, which rests on mere suspicion. Ardvoirlich, the assassin, certainly did fly to the Covenanters, and was employed and promoted by them. He obtained a pardon for the slaughter of Lord Kilpont, confirmed by Parliament in 1644, and was made Major of Argyle's regiment in 1648. Such are the facts of the tale, here given as a Legend of Montrose's wars. The reader will find they are considerably altered in the fictitious narrative.

The author has endeavoured to enliven the tragedy of the tale by the introduction of a personage proper to the time and country. In this he has been held by excellent judges to have been in some degree successful. The contempt of commerce entertained by young men having some pretence to gentility, the poverty of the country of Scotland, the national disposition to wandering and to adventure, all conduced to lead the Scots abroad into the military service of countries which were at war with each other. They were distinguished on the Continent by their bravery; but in adopting the trade of mercenary soldiers, they necessarily injured their national character. The tincture of learning, which most of them possessed, degenerated into pedantry; their good breeding became mere ceremonial; their fear of dishonour no longer kept them aloof from that which was really unworthy, but was made to depend on certain punctilious observances totally apart from that which was in itself deserving of praise. A cavalier of honour, in search of his fortune, might, for example, change his service as he would his shirt; fight, like the doughty Captain Dalgetty, in one cause after another, without regard to the justice of the quarrel, and might plunder the peasantry subjected to him by the fate of war with the most unrelenting rapacity; but he must beware how he sustained the slightest reproach, even from a clergyman, if it had regard to neglect on the score of duty. The following occurrence will prove the truth of what I mean:—

"Here I must not forget the memory of one preacher, Master William Forbesse, a preacher for souldiers, yea, and a captaine in neede to leade souldiers on a good occasion, being full of courage, with discretion and good conduct, beyond some captaines I have knowne, that were not so capable as he. At this time he not onely prayed for us, but went on with us, to remarke, as I thinke, men's carriage; and having found a sergeant neglecting his dutie and his honour at such a time, (whose name I will not expresse,) having chidden him, did promise to reveale him unto me, as he did after their service. The sergeant being called before me,

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[1] See Appendix. No. I.

[2] See Appendix. No. II.

[3] I embrace the opportunity given me by a second mention of this tribe, to notice an error, which imputes to an individual named Ciar Mohr MacGregor, the slaughter of the students at the battle of Glenfruin. I am informed from the authority of John Gregorson, Esq. that the chieftain so named was dead nearly a century before the battle in question, and could not, therefore, have done the cruel action mentioned. The mistake does not rest with me, as I disclaimed being responsible for the tradition while I quoted it, but with vulgar fame, which is always disposed to ascribe remarkable actions to a remarkable name.—See the erroneous passage, Rob Roy, Introduction, p. 3; and so soft sleep the offended phantom of Dugald Ciar Mohr.

and accused, did deny his accusation, alleaging, if he were no pastour that had alleaged it, he would not lie under the injury. The preacher offered to fight with him, [in proof] that it was truth he had spoken of him; whereupon I cashiered the sergeant, and gave his place to a worthier, called Mungo Gray, a gentleman of good worth, and of much courage. The sergeant being cashiered, never called Master William to account, for which he was evill thought of; so that he retired home, and quit the warres."

The above quotation is taken from a work which the author repeatedly consulted while composing the following sheets, and which is in great measure written in the humour of Captain Dugald Dalgetty. It bears the following formidable title:—"Monro his Expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment, called MacKeye's Regiment, levied in August 1626, by Sir Donald MacKeye Lord Rees Colonel, for his Majestie's service of Denmark, and reduced after the battle of Nerling, in September 1634, at Wormes, in the Palz: Discharged in several duties and observations of service, first, under the magnanimous King of Denmark, during his wars against the Empire; afterwards under the invincible King of Sweden, during his Majestie's lifetime; and since under the Director-General, the Rex-Chancellor Oxensterne, and his Generals: Collected and gathered together, at spare hours, by Colonel Robert Monro, as First Lieutenant under the said Regiment, to the noble and worthy Captain Thomas MacKenzie of Kildon, brother to the noble Lord, the Lord Earl of Seaforth, for the use of all noble Cavaliers favouring the laudable profession of arms. To which is annexed, the Abridgement of Exercise, and divers Practical Observations for the Younger Officer, his consideration. Ending with the Soldier's Meditations on going on Service."—London, 1637.

Another worthy of the same school, and nearly the same views of the military character, is Sir James Turner, a soldier of fortune, who rose to considerable rank in the reign of Charles II., had a command in Galloway and Dumfries-shire, for the suppression of conventicles, and was made prisoner by the insurgent Covenanters in that rising which was followed by the battle of Pentland. Sir James is a person even of superior pretensions to Lieutenant-Colonel Monro, having written a military Treatise on the Pike-Exercise, called "Pallas Armata." Moreover, he was educated at Glasgow College, though he escaped to become an Ensign in the German wars, instead of taking his degree of Master of Arts at that learned seminary.

In latter times, he was author of several discourses on historical and literary subjects, from which the Bannatyne Club have extracted and printed such passages as concern his Life and Times, under the title of "Sir James Turner's Memoirs." From this curious book I extract the following passage, as an example of how Captain Dalgetty might have recorded such an incident had he kept a journal; or, to give it a more just character, it is such as the genius of De Foe would have devised, to give the minute and distinguishing features of truth to a fictitious narrative:—

"Heere I will set doun ane accident befell me; for thogh it was not a very strange one, yet it was a very od one in all its parts. My tuo brigads lay in a village within halfe a mile of Applebie; my own quarter was in a gentleman's house, who was a Ritmaster, and at that time with Sir Marmaduke; his wife keepd her chamber, readie to be brought to bed. The castle being over, and Lambert farre enough, I resolved to goe to bed everie night, haveing had fatigue enough before. The first night I sleepd well enough; and riseing nixt morning, I misd one linnen stockine, one halfe silke one, and one boothose, the accoustrement under a boote for one leg; neither could they be found for any search. Being provided of more of the same kind, I made myselfe reddie, and rode to the head-quarters. At my returne, I could heare no news of my stockins. That night I went to bed, and nixt morning found myselfe just so used; missing the three stockins for one leg onlie, the other three being left intire as they were the day before. A narrower search than the first was made, bot without successe. I had yet in reserve one paire of whole stockings, and a paire of boothose, greater then the former. These I put on my legs. The third morning I found the same usage, the stockins for one leg onlie left me. It was time for me then, and my servants too, to imagine it must be rats that had shard my stockins so inequallie with me; and this the mistress of the house knew well enough, bot wold not tell it me. The roome, which was a low parlour, being well searched with candles, the top of my great boothose was found at a hole, in which they had drawne all the rest. I went abroad and orderd the boards to be raised, to see how the rats had disposd of my moveables. The mistress sent a servant of her oune to be present at this action, which she knew concernd her. One board being bot a litle opend, a litle boy of mine thrust in his hand, and fetchd with him foure and tuentie old peeces of gold, and one angell. The servant of the house affirmed it appertaind to his mistres. The boy bringing the gold to me, I went immediatlie to the gentlewomans chamber, and told her, it was probable Lambert haveing quarterd in that house, as indeed he had, some of his servants might have hid that gold; and if so, it was lawfullie mine; bot if she could make it appeare it belongd to her, I sould immediatlie give it her. The poore gentlewoman told me with many teares, that her husband being none of the frugallest men, (and indeed he was a spendthrift) she had hid that gold without his knowledge, to make use of it as she had occasion, especiallie when she lay in; and conjured me, as I lovd the King, (for whom her husband and she had sufferd much) not to detaine her gold. She said, if there was either more or lesse than foure and

tuentie whole peeces, and two halfe ones, it sould be none of hers; and that they were put by her in a red velvet purse. After I had given her assureance of her gold, a new search is made, the other angell is found, the velvet purse all gnawd in bits, as my stockins were, and the gold instantlie restord to the gentlewoman. I have often heard that the eating or gnawing of cloths by rats is ominous, and portends some mischance to fall on these to whom the cloths belong. I thank God I was never addicted to such divinations, or heeded them. It is true, that more misfortunes then one fell on me shortlie after; bot I am sure I could have better forseene them myselfe then rats or any such vermine, and yet did it not. I have heard indeed many fine stories told of rats, how they abandon houses and ships, when the first are to be burnt, and the second dround. Naturalists say they are very sagacious creatures, and I beleeve they are so; bot I shall never be of the opinion they can forsee future contingencies, which I suppose the divell himselfe can neither forknow nor fortell; these being things which the Almightie hath keepd hidden in the bosome of his divine prescience. And whither the great God hath preordained or predestinated these things, which to us are contingent, to fall out by ane uncontrollable and unavoidable necessitie, is a question not yet decided."[1]

In quoting these ancient authorities, I must not forget the more modern sketch of a Scottish soldier of the old fashion, by a master-hand, in the character of Lesmahagow, since the existence of that doughty captain alone must deprive the present author of all claim to absolute originality. Still Dalgetty, as the production of his own fancy, has been so far a favourite with its parent, that he has fallen into the error of assigning to the Captain too prominent a part in the story. This is the opinion of a critic who encamps on the highest pinnacles of literature; and the author is so far fortunate in having incurred his censure, that it gives his modesty a decent apology for quoting the praise, which it would have ill-befitted him to bring forward in an unmingled state. The passage occurs in the Edinburgh Review, No. 55, containing a criticism on Ivanhoe:—

"There is too much, perhaps, of Dalgetty,—or, rather, he engrosses too great a proportion of the work,—for, in himself, we think he is uniformly entertaining; and the author has nowhere shewn more affinity to that matchless spirit who could bring out his Falstaffs and his Pistols, in act after act, and play after play, and exercise them every time with scenes of unbounded loquacity, without either exhausting their humour, or varying a note from its characteristic tone, than in his large and reiterated specimens of the eloquence of the redoubted Ritt-master. The general idea of the character is familiar to our comic dramatists after the Restoration—and may be said in some measure to be compounded of Captain Fluellen and Bobadil; but the ludicrous combination of the *soldado* with the divinity student of Mareschal College, is entirely original; and the mixture of talent, selfishness, courage, coarseness, and conceit, was never so happily exemplified. Numerous as his speeches are, there is not one that is not charac teristic—and, to our taste, divertingly ludicrous."

[1] Sir James Turner's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 59.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE scarcity of my late friend's poem may be an excuse for adding the spirited conclusion of Clan Alpin's vow. The Clan Gregor has met in the ancient church of Balquidder. The head of Drummond-Ernoch is placed on the altar, covered for a time with the banner of the tribe. The Chief of the tribe advances to the altar:

"And pausing, on the banner gazed:
Then cried in scorn, his finger raised,
'This was the boon of Scotland's king;'
And, with a quick and angry fling,
Tossing the pageant screen away,
The dead man's head before him lay.
Unmoved he scann'd the visage o'er,
The clotted locks were dark with gore,
The features with convulsion grim,
The eyes contorted, sunk, and dim,
But unappall'd, in angry mood,
With lowering brow, unmoved he stood,
Upon the head his bared right hand
He laid, the other grasp'd his brand:
Then kneeling, cried, 'To Heaven I swear
This deed of death I own, and share;
As truly, fully mine, as though
This my right hand had dealt the blow;
Come then, our foemen, one, come all;
If to revenge this caitiff's fall
One blade is bared, one bow is drawn,
Mine everlasting peace I pawn,
To claim from them, or claim from him,
In retribution, limb for limb.
In sudden fray, or open strife,
This steel shall render life for life.'

"He ceased; and at his beckoning nod,
The clansmen to the altar trod;
And not a whisper breathed around,
And nought was heard of mortal sound,
Save from the clanking arms they bore,
That rattled on the marble floor;
And each, as he approach'd in haste,
Upon the scalp his right hand placed;
With livid lip, and gather'd brow,
Each utter'd, in his turn, the vow.
Fierce Malcolm watch'd the passing scene,
And search'd them through with glances keen;
Then dash'd a tear-drop from his eye;
Unbid it came—he knew not why.
Exulting high, he towering stood:
'Kinsmen,' he cried, 'of Alpin's blood,
And worthy of Clan Alpin's name,
Unstain'd by cowardice and shame,
E'en do, spare nocht, in time of ill
Shall be Clan Alpin's legend still!'"

INTRODUCTION TO A LEGEND OF MONTROSE.

No. II.

It has been disputed whether the Children of the Mist were actual MacGregors, or whether they were not outlaws named MacDonald, belonging to Ardnamurchan. The following act of the Privy Council seems to decide the question:—

"*Edinburgh, 4th February*, 1589.

"The same day, the Lords of Secret Council being crediblie informed of ye cruel and mischeivous proceeding of ye wicked Clangrigor, so lang continueing in blood, slaughters, herships, manifest reifts, and stouths committed upon his Hieness' peaceable and good subjects; inhabiting ye countries ewest ye brays of ye Highlands, thir money years bygone; but specially heir after ye cruel murder of umqll Jo. Drummond of Drummoneyryuch, his Majesties proper tennant, and ane of his fosters of Glenartney, committed upon ye day of last bypast, be certain of ye said clan, be ye council and determination of ye haill, avow and to defend ye authors yrof qoever wald persew for revenge of ye same, qll ye said Jo. was occupied in seeking of venison to his Hieness, at command of Pat. Lord Drummond, stewart of Stratharne, and principal forrester of Glenartney; the Queen, his Majesties dearest spouse, being yn shortlie looked for to arrive in this realm. Likeas, after ye murder committed, ye authors yrof cutted off ye said umqll Jo. Drummond's head, and carried the same to the Laird of M'Grigor, who, and the haill surname of M'Grigors, purposely conveined upon the Sunday yrafter, at the Kirk of Buchquhidder; qr they caused ye said umqll John's head to be pnted to ym, and yr avowing ye sd murder to have been committed by yr communion, council, and determination, laid yr hands upon the pow, and in eithnik, and barbarous manner, swear to defend ye authors of ye sd murder, in maist proud contempt of our sovrn Lord and his authoritie, and in evil example to others wicked limmaris to do ye like, give ys sall be suffered to remain unpunished."

Then follows a commission to the Earls of Huntly, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, Pat. Lord Drummond, Ja. Commendator of Incheffray, And. Campbel of Lochinnel, Duncan Campbel of Ardkinglas, Lauchlane M'Intosh of Dunnauchtane, Sir Jo. Murrya of Tullibarden, knt., Geo. Buchanan of that Ilk, and And. M'Farlane of Ariquocher, to search for and apprehend Alaster M'Grigor of Glenstre, (and a number of others nominatim,) "and all others of the said Clangrigor, or ye assistars, culpable of the said odious murther, or of thift, reset of thift, herships, and sornings, qrever they may be apprehended. And if they refuse to be taken, or flees to strengths and houses, to pursue and assege them with fire and sword; and this commission to endure for the space of three years."

Such was the system of police in 1589; and such the state of Scotland nearly thirty years after the Reformation.

POSTSCRIPT.

While these pages were passing through the press, the author received a letter from the present Robert Stewart of Ardvoirlich, favouring him with the account of the unhappy slaughter of Lord Kilpont, differing from, and more probable than, that given by Bishop Wishart, whose narrative infers either insanity or the blackest treachery on the part of James Stewart of Ardvoirlich, the ancestor of the present family of that name. It is but fair to give the entire communication as received from my respected correspondent, which is more minute than the histories of the period.

"Although I have not the honour of being personally known to you, I hope you will excuse the liberty I now take, in addressing you on the subject of a transaction more than once alluded to by you, in which an ancestor of mine was unhappily concerned. I allude to the slaughter of Lord Kilpont, son of the Earl of Airth and Monteith, in 1644, by James Stewart of Ardvoirlich. As the cause of this unhappy event, and the quarrel which led to it, have never been correctly stated in any history of the period in which it took place, I am induced, in consequence of your having, in the second series of your admirable Tales on the History of Scotland, adopted Wishart's version of the transaction, and being aware that your having done so will stamp it with an authenticity which it does not merit, and with a view, as far as possible, to do justice to the memory of my unfortunate ancestor, to send you the account of this affair as it has been handed down in the family.

"James Stewart of Ardvoirlich, who lived in the early part of the 17th century, and who was the unlucky cause of the slaughter of Lord Kilpont, as before mentioned, was appointed to the command of one of several independent companies raised in the Highlands at the commencement of the troubles in the reign of Charles I.; another of these companies was under the command of Lord Kilpont, and a strong intimacy, strengthened by a distant relationship, subsisted between them. When Montrose raised the royal standard, Ardvoirlich was one of the first to declare for him, and is said to have been a principal means of bringing over Lord Kilpont to the same cause; and they accordingly, along with Sir John Drummond and their respective followers, joined Montrose, as recorded by Wishart, at Buchanty. While they served together, so strong was their intimacy, that they lived and slept in the same tent.

"In the meantime, Montrose had been joined by the Irish under the command of Alexander Macdonald; these, on their march to join Montrose, had committed some excesses on lands belonging to Ardvoirlich, which lay in the line of their march from the west coast. Of this Ardvoirlich complained to Montrose, who, probably wishing as much as possible to conciliate his new allies, treated it in rather an evasive manner. Ardvoirlich, who was a man of violent passions, having failed to receive

such satisfaction as he required, challenged Macdonald to single combat. Before they met, however, Montrose, on the information and by advice, as it is said, of Kilpont, laid them both under arrest. Montrose, seeing the evils of such a feud at such a critical time, effected a sort of reconciliation between them, and forced them to shake hands in his presence; when, it was said, that Ardvoirlich, who was a very powerful man, took such a hold of Macdonald's hand as to make the blood start from his fingers. Still, it would appear, Ardvoirlich was by no means reconciled.

"A few days after the battle of Tippermuir, when Montrose with his army was encamped at Collace, an entertainment was given by him to his officers, in honour of the victory he had obtained, and Kilpont and his comrade Ardvoirlich were of the party. After returning to their quarters, Ardvoirlich, who seemed still to brood over his quarrel with Macdonald, and being heated with drink, began to blame Lord Kilpont for the part he had taken in preventing his obtaining redress, and reflecting against Montrose for not allowing him what he considered proper reparation. Kilpont of course defended the conduct of himself and his relative Montrose, till their argument came to high words, and finally, from the state they were both in, by an easy transition, to blows, when Ardvoirlich, with his dirk, struck Kilpont dead on the spot. He immediately fled, and under the cover of a thick mist escaped pursuit, leaving his eldest son Henry, who had been mortally wounded at Tippermuir, on his deathbed.

"His followers immediately withdrew from Montrose, and no course remained for him but to throw himself into the arms of the opposite faction, by whom he was well received. His name is frequently mentioned in Leslie's campaigns, and on more than one occasion he is mentioned as having afforded protection to several of his former friends through his interest with Leslie, when the King's cause became desperate.

"The foregoing account of this unfortunate transaction, I am well aware, differs materially from the account given by Wishart, who alleges that Stewart had laid a plot for the assassination of Montrose, and that he murdered Lord Kilpont in consequence of his refusal to participate in his design. Now, I may be allowed to remark, that besides Wishart having always been regarded as a partial historian, and very questionable authority on any subject connected with the motives or conduct of those who differed from him in opinion, that even had Stewart formed such a design, Kilpont, from his name and connections, was likely to be the very last man of whom Stewart would choose to make a confidant and accomplice. On the other hand, the above account, though never, that I am aware, before hinted at, has been a constant tradition in the family; and, from the comparative recent date of the transaction, and the sources from which the tradition has been derived, I have no reason to doubt its perfect authenticity. It was most circumstantially detailed as above, given to my father, Mr Stewart, now of Ardvoirlich, many years ago, by a man nearly connected with the family, who lived to the age of 100. This man was a great-grandson of James Stewart, by a natural son John, of whom many stories are still current in this country, under his appellation of *John dhu Mhor*. This John was with his father at the time, and of course was a witness of the whole transaction; he lived till a considerable time after the Revolution, and it was from him that my father's informant, who was a man before his grandfather John dhu Mhor's death, received the information as above stated.

"I have many apologies to offer for trespassing so long on your patience; but I felt a natural desire, if possible, to correct what I conceive to be a groundless imputation on the memory of my ancestor, before it shall come to be considered as a matter of history. That he was a man of violent passions and singular temper, I do not pretend to deny, as many traditions still current in this country amply verify; but that he was capable of forming a design to assassinate Montrose, the whole tenor of his former conduct and principles contradict. That he was obliged to join the opposite party, was merely a matter of safety, while Kilpont had so many powerful friends and connections able and ready to avenge his death.

"I have only to add, that you have my full permission to make what use of this communication you please, and either to reject it altogether, or allow it such credit as you think it deserves; and I shall be ready at all times to furnish you with any farther information on this subject which you may require, and which it may be in my power to afford.

"ARDVOIRLICH,
15th January, 1830."

The publication of a statement so particular, and probably so correct, is a debt due to the memory of James Stewart; the victim, it would seem, of his own violent passions, but perhaps incapable of an act of premeditated treachery.

ABBOTSFORD,
1st August, 1830.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION (1819.)

Sergeant More M'Alpin was, during his residence among us, one of the most honoured inhabitants of Gandercleugh. No one thought of disputing his title to the great leathern chair on the "cosiest side of the chimney," in the common room of the Wallace Arms, on a Saturday evening. No less would our sexton, John Duirward, have held it an unlicensed intrusion, to suffer any one to induct himself into the corner of the left-hand pew nearest to the pulpit, which the Sergeant regularly occupied on Sundays. There he sat, his blue invalid uniform brushed with the most scrupulous accuracy. Two medals of merit displayed at his button-hole, as well as the empty sleeve which should have been occupied by his right arm, bore evidence of his hard and honourable service. His weatherbeaten features, his grey hair tied in a thin queue in the military fashion of former days, and the right side of his head a little turned up, the better to catch the sound of the clergyman's voice, were all marks of his profession and infirmities. Beside him sat his sister Janet, a little neat old woman, with a Highland curch and tartan plaid, watching the very looks of her brother, to her the greatest man upon earth, and actively looking out for him, in his silver-clasped Bible, the texts which the minister quoted or expounded.

I believe it was the respect that was universally paid to this worthy veteran by all ranks in Gandercleugh, which induced him to choose our village for his residence, for such was by no means his original intention.

He had risen to the rank of sergeant-major of artillery, by hard service in various quarters of the world, and was reckoned one of the most tried and trusty men of the Scotch Train. A ball, which shattered his arm in a Peninsular campaign, at length procured him an honourable discharge, with an allowance from Chelsea, and a handsome gratuity from the patriotic fund. Moreover, Sergeant More M'Alpin had been prudent as well as valiant; and, from prize-money and savings, had become master of a small sum in the three per cent consols.

He retired with the purpose of enjoying this income in the wild Highland glen in which, when a boy, he had herded black cattle and goats, ere the roll of the drum had made him cock his bonnet an inch higher, and follow its music for nearly forty years. To his recollection, this retired spot was unparalleled in beauty by the richest scenes he had visited in his wanderings. Even the Happy Valley of Rasselas would have sunk into nothing upon the comparison. He came—he revisited the loved scene; it was but a steril glen, surrounded with rude crags, and traversed by a northern torrent. This was not the worst. The fires had been quenched upon thirty hearths—of the cottage of his fathers he could but distinguish a few rude stones—the language was almost extinguished—the ancient race from which he boasted his descent had found a refuge beyond the Atlantic. One southland farmer, three grey-plaided shepherds, and six dogs, now tenanted the whole glen, which in his youth had maintained in content, if not in competence, upwards of two hundred inhabitants.

In the house of the new tenant, Sergeant M'Alpin found, however, an unexpected source of pleasure, and a means of employing his social affections. His sister Janet had fortunately entertained so strong a persuasion that her brother would one day return, that she had refused to accompany her kinsfolk upon their emigration. Nay, she had consented, though not without a feeling of degradation, to take service with the intruding Lowlander, who, though a Saxon, she said, had proved a kind man to her. This unexpected meeting with his sister seemed a cure for all the disappointments which it had been Sergeant More's lot to encounter, although it was not without a reluctant tear that he heard told, as a Highland woman alone could tell it, the story of the expatriation of his kinsmen.

She narrated at great length the vain offers they had made of advanced rent, the payment of which must have reduced them to the extremity of poverty, which they were yet contented to face, for permission to live and die on their native soil. Nor did Janet forget the portents which had announced the departure of the Celtic race, and the arrival of the strangers. For two years previous to the emigration, when the night wind howled down the pass of Balachra, its notes were distinctly modelled to the tune of, "*Ha til mi tulidh*," ("We return no more,") with which the emigrants usually bid farewell to their native shores. The uncouth cries of the Southland shepherds, and the barking of their dogs, were often heard in the mist of the hills long before their actual arrival. A bard, the last of his race, had commemorated the expulsion of the natives of the glen in a tune, which brought tears into the aged eyes of the veteran, and of which the first stanza may be thus rendered:—

> Wo, wo, son of the Lowlander,
> Why wilt thou leave thine own bonny Border?
> Why comes thou hither, disturbing the Highlander,
> Wasting the glen that was once in fair order?

What added to Sergeant More M'Alpin's distress upon the occasion was, that the chief by whom this change had been effected, was, by tradition and

common opinion, held to represent the ancient leaders and fathers of the expelled fugitives; and it had hitherto been one of Sergeant More's principal subjects of pride to prove, by genealogical deduction, in what degree of kindred he stood to this personage. A woful change was now wrought in his sentiments towards him.

"I cannot curse him," he said, as he rose and strode through the room, when Janet's narrative was finished—"I will not curse him; he is the descendant and representative of my fathers. But never shall mortal man hear me name his name again." And he kept his word; for, until his dying day, no man heard him mention his selfish and hard-hearted chieftain.

After giving a day to sad recollections, the hardy spirit which had carried him through so many dangers, manned the Sergeant's bosom against this cruel disappointment. "He would go," he said, "to Canada to his kinsfolk, where they had named a Transatlantic valley after the glen of their fathers. Janet," he said, "should kilt her coats like a leaguer lady; d—n the distance! it was a flea's leap to the voyages and marches he had made on a slighter occasion."

With this purpose he left the Highlands, and came with his sister as far as Gandercleugh, on his way to Glasgow, to take a passage to Canada. But winter was now set in, and as he thought it advisable to wait for a spring passage, when the St Lawrence should be open, he settled among us for the few months of his stay in Britain. As we said before, the respectable old man met with deference and attention from all ranks of society; and when spring returned, he was so satisfied with his quarters, that he did not renew the purpose of his voyage. Janet was afraid of the sea, and he himself felt the infirmities of age and hard service more than he had at first expected. And, as he confessed to the clergyman, and my worthy principal, Mr Cleishbotham, "it was better staying with kend friends, than going farther and faring worse."

He therefore established himself and his domicile at Gandercleugh, to the great satisfaction, as we have already said, of all its inhabitants, to whom he became, in respect of military intelligence, and able commentaries upon the newspapers, gazettes, and bulletins, a very oracle, explanatory of all martial events, past, present, or to come.

It is true, the Sergeant had his inconsistencies. He was a steady jacobite, his father and his four uncles having been out in the forty-five; but he was a no less steady adherent of King George, in whose service he had made his little fortune, and lost three brothers; so that you were in equal danger to displease him, in terming Prince Charles the Pretender, or by saying any thing derogatory to the dignity of King George. Farther, it must not be denied, that when the day of receiving his dividends came around, the Sergeant was apt to tarry longer at the Wallace Arms of an evening, than was consistent with strict temperance, or indeed with his worldly interest; for upon these occasions, his compotators sometimes contrived to flatter his partialities by singing jacobite songs, and drinking confusion to Bonaparte, and the health of the Duke of Wellington, until the Sergeant was not only flattered into paying the whole reckoning, but occasionally induced to lend small sums to his interested companions. After such sprays, as he called them, were over, and his temper once more cool, he seldom failed to thank God, and the Duke of York, who had made it much more difficult for an old soldier to ruin himself by his folly, than had been the case in his younger days.

It was not on such occasions that I made a part of Sergeant More M'Alpin's society. But often, when my leisure would permit, I used to seek him, on what he called his morning and evening parade, on which, when the weather was fair, he appeared as regularly as if summoned by tuck of drum. His morning walk was beneath the elms in the churchyard; "for death," he said, "had been his next-door neighbour for so many years, that he had no apology for dropping the acquaintance." His evening promenade was on the bleaching-green by the river-side, where he was sometimes to be seen on an open bench, with spectacles on nose, conning over the newspapers to a circle of village politicians, explaining military terms, and aiding the comprehension of his hearers by lines drawn on the ground with the end of his rattan. On other occasions, he was surrounded by a bevy of school-boys, whom he sometimes drilled to the manual, and sometimes, with less approbation on the part of their parents, instructed in the mystery of artificial fire-works; for in the case of public rejoicings, the Sergeant was pyrotechnist (as the Encyclopedia calls it) to the village of Gandercleugh.

It was in his morning walk that I most frequently met with the veteran. And I can hardly yet look upon the village footpath, overshadowed by the row of lofty elms, without thinking I see his upright form advancing towards me with measured step, and his cane advanced, ready to pay me the military salute—But he is dead, and sleeps, with his faithful Janet, under the third of those very trees, counting from the stile at the west corner of the churchyard.

The delight which I had in Sergeant M'Alpin's conversation, related not only to his own adventures, of which he had encountered many in the course of a wandering life, but also to his recollection of numerous Highland traditions, in which his youth had been instructed by his parents, and of which he would in after life have deemed it a kind of heresy to question the authenticity. Many of these belonged to the wars of Montrose, in which some of the Sergeant's ancestry had, it seems, taken a distinguished part. It has happened, that, although these civil commotions reflect the highest honour upon the Highlanders, being indeed the first occasion upon which they shewed themselves superior, or even equal to their Lowcountry neighbours in military encounters, they have been less commemorated among them than any one would have expected, judging from the abundance of traditions which they have preserved upon less interesting subjects. It was, therefore, with great pleasure, that I extracted from my military friend some curious particulars respecting that time; they are mixed with that measure of the wild and wonderful which belongs to the period and the narrator, but which I do not in the least object to the reader's treating with disbelief, provided he will be so good as give implicit credit to the natural events of the story, which, like all those which I have had the honour to put under his notice, actually rest upon a basis of truth.

A Legend of Montrose.

CHAPTER I.

Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun,
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery,
And prove their doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks.
BUTLER.

It was during the period of that great and bloody Civil War which agitated Britain during the seventeenth century, that our tale has its commencement. Scotland had as yet remained free from the ravages of intestine war, although its inhabitants were much divided in political opinions; and many of them, tired of the control of the Estates of Parliament, and disapproving of the bold measure which they had adopted, by sending into England a large army to the assistance of the Parliament, were determined on their part to embrace the earliest opportunity of declaring for the King, and making such a diversion as should at least compel the recall of General Leslie's army out of England, if it did not recover a great part of Scotland to the King's allegiance. This plan was chiefly adopted by the northern nobility, who had resisted with great obstinacy the adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant, and by many of the chiefs of the Highland clans, who conceived their interest and authority to be connected with royalty, who had, besides, a decided aversion to the Presbyterian form of religion, and who, finally, were in that half savage state of society, in which war is always more welcome than peace.

Great commotions were generally expected to arise from these concurrent causes; and the trade of incursion and depredation, which the Scottish Highlanders at all times exercised upon the Lowlands, began to assume a more steady, avowed, and systematic form, as part of a general military system.

Those at the head of affairs were not insensible to the peril of the moment, and anxiously made preparations to meet and to repel it. They considered, however, with satisfaction, that no leader or name of consequence had as yet appeared to assemble an army of royalists, or even to direct the efforts of those desultory bands, whom love of plunder, perhaps, as much as political principle, had hurried into measures of hostility. It was generally hoped that the quartering a sufficient number of troops in the Lowlands adjacent to the Highland line, would have the effect of restraining the mountain chieftains; while the power of various barons in the north, who had espoused the Covenant, as, for example, the Earl Mareschal, the great families of Forbes, Leslie, and Irvine, the Grants, and other Presbyterian clans, might counterbalance and bridle not only the strength of the Ogilvies and other cavaliers of Angus and Kincardine, but even the potent family of the Gordons, whose extensive authority was only equalled by their extreme dislike to the Presbyterian model.

In the West Highlands the ruling party numbered many enemies; but the power of these disaffected clans was supposed to be broken, and the spirit of their chieftains intimidated, by the predominating influence of the Marquis of Argyle, upon whom the confidence of the Convention of Estates was reposed with the utmost security; and whose power in the Highlands, already exorbitant, had been still farther increased by concessions extorted from the King at the last pacification. It was indeed well known that Argyle was a man rather of political enterprise than personal courage, and better calculated to manage an intrigue of state, than to control the tribes of hostile mountaineers; yet the numbers of his clan, and the spirit of the gallant gentlemen by whom it was led, might, it was supposed, atone for the personal deficiencies of their chief; and as the Campbells had already severely humbled several of the neighbouring tribes, it was supposed these would not readily again provoke an encounter with a body so powerful.

Thus having at their command the whole west and south of Scotland, indisputably the richest part of the kingdom,—Fifeshire being in a peculiar manner their own, and possessing many and powerful friends even north of the Forth and Tay,—the Scottish Convention of Estates saw no danger sufficient to induce them to alter the line of policy they had adopted, or to recall from the assistance of their brethren of the English Parliament that auxiliary army of twenty thousand men, by means of which accession of strength, the King's party had been reduced to the defensive, when in full career of triumph and success.

The causes which moved the Convention of Estates at this time to take such an immediate and active interest in the civil war of England, are detailed in our historians, but may be here shortly recapitulated. They had indeed no new injury or aggression to complain of at the hand of the King, and the peace which had been made between Charles and his subjects of Scotland had been carefully observed; but the Scottish rulers were well aware that this peace had been extorted from the King, as well by the influence of the parliamentary party in England, as by the terror of their own arms. It is true, King Charles had since then visited the capital of his ancient kingdom, had assented to the new organization of the church, and had distributed honours and rewards among the leaders of the party which had shewn themselves most hostile

to his interests; but it was suspected that distinctions so unwillingly conferred would be resumed as soon as opportunity offered. The low state of the English Parliament was seen in Scotland with deep apprehension; and it was concluded, that should Charles triumph by force of arms against his insurgent subjects of England, he would not be long in exacting from the Scots the vengeance which he might suppose due to those who had set the example of taking up arms against him. Such was the policy of the measure which dictated the sending the auxiliary army into England; and it was avowed in a manifesto explanatory of their reasons for giving this timely and important aid to the English Parliament. The English Parliament, they said, had been already friendly to them, and might be so again; whereas the King, although he had so lately established religion among them according to their desires, had given them no ground to confide in his royal declaration, seeing they had found his promises and actions inconsistent with each other. "Our conscience," they concluded, "and God, who is greater than our conscience, beareth us record, that we aim altogether at the glory of God, peace of both nations, and honour of the King, in suppressing and punishing in a legal way, those who are the troublers of Israel, the firebrands of hell, the Korahs, the Balaams, the Doegs, the Rabshakehs, the Hamans, the Tobiahs, the Sanballats of our time; which done, we are satisfied. Neither have we begun to use a military expedition to England as a mean for compassing those our pious ends, until all other means which we could think upon have failed us: and this alone is left to us, *ultimum et unicum remedium*, the last and only remedy."

Leaving it to casuists to determine whether one contracting party is justified in breaking a solemn treaty, upon the suspicion that, in certain future contingencies, it might be infringed by the other, we shall proceed to mention two other circumstances that had at least equal influence with the Scottish rulers and nation, with any doubts which they entertained of the King's good faith.

The first of these was the nature and condition of their army; headed by a poor and discontented nobility, under whom it was officered chiefly by Scottish soldiers of fortune, who had served in the German wars until they had lost almost all distinction of political principle, and even of country, in the adoption of the mercenary faith, that a soldier's principal duty was fidelity to the state or sovereign from whom he received his pay, without respect either to the justice of the quarrel, or to their own connection with either of the contending parties. To men of this stamp, Grotius applies the severe character—*Nullum vitæ genus est improbius, quam eorum, qui sine causæ respectu mercede conducti, militant.* To these mercenary soldiers, as well as to the needy gentry with whom they were mixed in command, and who easily imbibed the same opinions, the success of the late short invasion of England in 1641 was a sufficient reason for renewing so profitable an experiment. The good pay and free quarters of England had made a feeling impression upon the recollection of these military adventurers, and the prospect of again levying eight hundred and fifty pounds a-day, came in place of all arguments, whether of state or of morality.

Another cause inflamed the minds of the nation at large, no less than the tempting prospect of the wealth of England animated the soldiery. So much had been written and said on either side concerning the form of church government, that it had become a matter of infinitely more consequence in the eyes of the multitude than the doctrines of that gospel which both churches had embraced. The Prelatists and Presbyterians of the more violent kind became as illiberal as the Papists, and would scarcely allow the possibility of salvation beyond the pale of their respective churches. It was in vain remarked to these zealots, that had the Author of our holy religion considered any peculiar form of church government as essential to salvation, it would have been revealed with the same precision as under the Old Testament dispensation. Both parties continued as violent as if they could have pleaded the distinct commands of Heaven to justify their intolerance. Laud, in the days of his domination, had fired the train, by attempting to impose upon the Scottish people church ceremonies foreign to their habits and opinions. The success with which this had been resisted, and the Presbyterian model substituted in its place, had endeared the latter to the nation, as the cause in which they had triumphed. The Solemn League and Covenant, adopted with such zeal by the greater part of the kingdom, and by them forced, at the sword's point, upon the others, bore in its bosom, as its principal object, the establishing the doctrine and discipline of the Presbyterian church, and the putting down all error and heresy; and having attained for their own country an establishment of this golden candlestick, the Scots became liberally and fraternally anxious to erect the same in England. This they conceived might be easily attained by lending to the Parliament the effectual assistance of the Scottish forces. The Presbyterians, a numerous and powerful party in the English Parliament, had hitherto taken the lead in opposition to the King; while the Independents and other sectaries, who afterwards, under Cromwell, resumed the power of the sword, and overset the Presbyterian model both in Scotland and England, were as yet contented to lurk under the shelter of the wealthier and more powerful party. The prospect of bringing to a uniformity the kingdoms of England and Scotland in discipline and worship, seemed therefore as fair as it was desirable.

The celebrated Sir Henry Vane, one of the commissioners who negotiated the alliance betwixt England and Scotland, saw the influence which this bait had upon the spirits of those with whom he dealt; and although himself a violent Independent, he contrived at once to gratify and to elude the eager desires of the Presbyterians, by qualifying the obligation to reform the Church of England, as a change to be executed "according to the word of God, and the best reformed churches." Deceived by their own eagerness, themselves entertaining no doubts on the *Jus Divinum* of their own ecclesiastical establishments, and not holding it possible such doubts could be adopted by others, the Convention of Estates and the Kirk of Scotland conceived, that such expressions necessarily inferred the establishment of Presbytery; nor were they undeceived, until, when their help was no longer needful, the sectaries gave them to understand, that the phrase might be as well applied to Independency, or any other mode of worship, which those who were at the head of affairs at the time might consider as

agreeable "to the word of God, and the practice of the reformed churches." Neither were the outwitted Scottish less astonished to find, that the designs of the English sectaries struck against the monarchical constitution of Britain, it having been their intention to reduce the power of the King, but by no means to abrogate the office. They fared, however, in this respect, like rash physicians, who commence by over-physicking a patient, until he is reduced to a state of weakness, from which cordials are afterwards unable to recover him.

But these events were still in the womb of futurity. As yet the Scottish Parliament held their engagement with England consistent with justice, prudence, and piety, and their military undertaking seemed to succeed to their very wish. The junction of the Scottish army with those of Fairfax and Manchester, enabled the Parliamentary forces to besiege York, and to fight the desperate action of Long-Marston Moor, in which Prince Rupert and the Marquis of Newcastle were defeated. The Scottish auxiliaries, indeed, had less of the glory of this victory than their countrymen could desire. David Leslie, with their cavalry, fought bravely, and to them, as well as to Cromwell's brigade of Independents, the honour of the day belonged; but the old Earl of Leven, the covenanting general, was driven out of the field by the impetuous charge of Prince Rupert, and was thirty miles distant, in full flight towards Scotland, when he was overtaken by the news that his party had gained a complete victory.

The absence of these auxiliary troops, upon this crusade for the establishment of Presbyterianism in England, had considerably diminished the power of the Convention of Estates in Scotland, and had given rise to those agitations among the anti-covenanters, which we have noticed at the beginning of this chapter.

CHAPTER II.

His mother could for him as cradle set
Her husband's rusty iron corselet;
Whose jangling sound could hush her babe to rest,
That never plain'd of his uneasy nest;
Then did he dream of dreary wars at hand,
And woke, and fought, and won, ere he could stand.
HALL'S *Satires.*

It was towards the close of a summer's evening, during the anxious period which we have commemorated, that a young gentleman of quality, well mounted and armed, and accompanied by two servants, one of whom led a sumpter horse, rode slowly up one of those steep passes, by which the Highlands are accessible from the Lowlands of Perthshire.[1] Their course had lain for some time along the banks of a lake, whose deep waters reflected the crimson beams of the western sun. The broken path, which they pursued with some difficulty, was in some places shaded by ancient birches and oak trees, and in others overhung by fragments of huge rock. Elsewhere, the hill, which formed the northern side of this beautiful sheet of water, arose in steep, but less precipitous acclivity, and was arrayed in heath of the darkest purple. In the present times, a scene so romantic would have been judged to possess the highest charms for the traveller; but those who journey in days of doubt and dread, pay little attention to picturesque scenery.

The master kept, as often as the wood permitted, abreast of one or both of his domestics, and seemed earnestly to converse with them, probably because the distinctions of rank are readily set aside among those who are made to be sharers of common danger. The dispositions of the leading men who inhabited this wild country, and the probability of their taking part in the political convulsions that were soon expected, were the subjects of their conversation.

They had not advanced above half way up the lake, and the young gentleman was pointing to his attendants the spot where their intended road turned northwards, and, leaving the verge of the loch, ascended a ravine to the right hand, when they discovered a single horseman coming down the shore, as if to meet them. The gleam of the sunbeams upon his head-piece and corslet shewed that he was in armour, and the purpose of the other travellers required that he should not pass unquestioned. "We must know who he is," said the young gentleman, "and whither he is going." And putting spurs to his horse, he rode forward as fast as the rugged state of the road would permit, followed by his two attendants, until he reached the point where the pass along the side of the lake was intersected by that which descended from the ravine, securing thus against the possibility of the stranger eluding them, by turning into the latter road before they came up with him.

The single horseman had mended his pace, when he first observed the three riders advance rapidly towards him; but when he saw them halt and form a front, which completely occupied the path, he checked his horse, and advanced with great deliberation; so that each party had an opportunity to take a full survey of the other. The solitary stranger was mounted upon an able horse, fit for military service, and for the great weight which he had to carry, and his rider occupied his demipique, or war-saddle, with an air that shewed it was his familiar seat. He had a bright burnished head-piece, with a plume of feathers, together with a cuirass, thick enough to resist a musket-ball, and a back-piece of lighter materials. These defensive arms he wore over a buff jerkin, along with a pair of gauntlets, or steel gloves, the tops of which reached up to his elbow, and which, like the rest of his armour, were of bright steel. At the front of his military saddle hung a case of pistols, far beyond the ordinary size, nearly two feet in length, and carrying bullets of twenty to the pound. A buff belt, with a broad silver buckle, sustained on one side a long straight double-edged broadsword, with a strong guard, and a blade calculated either to strike or push. On the right side hung a dagger of about eighteen inches in length; a shoulder-belt sustained at his back a musketoon or blunderbuss, and was crossed by a bandelier containing his charges of ammunition. Thigh-pieces of steel, then termed taslets, met the tops of his huge jack-boots, and completed the equipage of a well-armed trooper of the period.

The appearance of the horseman himself corresponded well with his military equipage, to which he had the air of having been long inured. He

[1] The beautiful pass of Leny, near Callender, in Monteith, would, in some respects, answer the description.

was above the middle size, and of strength sufficient to bear with ease the weight of his weapons, offensive and defensive. His age might be forty and upwards, and his countenance was that of a resolute weather-beaten veteran, who had seen many fields, and brought away in token more than one scar. At the distance of about thirty yards he halted and stood fast, raised himself on his stirrups, as if to reconnoitre and ascertain the purpose of the opposite party, and brought his musketoon under his right arm, ready for use, if occasion should require it. In every thing but numbers, he had the advantage of those who seemed inclined to interrupt his passage.

The leader of the party was, indeed, well mounted and clad in a buff coat, richly embroidered, the half-military dress of the period; but his domestics had only coarse jackets of thick felt, which could scarce be expected to turn the edge of a sword, if wielded by a strong man; and none of them had any weapons, save swords and pistols, without which gentlemen, or their attendants, during those disturbed times, seldom stirred abroad.

When they had stood at gaze for about a minute, the younger gentleman gave the challenge which was then common in the mouth of all strangers who met in such circumstances—"For whom are you?"

"Tell me first," answered the soldier, "for whom are you?—the strongest party should speak first."

"We are for God and King Charles," answered the first speaker.—"Now tell your faction, you know ours."

"I am for God and my standard," answered the single horseman.

"And for which standard?" replied the chief of the other party—"Cavalier or Roundhead, King or Convention?"

"By my troth, sir," answered the soldier, "I would be loath to reply to you with an untruth, as a thing unbecoming a cavalier of fortune and a soldier. But to answer your query with beseeming veracity, it is necessary I should myself have resolved to whilk of the present divisions of the kingdom I shall ultimately adhere, being a matter whereon my mind is not as yet preceesely ascertained."

"I should have thought," answered the gentleman, "that, when loyalty and religion are at stake, no gentleman or man of honour could be long in choosing his party."

"Truly, sir," replied the trooper, "if ye speak this in the way of vituperation, as meaning to impugn my honour or genteelity, I would blithely put the same to issue, venturing in that quarrel with my single person against you three. But if you speak it in the way of logical ratiocination, whilk I have studied in my youth at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, I am ready to prove to ye *logicé*, that my resolution to defer, for a certain season, the taking upon me either of these quarrels, not only becometh me as a gentleman and a man of honour, but also as a person of sense and prudence, one imbued with humane letters in his early youth, and who, from thenceforward, has followed the wars under the banner of the invincible Gustavus, the Lion of the North, and under many other heroic leaders, both Lutheran and Calvinist, Papist and Arminian."

After exchanging a word or two with his domestics, the younger gentleman replied, "I should be glad, sir, to have some conversation with you upon so interesting a question, and should be proud if I can determine you in favour of the cause I have myself espoused. I ride this evening to a friend's house not three miles distant, whither, if you choose to accompany me, you shall have good quarters for the night, and free permission to take your own road in the morning, if you then feel no inclination to join with us."

"Whose word am I to take for this?" answered the cautious soldier—"A man must know his guarantee, or he may fall into an ambuscade."

"I am called," answered the younger stranger, "the Earl of Menteith, and, I trust, you will receive my honour as a sufficient security."

"A worthy nobleman," answered the soldier, "whose parole is not to be doubted." With one motion he replaced his musketoon at his back, and with another made his military salute to the young nobleman, and continuing to talk as he rode forward to join him—"And, I trust," said he, "my own assurance, that I will be *bon camarado* to your lordship in peace or in peril, during the time we shall abide together, will not be altogether vilipended in these doubtful times, when, as they say, a man's head is safer in a steel-cap than in a marble palace."

"I assure you, sir," said Lord Menteith, "that to judge from your appearance, I most highly value the advantage of your escort; but, I trust we shall have no occasion for any exercise of valour, as I expect to conduct you to good and friendly quarters."

"Good quarters, my lord," replied the soldier, "are always acceptable, and are only to be postponed to good pay or good booty,—not to mention the honour of a cavalier, or the needful points of commanded duty. And truly, my lord, your noble proffer is not the less welcome, in that I knew not preceesely this night where I and my poor companion" (patting his horse) "were to find lodgments."

"May I be permitted to ask, then," said Lord Menteith, "to whom I have the good fortune to stand quarter-master?"

"Truly, my lord," said the trooper, "my name is Dalgetty—Dugald Dalgetty, Ritt-master Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, at your honourable service to command. It is a name you may have seen in *Gallo Belgicus*, the *Swedish Intelligencer*, or, if you read High Dutch, in the *Fliegenden Mercoeur* of Leipsic. My father, my lord, having by unthrifty courses reduced a fair patrimony to a nonentity, I had no better shift, when I was eighteen years auld, than to carry the learning whilk I had acquired at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, my gentle bluid and designation of Drumthwacket, together with a pair of stalwarth arms, and legs conform, to the German wars, there to push my way as a cavalier of fortune. My lord, my legs and arms stood me in more stead than either my gentle kin or my book-lear, and I found myself trailing a pike as a private gentleman under old Sir Ludovick Leslie, where I learned the rules of service so tightly, that I will not forget them in a hurry. Sir, I have been made to stand guard eight hours, being from twelve at noon to eight o'clock of the night, at the palace, armed with back and breast, headpiece and bracelets, being iron to the teeth, in a bitter frost, and the ice was as hard as ever was

flint; and all for stopping an instant to speak to my landlady, when I should have gone to roll-call."

"And, doubtless, sir," replied Lord Menteith, "you have gone through some hot service, as well as this same cold duty you talk of?"

"Surely, my lord, it doth not become me to speak; but he that hath seen the fields of Leipsic and of Lutzen, may be said to have seen pitched battles. And one who hath witnessed the intaking of Frankfort, and Spanheim, and Nuremberg, and so forth, should know somewhat about leaguers, storms, onslaughts, and outfalls."

"But your merit, sir, and experience, were doubtless followed by promotion?"

"It came slow, my lord, dooms slow," replied Dalgetty; "but as my Scottish countrymen, the fathers of the war, and the raisers of those valorous Scottish regiments that were the dread of Germany, began to fall pretty thick, what with pestilence and what with the sword, why we, their children, succeeded to their inheritance. Sir, I was six years first private gentleman of the company, and three years lance speisade; disdaining to receive a halberd, as unbecoming my birth. Wherefore I was ultimately promoted to be a fahn-dragger, as the High Dutch call it, (which signifies an ancient,) in the King's Leif Regiment of Black Horse, and thereafter I arose to be lieutenant and ritt-master, under that invincible monarch, the bulwark of the Protestant faith, the Lion of the North, the terror of Austria, Gustavus the Victorious."

"And yet, if I understand you, Captain Dalgetty —I think that rank corresponds with your foreign title of ritt-master——"

"The same grade preceesely," answered Dalgetty; "ritt-master signifying literally file-leader."

"I was observing," continued Lord Menteith, "that, if I understood you right, you had left the service of this great Prince."

"It was after his death—it was after his death, sir," said Dalgetty, "when I was in no shape bound to continue mine adherence. There are things, my lord, in that service, that cannot but go against the stomach of any cavalier of honour. In especial, albeit the pay be none of the most superabundant, being only about sixty dollars a-month to a ritt-master, yet the invincible Gustavus never paid above one-third of that sum, whilk was distributed monthly by way of loan; although, when justly considered, it was, in fact, a borrowing by that great monarch of the additional two-thirds which were due to the soldier. And I have seen whole regiments of Dutch and Holsteiners mutiny on the field of battle, like base scullions, crying out 'Gelt, gelt,' signifying their desire of pay, instead of falling to blows like our noble Scottish blades, who ever disdained, my lord, postponing of honour to filthy lucre."

"But were not these arrears," said Lord Menteith, "paid to the soldiery at some stated period?"

"My lord," said Dalgetty, "I take it on my conscience, that at no period, and by no possible process, could one creutzer of them ever be recovered. I myself never saw twenty dollars of my own all the time I served the invincible Gustavus, unless it was from the chance of a storm or victory, or the fetching in some town or doorp, when a cavalier of fortune, who knows the usage of wars, seldom faileth to make some small profit."

"I begin rather to wonder, sir," said Lord Menteith, "that you should have continued so long in the Swedish service, than that you should have ultimately withdrawn from it."

"Neither I should," answered the Ritt-master; "but that great leader, captain, and king, the Lion of the North, and the bulwark of the Protestant faith, had a way of winning battles, taking towns, overrunning countries, and levying contributions, whilk made his service irresistibly delectable to all true-bred cavaliers who follow the noble profession of arms. Simple as I ride here, my lord, I have myself commanded the whole stift of Dunklespiel on the Lower Rhine, occupying the Palsgrave's palace, consuming his choice wines with my comrades, calling in contributions, requisitions, and caduacs, and not failing to lick my fingers, as became a good cook. But truly all this glory hastened to decay, after our great master had been shot with three bullets on the field of Lutzen; wherefore, finding that Fortune had changed sides, that the borrowings and lendings went on as before out of our pay, while the caduacs and casualties were all cut off, I e'en gave up my commission, and took service with Wallenstein, in Walter Butler's Irish regiment."

"And may I beg to know of you," said Lord Menteith, apparently interested in the adventures of this soldier of fortune, "how you liked this change of masters?"

"Indifferent well," said the Captain — "very indifferent well. I cannot say that the Emperor paid much better than the great Gustavus. For hard knocks, we had plenty of them. I was often obliged to run my head against my old acquaintances, the Swedish feathers, whilk your honour must conceive to be double-pointed stakes, shod with iron at each end, and planted before the squad of pikes to prevent an onfall of the cavalry. The whilk Swedish feathers, although they look gay to the eye, resembling the shrubs or lesser trees of ane forest, as the puissant pikes, arranged in battalia behind them, correspond to the tall pines thereof, yet, nevertheless, are not altogether so soft to encounter as the plumage of a goose. Howbeit, in despite of heavy blows and light pay, a cavalier of fortune may thrive indifferently well in the Imperial service, in respect his private casualties are nothing so closely looked to as by the Swede; and so that an officer did his duty on the field, neither Wallenstein nor Pappenheim, nor old Tilly before them, would likely listen to the objurgations of boors or burghers against any commander or soldado, by whom they chanced to be somewhat closely shorn. So that an experienced cavalier, knowing how to lay, as our Scottish phrase runs, 'the head of the sow to the tail of the grice,' might get out of the country the pay whilk he could not obtain from the Emperor."

"With a full hand, sir, doubtless, and with interest," said Lord Menteith.

"Indubitably, my lord," answered Dalgetty, composedly; "for it would be doubly disgraceful for any soldado of rank to have his name called in question for any petty delinquency."

"And pray, sir," continued Lord Menteith, "what made you leave so gainful a service?"

"Why, truly, sir," answered the soldier, "an Irish cavalier, called O'Quilligan, being major of our regiment, and I having had words with him the night before, respecting the worth and prece-

dence of our several nations, it pleased him the next day to deliver his orders to me with the point of his batoon advanced and held aloof, instead of declining and trailing the same, as is the fashion from a courteous commanding officer towards his equal in rank, though, it may be, his inferior in military grade. Upon this quarrel, sir, we fought in private rencontre; and as, in the perquisitions which followed, it pleased Walter Butler, our oberst, or colonel, to give the lighter punishment to his countryman, and the heavier to me, whereupon, ill stomaching such partiality, I exchanged my commission for one under the Spaniard."

"I hope you found yourself better off by the change?" said Lord Menteith.

"In good sooth," answered the Ritt-master, "I had but little to complain of. The pay was somewhat regular, being furnished by the rich Flemings and Walloons of the Low Country. The quarters were excellent; the good wheaten loaves of the Flemings were better than the provant rye-bread of the Swede, and Rhenish wine was more plenty with us than ever I saw the black-beer of Rostock in Gustavus's camp. Service there was none, duty there was little; and that little we might do, or leave undone, at our pleasure; an excellent retirement for a cavalier somewhat weary of field and leaguer, who had purchased with his blood as much honour as might serve his turn, and was desirous of a little ease and good living."

"And may I ask," said Lord Menteith, "why you, Captain, being, as I suppose, in the situation you describe, retired from the Spanish service also?"

"You are to consider, my lord, that your Spaniard," replied Captain Dalgetty, "is a person altogether unparalleled in his own conceit, wherethrough he maketh not fit account of such foreign cavaliers of valour as are pleased to take service with him. And a galling thing it is to every honourable soldado, to be put aside, and postponed, and obliged to yield preference to every puffing signior, who, were it the question which should first mount a breach at push of pike, might be apt to yield willing place to a Scottish cavalier. Moreover, sir, I was pricked in conscience respecting a matter of religion."

"I should not have thought, Captain Dalgetty," said the young nobleman, "that an old soldier, who had changed service so often, would have been too scrupulous on that head."

"No more I am, my lord," said the Captain, "since I hold it to be the duty of the chaplain of the regiment to settle those matters for me, and every other brave cavalier, inasmuch as he does nothing else that I know of for his pay and allowances. But this was a particular case, my lord, a *casus improvisus*, as I may say, in whilk I had no chaplain of my own persuasion to act as my adviser. I found, in short, that although my being a Protestant might be winked at, in respect that I was a man of action, and had more experience than all the Dons in our *tertia* put together, yet, when in garrison, it was expected I should go to mass with the regiment. Now, my lord, as a true Scottish man, and educated at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, I was bound to uphold the mass to be an act of blinded papistry and utter idolatry, whilk I was altogether unwilling to homologate by my presence. True it is, that I consulted on the point with a worthy countryman of my own, one Father Fatsides, of the Scottish Convent in Wurtzburg——"

"And I hope," observed Lord Menteith, "you obtained a clear opinion from this same ghostly father?"

"As clear as it could be," replied Captain Dalgetty, "considering we had drunk six flasks of Rhenish, and about two mutchkins of Kirchenwasser. Father Fatsides informed me, that, as nearly as he could judge, for a heretic like myself, it signified not much whether I went to mass or not, seeing my eternal perdition was signed and sealed at any rate, in respect of my impenitent and obdurate perseverance in my damnable heresy. Being discouraged by this response, I applied to a Dutch pastor of the reformed church, who told me, he thought I might lawfully go to mass, in respect that the prophet permitted Naaman, a mighty man of valour, and an honourable cavalier of Syria, to follow his master into the house of Rimmon, a false god, or idol, to whom he had vowed service, and to bow down when the king was leaning upon his hand. But neither was this answer satisfactory to me, both because there was an unco difference between an anointed King of Syria and our Spanish colonel, whom I could have blown away like the peeling of an ingan, and chiefly because I could not find the thing was required of me by any of the articles of war; neither was I proffered any consideration, either in perquisite or pay, for the wrong I might thereby do to my conscience."

"So you again changed your service?" said Lord Menteith.

"In troth did I, my lord; and after trying for a short while two or three other powers, I even took on for a time with their High Mightinesses the States of Holland."

"And how did their service jump with your humour?" again demanded his companion.

"O! my lord," said the soldier, in a sort of enthusiasm, "their behaviour on pay-day might be a pattern to all Europe—no borrowings, no lendings, no offsets, no arrears—all balanced and paid like a banker's book. The quarters, too, are excellent, and the allowances unchallengeable; but then, sir, they are a preceese, scrupulous people, and will allow nothing for peccadilloes. So that if a boor complains of a broken head, or a beer-seller of a broken can, or a daft wench does but squeak loud enough to be heard above her breath, a soldier of honour shall be dragged, not before his own court-martial, who can best judge of and punish his demerits, but before a base mechanical burgo-master, who shall menace him with the rasp-house, the cord, and what not, as if he were one of their own mean, amphibious, twenty-breeched boors. So not being able to dwell longer among these ungrateful plebeians, who, although unable to defend themselves by their proper strength, will nevertheless allow the noble foreign cavalier who engages with them nothing beyond his dry wages, which no honourable spirit will put in competition with a liberal licence and honourable countenance, I resolved to leave the service of the Mynheers. And hearing at this time, to my exceeding satisfaction, that there is something to be doing this summer in my way in this my dear native country, I am come hither, as they say, like a beggar to a bridal, in order to give my loving countrymen the advantage of that experience which I have acquired in foreign parts. So

your lordship has an outline of my brief story, excepting my deportment in those passages of action in the field, in leaguers, storms, and onslaughts, whilk would be tedious to narrate, and might, peradventure, better befit any other tongue than mine own."

CHAPTER III.

For pleas of right let statesmen vex their head,
Battle's my business, and my guerdon bread;
And, with the sworded Switzer, I can say,
The best of causes is the best of pay.

DONNE.

THE difficulty and narrowness of the road had by this time become such as to interrupt the conversation of the travellers, and Lord Menteith, reining back his horse, held a moment's private conversation with his domestics. The Captain, who now led the van of the party, after about a quarter of a mile's slow and toilsome advance up a broken and rugged ascent, emerged into an upland valley, to which a mountain stream acted as a drain, and afforded sufficient room upon its greensward banks for the travellers to pursue their journey in a more social manner.

Lord Menteith accordingly resumed the conversation, which had been interrupted by the difficulties of the way. "I should have thought," said he to Captain Dalgetty, "that a cavalier of your honourable mark, who hath so long followed the valiant King of Sweden, and entertains such a suitable contempt for the base mechanical States of Holland, would not have hesitated to embrace the cause of King Charles, in preference to that of the low-born, roundheaded, canting knaves, who are in rebellion against his authority?"

"Ye speak reasonably, my lord," said Dalgetty, "and, *cæteris paribus*, I might be induced to see the matter in the same light. But, my lord, there is a southern proverb,—fine words butter no parsnips. I have heard enough since I came here, to satisfy me that a cavalier of honour is free to take any part in this civil embroilment whilk he may find most convenient for his own peculiar. Loyalty is your pass-word, my lord—Liberty, roars another chield from the other side of the strath—the King, shouts one war-cry—the Parliament, roars another—Montrose for ever, cries Donald, waving his bonnet—Argyle and Leven, cries a south-country Saunders, vapouring with his hat and feather—Fight for the bishops, says a priest, with his gown and rochet—Stand stout for the Kirk, cries a minister, in a Geneva cap and band.—Good watchwords all—excellent watchwords. Whilk cause is the best I cannot say. But sure am I, that I have fought knee-deep in blood many a day for one that was ten degrees worse than the worst of them all."

"And pray, Captain Dalgetty," said his lordship, "since the pretensions of both parties seem to you so equal, will you please to inform us by what circumstances your preference will be determined?"

"Simply upon two considerations, my lord," answered the soldier. "Being, first, on which side my services would be in most honourable request;—And, secondly, whilk is a corollary of the first, by whilk party they are likely to be most gratefully requited. And, to deal plainly with you, my lord, my opinion at present doth on both points rather incline to the side of the Parliament."

"Your reasons, if you please," said Lord Menteith, "and perhaps I may be able to meet them with some others which are more powerful."

"Sir, I shall be amenable to reason," said Captain Dalgetty, "supposing it addresses itself to my honour and my interest. Well, then, my lord, here is a sort of Highland host assembled, or expected to assemble, in these wild hills, in the King's behalf. Now, sir, you know the nature of our Highlanders. I will not deny them to be a people stout in body and valiant in heart, and courageous enough in their own wild way of fighting, which is as remote from the usages and discipline of war as ever was that of the ancient Scythians, or of the salvage Indians of America that now is. They havena sae mickle as a German whistle, or a drum, to beat a march, an alarm, a charge, a retreat, a reveillé, or the tattoo, or any other point of war; and their damnable skirlin' pipes, whilk they themselves pretend to understand, are unintelligible to the ears of any cavaliero accustomed to civilized warfare. So that, were I undertaking to discipline such a breechless mob, it were impossible for me to be understood; and if I were understood, judge ye, my lord, what chance I had of being obeyed among a band of half salvages, who are accustomed to pay to their own lairds and chiefs, allenarly, that respect and obedience whilk ought to be paid to commissionate officers. If I were teaching them to form battalia by extracting the square root, that is, by forming your square battalion of equal number of men of rank and file, corresponding to the square root of the full number present, what return could I expect for communicating this golden secret of military tactic, except it may be a dirk in my wame, on placing some M'Alister More, M'Shemei, or Capperfae, in the flank or rear, when he claimed to be in the van?—Truly, well saith Holy Writ, 'if ye cast pearls before swine, they will turn again and rend ye.'"

"I believe, Anderson," said Lord Menteith, looking back to one of his servants, for both were close behind him, "you can assure this gentleman we shall have more occasion for experienced officers, and be more disposed to profit by their instructions, than he seems to be aware of."

"With your honour's permission," said Anderson, respectfully raising his cap, "when we are joined by the Irish infantry, who are expected, and who should be landed in the West Highlands before now, we shall have need of good soldiers to discipline our levies."

"And I should like well—very well, to be employed in such service," said Dalgetty; "the Irish are pretty fellows—very pretty fellows—I desire to see none better in the field. I once saw a brigade of Irish, at the taking of Frankfort upon the Oder, stand to it with sword and pike until they beat off the blue and yellow Swedish brigades, esteemed as stout as any that fought under the immortal Gustavus. And although stout Hepburn, valiant Lumsdale, courageous Monroe, with myself and other cavaliers, made entry elsewhere at point of pike, yet, had we all met with such opposition, we had returned with great loss and little profit. Wherefore these valiant Irishes, being all put to the sword, as is usual in such cases, did nevertheless gain immortal praise and honour; so that, for

their sakes, I have always loved and honoured those of that nation next to my own country of Scotland."

"A command of Irish," said Menteith, "I think I could almost promise you, should you be disposed to embrace the royal cause."

"And yet," said Captain Dalgetty, "my second and greatest difficulty remains behind; for, although I hold it a mean and sordid thing for a soldado to have nothing in his mouth but pay and gelt, like the base cullions, the German lanz-knechts, whom I mentioned before; and although I will maintain it with my sword, that honour is to be preferred before pay, free quarters, and arrears, yet, *ex contrario*, a soldier's pay being the counterpart of his engagement of service, it becomes a wise and considerate cavalier to consider what remuneration he is to receive for his service, and from what funds it is to be paid. And truly, my lord, from what I can see and hear, the Convention are the purse-masters. The Highlanders, indeed, may be kept in humour, by allowing them to steal cattle; and for the Irishes, your lordship and your noble associates may, according to the practice of the wars in such cases, pay them as seldom or as little as may suit your pleasure or convenience; but the same mode of treatment doth not apply to a cavalier like me, who must keep up his horses, servants, arms, and equipage, and who neither can, nor will, go to warfare upon his own charges."

Anderson, the domestic who had before spoken, now respectfully addressed his master.—"I think, my lord," he said, "that, under your lordship's favour, I could say something to remove Captain Dalgetty's second objection also. He asks us where we are to collect our pay; now, in my poor mind, the resources are as open to us as to the Covenanters. They tax the country according to their pleasure, and dilapidate the estates of the King's friends; now, were we once in the Lowlands, with our Highlanders and our Irish at our backs, and our swords in our hands, we can find many a fat traitor, whose ill-gotten wealth shall fill our military chest and satisfy our soldiery. Besides, confiscations will fall in thick; and, in giving donations of forfeited lands to every adventurous cavalier who joins his standard, the King will at once reward his friends and punish his enemies. In short, he that joins these Roundhead dogs may get some miserable pittance of pay—he that joins our standard has a chance to be knight, lord, or earl, if luck serve him."

"Have you ever served, my good friend?" said the Captain to the spokesman.

"A little, sir, in these our domestic quarrels," answered the man, modestly.

"But never in Germany or the Low Countries?" said Dalgetty.

"I never had the honour," answered Anderson.

"I profess," said Dalgetty, addressing Lord Menteith, "your lordship's servant has a sensible, natural, pretty idea of military matters; somewhat irregular, though, and smells a little too much of selling the bear's skin before he has hunted him.—I will take the matter, however, into my consideration."

"Do so, Captain," said Lord Menteith; "you will have the night to think of it, for we are now near the house, where I hope to ensure you a hospitable reception."

"And that is what will be very welcome," said the Captain, "for I have tasted no food since daybreak but a farl of oat-cake, which I divided with my horse. So I have been fain to draw my sword-belt three bores tighter for very extenuation, lest hunger and heavy iron should make the gird slip."

CHAPTER IV.

Once on a time, no matter when,
Some Glunimies met in a glen;
As deft and tight as ever wore
A durk, a targe, and a claymore,
Short hose, and belted plaid or trews,
In Uist, Lochaber, Skye, or Lewes,
Or cover'd hard head with his bonnet;
Had you but known them, you would own it.
MESTON.

A HILL was now before the travellers, covered with an ancient forest of Scottish firs, the topmost of which, flinging their scathed branches across the western horizon, gleamed ruddy in the setting sun. In the centre of this wood rose the towers, or rather the chimneys, of the house, or castle, as it was called, destined for the end of their journey.

As usual at that period, one or two high-ridged narrow buildings, intersecting and crossing each other, formed the *corps de logis*. A projecting bartizan or two, with the addition of small turrets at the angles, much resembling pepper-boxes, had procured for Darnlinvarach the dignified appellation of a castle. It was surrounded by a low court-yard wall, within which were the usual offices.

As the travellers approached more nearly, they discovered marks of recent additions to the defences of the place, which had been suggested, doubtless, by the insecurity of those troublesome times. Additional loop-holes for musketry were struck out in different parts of the building, and of its surrounding wall. The windows had just been carefully secured by stancheons of iron, crossing each other athwart and end-long, like the grates of a prison. The door of the court-yard was shut; and it was only after cautious challenge that one of its leaves was opened by two domestics, both strong Highlanders, and both under arms, like Bitias and Pandarus in the Æneid, ready to defend the entrance if aught hostile had ventured an intrusion.

When the travellers were admitted into the court, they found additional preparations for defence. The walls were scaffolded for the use of fire-arms, and one or two of the small guns called sackers, or falcons, were mounted at the angles and flanking turrets.

More domestics, both in the Highland and Lowland dress, instantly rushed from the interior of the mansion, and some hastened to take the horses of the strangers, while others waited to marshal them a way into the dwelling-house. But Captain Dalgetty refused the proffered assistance of those who wished to relieve him of the charge of his horse. "It is my custom, my friends, to see Gustavus (for so I have called him, after my invincible master) accommodated myself; we are old friends and fellow-travellers, and as I often need the use of his legs, I always lend him in my turn the service of my tongue, to call for whatever he has occasion for;" and accordingly, he strode into the stable after his steed without farther apology.

Neither Lord Menteith nor his attendants paid the same attention to their horses, but leaving them to the proffered care of the servants of the place, walked forward into the house, where a sort of dark vaulted vestibule displayed, among other miscellaneous articles, a huge barrel of two-penny ale, beside which were ranged two or three wooden queichs, or bickers, ready, it would appear, for the service of whoever thought proper to employ them. Lord Menteith applied himself to the spigot, drank without ceremony, and then handed the stoup to Anderson, who followed his master's example, but not until he had flung out the drop of ale which remained, and slightly rinsed the wooden cup.

"What the deil, man," said an old Highland servant belonging to the family, "can she no drink after her ain master without washing the cup and spilling the ale, and be tamned to her?"

"I was bred in France," answered Anderson, "where nobody drinks after another out of the same cup, unless it be after a young lady."

"The teil's in their nicety!" said Donald; "and if the ale be gude, fat the waur is 't that another man's beard 's been in the queich before ye?"

Anderson's companion drank without observing the ceremony which had given Donald so much offence, and both of them followed their master into the low-arched stone hall, which was the common rendezvous of a Highland family. A large fire of peats in the huge chimney at the upper end shed a dim light through the apartment, and was rendered necessary by the damp, by which, even during the summer, the apartment was rendered uncomfortable. Twenty or thirty targets, as many claymores, with dirks, and plaids, and guns, both match-lock and fire-lock, and long-bows, and cross-bows, and Lochaber axes, and coats of plate armour, and steel bonnets, and head-pieces, and the more ancient habergeons, or shirts of reticulated mail, with hood and sleeves corresponding to it, all hung in confusion about the walls, and would have formed a month's amusement to a member of a modern antiquarian society. But such things were too familiar to attract much observation on the part of the present spectators.

There was a large clumsy oaken table, which the hasty hospitality of the domestic who had before spoken, immediately spread with milk, butter, goat-milk cheese, a flagon of beer, and a flask of usquebæ, designed for the refreshment of Lord Menteith; while an inferior servant made similar preparations at the bottom of the table for the benefit of his attendants. The space which intervened between them was, according to the manners of the times, sufficient distinction between master and servant, even though the former was, as in the present instance, of high rank. Meanwhile the guests stood by the fire — the young nobleman under the chimney, and his servants at some little distance.

"What do you think, Anderson," said the former, "of our fellow-traveller?"

"A stout fellow," replied Anderson, "if all be good that is upcome. I wish we had twenty such, to put our Teagues into some sort of discipline."

"I differ from you, Anderson," said Lord Menteith; "I think this fellow Dalgetty is one of those horse-leeches, whose appetite for blood being only sharpened by what he has sucked in foreign countries, he is now returned to batten upon that of his own. Shame on the pack of these mercenary swordsmen! they have made the name of Scot through all Europe equivalent to that of a pitiful mercenary, who knows neither honour nor principle but his month's pay, who transfers his allegiance from standard to standard, at the pleasure of fortune or the highest bidder; and to whose insatiable thirst for plunder and warm quarters we owe much of that civil dissention which is now turning our swords against our own bowels. I had scarce patience with the hired gladiator, and yet could hardly help laughing at the extremity of his impudence."

"Your lordship will forgive me," said Anderson, "if I recommend to you, in the present circumstances, to conceal at least a part of this generous indignation; we cannot, unfortunately, do our work without the assistance of those who act on baser motives than our own. We cannot spare the assistance of such fellows as our friend the soldado. To use the canting phrase of the saints in the English Parliament, the sons of Zeruiah are still too many for us."

"I must dissemble, then, as well as I can," said the Lord Menteith, "as I have hitherto done, upon your hint. But I wish the fellow at the devil with all my heart."

"Ay, but still you must remember, my Lord," resumed Anderson, "that to cure the bite of a scorpion, you must crush another scorpion on the wound — But stop, we shall be overheard."

From a side-door in the hall glided a Highlander into the apartment, whose lofty stature and complete equipment, as well as the eagle's feather in his bonnet, and the confidence of his demeanour, announced to be a person of superior rank. He walked slowly up to the table, and made no answer to Lord Menteith, who, addressing him by the name of Allan, asked him how he did.

"Ye manna speak to her e'en now," whispered the old attendant.

The tall Highlander, sinking down upon the empty settle next the fire, fixed his eyes upon the red embers and the huge heap of turf, and seemed buried in profound abstraction. His dark eyes, and wild and enthusiastic features, bore the air of one who, deeply impressed with his own subjects of meditation, pays little attention to exterior objects. An air of gloomy severity, the fruit perhaps of ascetic and solitary habits, might, in a Lowlander, have been ascribed to religious fanaticism; but by that disease of the mind, then so common both in England and the Lowlands of Scotland, the Highlanders of this period were rarely infected. They had, however, their own peculiar superstitions, which overclouded the mind with thick-coming fancies, as completely as the puritanism of their neighbours.

"His lordship's honour," said the Highland servant, sideling up to Lord Menteith, and speaking in a very low tone, "his lordship manna speak to Allan even now, for the cloud is upon his mind."

Lord Menteith nodded, and took no farther notice of the reserved mountaineer.

"Said I not," asked the latter, suddenly raising his stately person upright, and looking at the domestic — "said I not that four were to come, and here stand but three on the hall floor?"

"In troth did ye say sae, Allan," said the old Highlander, "and here 's the fourth man coming clinking in at the yett e'en now from the stable,

for he 's shelled like a partan, wi' airn on back and breast, haunch and shanks. And am I to set her chair up near the Menteith's, or down wi' the honest gentlemen at the foot of the table ?"

Lord Menteith himself answered the inquiry, by pointing to a seat beside his own.

"And here she comes," said Donald, as Captain Dalgetty entered the hall; "and I hope gentlemens will all take bread and cheese, as we say in the glens, until better meat be ready, until the Tiernach comes back frae the hill wi' the southern gentlefolk, and then Dugald Cook will shew himself wi' his kid and hill venison."

In the meantime, Captain Dalgetty had entered the apartment, and, walking up to the seat placed next Lord Menteith, was leaning on the back of it with his arms folded. Anderson and his companion waited at the bottom of the table, in a respectful attitude, until they should receive permission to seat themselves; while three or four Highlanders, under the direction of old Donald, ran hither and thither to bring additional articles of food, or stood still to give attendance upon the guests.

In the midst of these preparations, Allan suddenly started up, and snatching a lamp from the hand of an attendant, held it close to Dalgetty's face, while he perused his features with the most heedful and grave attention.

"By my honour," said Dalgetty, half displeased, as, mysteriously shaking his head, Allan gave up the scrutiny — "I trow that lad and I will ken each other when we meet again."

Meanwhile Allan strode to the bottom of the table, and having, by the aid of his lamp, subjected Anderson and his companion to the same investigation, stood a moment as if in deep reflection; then, touching his forehead, suddenly seized Anderson by the arm, and before he could offer any effectual resistance, half led and half dragged him to the vacant seat at the upper end, and having made a mute intimation that he should there place himself, he hurried the soldado with the same unceremonious precipitation to the bottom of the table. The Captain, exceedingly incensed at this freedom, endeavoured to shake Allan from him with violence; but, powerful as he was, he proved in the struggle inferior to the gigantic mountaineer, who threw him off with such violence, that after reeling a few paces, he fell at full length, and the vaulted hall rang with the clash of his armour. When he arose, his first action was to draw his sword and fly at Allan, who, with folded arms, seemed to await his onset with the most scornful indifference. Lord Menteith and his attendants interposed to preserve peace, while the Highlanders, snatching weapons from the wall, seemed prompt to increase the broil.

"He is mad," whispered Lord Menteith, "he is perfectly mad; there is no purpose in quarreling with him."

"If your lordship is assured that he is *non compos mentis*," said Dalgetty, "the whilk his breeding and behaviour seem to testify, the matter must end here, seeing that a madman can neither give an affront, nor render honourable satisfaction. But, by my saul, if I had my provant and a bottle of Rhenish under my belt, I should have stood otherways up to him. And yet it 's a pity he should be sae weak in the intellectuals, being a strong proper man of body, fit to handle pike, morgenstern,[1] or any other military implement whatsoever."

Peace was thus restored, and the party seated themselves agreeably to their former arrangement, with which Allan, who had now returned to his settle by the fire, and seemed once more immersed in meditation, did not again interfere. Lord Menteith, addressing the principal domestic, hastened to start some theme of conversation which might obliterate all recollection of the fray that had taken place. "The laird is at the hill then, Donald, I understand, and some English strangers with him ?"

"At the hill he is, an it like your honour, and two Saxon calabaleros are with him sure eneugh; and that is Sir Miles Musgrave and Christopher Hall, both from the Cumraik, as I think they call their country."

"Hall and Musgrave ?" said Lord Menteith, looking at his attendants, "the very men that we wished to see."

"Troth," said Donald, "an' I wish I had never seen them between the een, for they 're come to herry us out o' house and ha'."

"Why, Donald," said Lord Menteith, "you did not use to be so churlish of your beef and ale; southland though they be, they 'll scarce eat up all the cattle that 's going on the castle mains."

"Teil care an they did," said Donald, "an that were the warst o't, for we have a wheen canny trewsmen here that wadna let us want if there was a horned beast atween this and Perth. But this is a warse job — it 's nae less than a wager."

"A wager !" repeated Lord Menteith, with some surprise.

"Troth," continued Donald, to the full as eager to tell his news as Lord Menteith was curious to hear them, "as your lordship is a friend and kinsman o' the house, an' as ye 'll hear eneugh o 't in less than an hour, I may as weel tell ye mysell. Ye sall be pleased then to know, that when our Laird was up in England, where he gangs oftener than his friends can wish, he was biding at the house o' this Sir Miles Musgrave, an' there was putten on the table six candlesticks, that they tell me were twice as muckle as the candlesticks in Dumblane kirk, and neither airn, brass, nor tin, but a' solid silver, nae less;—up wi' their English pride, has sae muckle, and kens sae little how to guide it ! Sae they began to jeer the Laird, that he saw nae sic graith in his ain poor country; and the Laird, scorning to hae his country put down without a word for its credit, swore, like a gude Scotsman, that he had mair candlesticks, and better candlesticks, in his ain castle at hame, than were ever lighted in a hall in Cumberland, an Cumberland be the name o' the country."

"That was patriotically said," observed Lord Menteith.

"Fary true," said Donald; "but her honour had better hae hauden her tongue; for if ye say

[1] This was a sort of club, or mace, used in the earlier part of the seventeenth century in the defence of breaches and walls. When the Germans insulted a Scotch regiment then besieged in Trailsund, saying they heard there was a ship come from Denmark to them laden with tobacco pipes, "One of our soldiers," says Colonel Robert Munro, "shewing them over the work a morgenstern, made of a large stock banded with iron, like the shaft of a halberd, with a round globe at the end with cross iron pikes, saith, 'Here is one of the tobacco pipes, wherewith we will beat out your brains when you intend to storm us.'"

ony thing amang the Saxons that 's a wee by ordinar, they clink ye down for a wager as fast as a Lowland smith would hammer shoon on a Highland shelty. An' so the Laird behoved either to gae back o' his word, or wager twa hunder merks; and so he e'en took the wager, rather than be shamed wi' the like o' them. And now he 's like to get it to pay, and I 'm thinking that 's what makes him sae swear to come hame at e'en."

"Indeed," said Lord Menteith, "from my idea of your family plate, Donald, your master is certain to lose such a wager."

"Your honour may swear that; an' where he 's to get the siller I kenna, although he borrowed out o' twenty purses. I advised him to pit the twa Saxon gentlemen and their servants cannily into the pit o' the tower till they gae up the bargain o' free gude will, but the Laird winna hear reason."

Allan here started up, strode forward, and interrupted the conversation, saying to the domestic in a voice like thunder, "And how dared you to give my brother such dishonourable advice? or how dare you to say he will lose this or any other wager which it is his pleasure to lay?"

"Troth, Allan M'Aulay," answered the old man, "it 's no for my father's son to gainsay what your father's son thinks fit to say, an' so the Laird may no doubt win his wager. A' that I ken against it is, that the teil a candlestick, or ony thing like it, is in the house, except the auld airn branches that hae been here since Laird Kenneth's time, and the tin sconces that your father gard be made by auld Willie Winkie the tinkler, mair be token that deil an unce of siller plate is about the house at a', forby the lady's auld posset dish, that wants the cover and ane o' the lugs."

"Peace, old man!" said Allan, fiercely; "and do you, gentlemen, if your refection is finished, leave this apartment clear; I must prepare it for the reception of these southern guests."

"Come away," said the domestic, pulling Lord Menteith by the sleeve; "his hour is on him," said he, looking towards Allan, "and he will not be controlled."

They left the hall accordingly, Lord Menteith and the Captain being ushered one way by old Donald, and the two attendants conducted elsewhere by another Highlander. The former had scarcely reached a sort of withdrawing apartment ere they were joined by the lord of the mansion, Angus M'Aulay by name, and his English guests. Great joy was expressed by all parties, for Lord Menteith and the English gentlemen were well known to each other; and on Lord Menteith's introduction, Captain Dalgetty was well received by the Laird. But after the first burst of hospitable congratulation was over, Lord Menteith could observe that there was a shade of sadness on the brow of his Highland friend.

"You must have heard," said Sir Christopher Hall, "that our fine undertaking in Cumberland is all blown up. The militia would not march into Scotland, and your prick-ear'd Covenanters have been too hard for our friends in the southern shires. And so, understanding there is some stirring work here, Musgrave and I, rather than sit idle at home, are come to have a campaign among your kilts and plaids."

"I hope you have brought arms, men, and money with you," said Lord Menteith, smiling.

"Only some dozen or two of troopers, whom we left at the last Lowland village," said Musgrave, "and trouble enough we had to get them so far."

"As for money," said his companion, "we expect a small supply from our friend and host here."

The Laird now, colouring highly, took Menteith a little apart, and expressed to him his regret that he had fallen into a foolish blunder.

"I heard it from Donald," said Lord Menteith, scarce able to suppress a smile.

"Devil take that old man," said M'Aulay, "he would tell every thing, were it to cost one's life; but it's no jesting matter to you neither, my lord, for I reckon on your friendly and fraternal benevolence, as a near kinsman of our house, to help me out with the money due to these pock-puddings; or else, to be plain wi' ye, the deil a M'Aulay will there be at the muster, for curse me if I do not turn Covenanter rather than face these fellows without paying them; and at the best, I shall be ill enough off, getting both the scaith and the scorn."

"You may suppose, cousin," said Lord Menteith, "I am not too well equipt just now; but you may be assured I shall endeavour to help you as well as I can, for the sake of old kindred, neighbourhood, and alliance."

"Thank ye—thank ye—thank ye," reiterated M'Aulay; "and as they are to spend the money in the King's service, what signifies whether you, they, or I pay it?—we are a' one man's bairns, I hope? But you must help me out too with some reasonable excuse, or else I shall be for taking to Andrew Ferrara; for I like not to be treated like a liar or a braggart at my own board-end, when, God knows, I only meant to support my honour and that of my family and country."

Donald, as they were speaking, entered, with rather a blither face than he might have been expected to wear, considering the impending fate of his master's purse and credit. "Gentlemens, her dinner is ready, *and her candles are lighted too*," said Donald, with a strong guttural emphasis on the last clause of his speech.

"What the devil can he mean?" said Musgrave, looking to his countryman.

Lord Menteith put the same question with his eyes to the Laird, which M'Aulay answered by shaking his head.

A short dispute about precedence somewhat delayed their leaving the apartment. Lord Menteith insisted upon yielding up that which belonged to his rank, on consideration of his being in his own country, and of his near connection with the family in which they found themselves. The two English strangers, therefore, were first ushered into the hall, where an unexpected display awaited them. The large oaken table was spread with substantial joints of meat, and seats were placed in order for the guests. Behind every seat stood a gigantic Highlander, completely dressed and armed after the fashion of his country, holding in his right hand his drawn sword, with the point turned downwards, and in the left a blazing torch made of the bog-pine. This wood, found in the morasses, is so full of turpentine, that, when split and dried, it is frequently used in the Highlands instead of candles. The unexpected and somewhat startling apparition was seen by the red glare of the torches, which displayed the wild features, unusual dress, and glittering arms of those who bore them, while the

smoke, eddying up to the roof of the hall, overcanopied them with a volume of vapour. Ere the strangers had recovered from their surprise, Allan stept forward, and pointing with his sheathed broadsword to the torch-bearers, said, in a deep and stern tone of voice, "Behold, gentlemen cavaliers, the chandeliers of my brother's house, the ancient fashion of our ancient name; not one of these men knows any law but their Chief's command—Would you dare to compare to THEM in value the richest ore that ever was dug out of the mine? How say you, cavaliers?—is your wager won or lost?"

"Lost, lost," said Musgrave, gaily—"my own silver candlesticks are all melted and riding on horseback by this time, and I wish the fellows that enlisted were half as trusty as these.—Here, sir," he added to the Chief, "is your money; it impairs Hall's finances and mine somewhat, but debts of honour must be settled."

"My father's curse upon my father's son," said Allan, interrupting him, "if he receive from you one penny! It is enough that you claim no right to exact from him what is his own."

Lord Menteith eagerly supported Allan's opinion, and the elder M'Aulay readily joined, declaring the whole to be a fool's business, and not worth speaking more about. The Englishmen, after some courteous opposition, were persuaded to regard the whole as a joke.

"And now, Allan," said the Laird, "please to remove your candles; for, since the Saxon gentlemen have seen them, they will eat their dinner as comfortably by the light of the old tin sconces, without scomfishing them with so much smoke."

Accordingly, at a sign from Allan, the living chandeliers, recovering their broadswords, and holding the point erect, marched out of the hall, and left the guests to enjoy their refreshment.[1]

CHAPTER V.

Thareby so fearlesse and so fell he grew,
That his own syre and maister of his guise
Did often tremble at his horrid view;
And if for dread of hurt would him advise,
The angry beastes not rashly to despise,
Nor too much to provoke; for he would learne
The lion stoup to him in lowly wise,
(A lesson hard,) and make the libbard sterne
Leave roaring, when in rage he for revenge did earne.

SPENSER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the proverbial epicurism of the English,—proverbial, that is to say, in Scotland at the period,—the English visiters made no figure whatever at the entertainment, compared with the portentous voracity of Captain Dalgetty, although that gallant soldier had already displayed much steadiness and pertinacity in his attack upon the lighter refreshment set before them at their entrance, by way of forlorn hope. He spoke to no one during the time of his meal; and it was not until the victuals were nearly withdrawn from the table, that he gratified the rest of the company, who had watched him with some surprise, with an account of the reasons why he ate so very fast and so very long.

"The former quality," he said, "he had acquired, while he filled a place at the bursar's table at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen; when," said he, "if you did not move your jaws as fast as a pair of castanets, you were very unlikely to get any thing to put between them. And as for the quantity of my food, be it known to this honourable company," continued the Captain, "that it 's the duty of every commander of a fortress, on all occasions which offer, to secure as much munition and vivers as their magazines can possibly hold, not knowing when they may have to sustain a siege or a blockade. Upon which principle, gentlemen," said he, "when a cavalier finds that provant is good and abundant, he will, in my estimation, do wisely to victual himself for at least three days, as there is no knowing when he may come by another meal."

The Laird expressed his acquiescence in the prudence of this principle, and recommended to the veteran to add a tass of brandy and a flagon of claret to the substantial provisions he had already laid in, to which proposal the Captain readily agreed.

When dinner was removed, and the servants had withdrawn, excepting the Laird's page, or henchman, who remained in the apartment to call for or bring whatever was wanted, or, in a word, to answer the purposes of a modern bell-wire, the conversation began to turn upon politics, and the state of the country; and Lord Menteith inquired anxiously and particularly what clans were expected to join the proposed muster of the King's friends.

"That depends much, my lord, on the person who lifts the banner," said the Laird; "for you know we Highlanders, when a few clans are assembled, are not easily commanded by one of our own Chiefs, or, to say the truth, by any other body. We have heard a rumour, indeed, that Colkitto—that is, young Colkitto, or Alaster M'Donald, is come over the Kyle from Ireland, with a body of the Earl of Antrim's people, and that they had got as far as Ardnamurchan. They might have been here before now, but, I suppose, they loitered to plunder the country as they came along."

"Will Colkitto not serve you for a leader, then?" said Lord Menteith.

"Colkitto!" said Allan M'Aulay, scornfully; "who talks of Colkitto? There lives but one man whom we will follow, and that is Montrose."

"But Montrose, sir," said Sir Christopher Hall, "has not been heard of since our ineffectual attempt to rise in the north of England. It is thought he has returned to the King at Oxford for farther instructions."

"Returned!" said Allan, with a scornful laugh; "I could tell ye, but it is not worth my while; ye will know soon enough."

"By my honour, Allan," said Lord Menteith, "you will weary out your friends with this intolerable, froward, and sullen humour.—But I know the reason," added he, laughing; "you have not seen Annot Lyle to-day."

"Whom did you say I had not seen?" said Allan, sternly.

"Annot Lyle, the fairy queen of song and minstrelsy," said Lord Menteith.

"Would to God I were never to see her again,"

[1] Such a bet as that mentioned in the text is said to have been taken by MacDonald of Keppoch, who extricated himself in the manner there narrated.

said Allan sighing, "on condition the same weird were laid on you?"

"And why on me?" said Lord Menteith, carelessly.

"Because," said Allan, "it is written on your forehead, that you are to be the ruin of each other." So saying, he rose up and left the room.

"Has he been long in this way?" asked Lord Menteith, addressing his brother.

"About three days," answered Angus; "the fit is well-nigh over, he will be better to-morrow. But come, gentlemen, don't let the tappit-hen scraugh to be emptied. The King's health, King Charles's health! and may the covenanting dog that refuses it, go to Heaven by the road of the Grassmarket?"

The health was quickly pledged, and as fast succeeded by another, and another, and another, all of a party cast, and enforced in an earnest manner. Captain Dalgetty, however, thought it necessary to enter a protest.

"Gentlemen cavaliers," he said, "I drink these healths, *primo*, both out of respect to this honourable and hospitable roof-tree, and, *secundo*, because I hold it not good to be preceese in such matters, *inter pocula;* but I protest, agreeable to the warrandice granted by this honourable lord, that it shall be free to me, notwithstanding my present complaisance, to take service with the Covenanters to-morrow, provided I shall be so minded."

M'Aulay and his English guests stared at this declaration, which would have certainly bred new disturbance, if Lord Menteith had not taken up the affair, and explained the circumstances and conditions. "I trust," he concluded, "we shall be able to secure Captain Dalgetty's assistance to our own party."

"And if not," said the Laird, "I protest, as the Captain says, that nothing that has passed this evening, not even his having eaten my bread and salt, and pledged me in brandy, Bourdeaux, or usquebaugh, shall prejudice my cleaving him to the neck-bone."

"You shall be heartily welcome," said the Captain, "provided my sword cannot keep my head, which it has done in worse dangers than your feud is likely to make for me."

Here Lord Menteith again interposed, and the concord of the company being with no small difficulty restored, was cemented by some deep carouses. Lord Menteith, however, contrived to break up the party earlier than was the usage of the castle, under pretence of fatigue and indisposition. This was somewhat to the disappointment of the valiant Captain, who, among other habits acquired in the Low countries, had acquired both a disposition to drink, and a capacity to bear, an exorbitant quantity of strong liquors.

Their landlord ushered them in person to a sort of sleeping gallery, in which there was a four-post bed, with tartan curtains, and a number of cribs, or long hampers, placed along the wall, three of which, well stuffed with blooming heather, were prepared for the reception of guests.

"I need not tell your lordship," said M'Aulay to Lord Menteith, a little apart, "our Highland mode of quartering. Only that, not liking you should sleep in the room alone with this German land-louper, I have caused your servants' beds to be made here in the gallery. By G—d, my lord, these are times when men go to bed with a throat hale and sound as ever swallowed brandy, and before next morning it may be gaping like an oyster-shell."

Lord Menteith thanked him sincerely, saying, "It was just the arrangement he would have requested; for, although he had not the least apprehension of violence from Captain Dalgetty, yet Anderson was a better kind of person, a sort of gentleman, whom he always liked to have near his person."

"I have not seen this Anderson," said M'Aulay; "did you hire him in England?"

"I did so," said Lord Menteith; "you will see the man to-morrow; in the meantime I wish you good-night."

His host left the apartment after the evening salutation, and was about to pay the same compliment to Captain Dalgetty, but observing him deeply engaged in the discussion of a huge pitcher filled with brandy-posset, he thought it a pity to disturb him in so laudable an employment, and took his leave without farther ceremony.

Lord Menteith's two attendants entered the apartment almost immediately after his departure. The good Captain, who was now somewhat encumbered with his good cheer, began to find the undoing of the clasps of his armour a task somewhat difficult, and addressed Anderson in these words, interrupted by a slight hiccup,—"Anderson, my good friend, you may read in Scripture, that he that putteth off his armour should not boast himself like he that putteth it on—I believe that is not the right word of command; but the plain truth of it is, I am like to sleep in my corslet, like many an honest fellow that never waked again, unless you unloose this buckle."

"Undo his armour, Sibbald," said Anderson to the other servant.

"By St Andrew!" exclaimed the Captain, turning round in great astonishment, "here's a common fellow—a stipendiary with four pounds a-year and a livery cloak, thinks himself too good to serve Ritt-master Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, who has studied humanity at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, and served half the princes of Europe!"

"Captain Dalgetty," said Lord Menteith, whose lot it was to stand peacemaker throughout the evening, "please to understand that Anderson waits upon no one but myself; but I will help Sibbald to undo your corslet with much pleasure."

"Too much trouble for you, my lord," said Dalgetty; "and yet it would do you no harm to practise how a handsome harness is put on and put off. I can step in and out of mine like a glove; only to-night, although not *ebrius*, I am, in the classic phrase, *vino ciboque gravatus*."

By this time he was unshelled, and stood before the fire musing with a face of drunken wisdom on the events of the evening. What seemed chiefly to interest him, was the character of Allan M'Aulay. "To come over the Englishmen so cleverly with his Highland torch-bearers—eight bare-breeched Rories for six silver candlesticks!—it was a master-piece—a *tour de passe*—it was perfect leger-demain—and to be a madman after all!—I doubt greatly, my lord," (shaking his head,) "that I must allow him, notwithstanding his relationship to your lordship, the privileges of a rational person, and either batoon him sufficiently to expiate the violence offered to my person, or else bring it to a

matter of mortal arbitrement, as becometh an insulted cavalier."

"If you care to hear a long story," said Lord Menteith, "at this time of night, I can tell you how the circumstances of Allan's birth account so well for his singular character, as to put such satisfaction entirely out of the question."

"A long story, my lord," said Captain Dalgetty, "is, next to a good evening draught and a warm nightcap, the best shoeing-horn for drawing on a sound sleep. And since your lordship is pleased to take the trouble to tell it, I shall rest your patient and obliged auditor."

"Anderson," said Lord Menteith, "and you, Sibbald, are dying to hear, I suppose, of this strange man too; and I believe I must indulge your curiosity, that you may know how to behave to him in time of need. You had better step to the fire then."

Having thus assembled an audience about him, Lord Menteith sat down upon the edge of the four-post bed, while Captain Dalgetty, wiping the relics of the posset from his beard and mustachoes, and repeating the first verse of the Lutheran psalm, *Alle guter geister loben den Herrn*, &c. rolled himself into one of the places of repose, and thrusting his shock pate from between the blankets, listened to Lord Menteith's relation in a most luxurious state, between sleeping and waking.

"The father," said Lord Menteith, "of the two brothers, Angus and Allan M'Aulay, was a gentleman of consideration and family, being the chief of a Highland clan, of good account, though not numerous; his lady, the mother of these young men, was a gentlewoman of good family, if I may be permitted to say so of one nearly connected with my own. Her brother, an honourable and spirited young man, obtained from James the Sixth a grant of forestry, and other privileges, over a royal chase adjacent to this castle; and, in exercising and defending these rights, he was so unfortunate as to involve himself in a quarrel with some of our Highland freebooters, or caterans, of whom I think, Captain Dalgetty, you must have heard."

"And that I have," said the Captain, exerting himself to answer the appeal. "Before I left the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, Dugald Garr was playing the devil in the Garioch, and the Farquharsons on Dee-side, and the Clan Chattan on the Gordons' lands, and the Grants and Camerons in Moray-land. And since that, I have seen the Cravats and Pandours in Pannonia and Transylvania, and the Cossacks from the Polish frontier, and robbers, banditti, and barbarians of all countries besides, so that I have a distinct idea of your broken Highlandmen."

"The clan," said Lord Menteith, "with whom the maternal uncle of the M'Aulays had been placed in feud, was a small sept of banditti, called, from their houseless state, and their incessantly wandering among the mountains and glens, the Children of the Mist. They are a fierce and hardy people, with all the irritability, and wild and vengeful passions, proper to men who have never known the restraint of civilized society. A party of them lay in wait for the unfortunate Warden of the Forest, surprised him while hunting alone and unattended, and slew him with every circumstance of inventive cruelty. They cut off his head, and resolved, in a bravado, to exhibit it at the castle of his brother-in-law. The laird was absent, and the lady reluctantly received as guests, men against whom, perhaps, she was afraid to shut her gates. Refreshments were placed before the Children of the Mist, who took an opportunity to take the head of their victim from the plaid in which it was wrapt, placed it on the table, put a piece of bread between the lifeless jaws, bidding them do their office now, since many a good meal they had eaten at that table. The lady, who had been absent for some household purpose, entered at this moment, and, upon beholding her brother's head, fled like an arrow out of the house into the woods, uttering shriek upon shriek. The ruffians, satisfied with this savage triumph, withdrew. The terrified menials, after overcoming the alarm to which they had been subjected, sought their unfortunate mistress in every direction, but she was nowhere to be found. The miserable husband returned next day, and, with the assistance of his people, undertook a more anxious and distant search, but to equally little purpose. It was believed universally, that, in the ecstasy of her terror, she must either have thrown herself over one of the numerous precipices which overhang the river, or into a deep lake about a mile from the castle. Her loss was the more lamented, as she was six months advanced in her pregnancy; Angus M'Aulay, her eldest son, having been born about eighteen months before.—But I tire you, Captain Dalgetty, and you seem inclined to sleep."

"By no means," answered the soldier; "I am no whit somnolent; I always hear best with my eyes shut. It is a fashion I learned when I stood sentinel."

"And I daresay," said Lord Menteith, aside to Anderson, "the weight of the halberd of the sergeant of the round often made him open them."

Being apparently, however, in the humour of story-telling, the young nobleman went on, addressing himself chiefly to his servants, without minding the slumbering veteran.

"Every baron in the country," said he, "now swore revenge for this dreadful crime. They took arms with the relations and brother-in-law of the murdered person, and the Children of the Mist were hunted down, I believe, with as little mercy as they had themselves manifested. Seventeen heads, the bloody trophies of their vengeance, were distributed among the allies, and fed the crows upon the gates of their castles. The survivors sought out more distant wildernesses, to which they retreated."

"To your right hand, counter-march, and retreat to your former ground," said Captain Dalgetty; the military phrase having produced the correspondent word of command; and then starting up, professed he had been profoundly attentive to every word that had been spoken.

"It is the custom in summer," said Lord Menteith, without attending to his apology, "to send the cows to the upland pastures to have the benefit of the grass; and the maids of the village, and of the family, go there to milk them in the morning and evening. While thus employed, the females of this family, to their great terror, perceived that their motions were watched at a distance by a pale, thin, meagre figure, bearing a strong resemblance to their deceased mistress, and passing, of course, for her apparition. When some of the boldest

resolved to approach this faded form, it fled from them into the woods with a wild shriek. The husband, informed of this circumstance, came up to the glen with some attendants, and took his measures so well as to intercept the retreat of the unhappy fugitive, and to secure the person of his unfortunate lady, though her intellect proved to be totally deranged. How she supported herself during her wandering in the woods, could not be known—some supposed she lived upon roots and wild-berries, with which the woods at that season abounded; but the greater part of the vulgar were satisfied that she must have subsisted upon the milk of the wild does, or been nourished by the fairies, or supported in some manner equally marvellous. Her re-appearance was more easily accounted for. She had seen from the thicket the milking of the cows, to superintend which had been her favourite domestic employment, and the habit had prevailed even in her deranged state of mind.

"In due season the unfortunate lady was delivered of a boy, who not only shewed no appearance of having suffered from his mother's calamities, but appeared to be an infant of uncommon health and strength. The unhappy mother, after her confinement, recovered her reason—at least in a great measure, but never her health and spirits. Allan was her only joy. Her attention to him was unremitting; and unquestionably she must have impressed upon his early mind many of those superstitious ideas to which his moody and enthusiastic temper gave so ready a reception. She died when he was about ten years old. Her last words were spoken to him in private; but there is little doubt that they conveyed an injunction of vengeance upon the Children of the Mist, with which he has since amply complied.

"From this moment, the habits of Allan M'Aulay were totally changed. He had hitherto been his mother's constant companion, listening to her dreams, and repeating his own, and feeding his imagination, which, probably from the circumstances preceding his birth, was constitutionally deranged, with all the wild and terrible superstitions so common to the mountaineers, to which his unfortunate mother had become much addicted since her brother's death. By living in this manner, the boy had gotten a timid, wild, startled look, loved to seek out solitary places in the woods, and was never so much terrified as by the approach of children of the same age. I remember, although some years younger, being brought up here by my father upon a visit, nor can I forget the astonishment with which I saw this infant hermit shun every attempt I made to engage him in the sports natural to our age. I can remember his father bewailing his disposition to mine, and alleging, at the same time, that it was impossible for him to take from his wife the company of the boy, as he seemed to be the only consolation that remained to her in this world, and as the amusement which Allan's society afforded her seemed to prevent the recurrence, at least in its full force, of that fearful malady by which she had been visited. But, after the death of his mother, the habits and manners of the boy seemed at once to change. It is true he remained as thoughtful and serious as before; and long fits of silence and abstraction shewed plainly that his disposition, in this respect, was in no degree altered. But at other times, he sought out the rendezvous of the youth of the clan, which he had hitherto seemed anxious to avoid. He took share in all their exercises; and, from his very extraordinary personal strength, soon excelled his brother and other youths, whose age considerably exceeded his own. They who had hitherto held him in contempt, now feared, if they did not love him; and, instead of Allan's being esteemed a dreaming, womanish, and feeble-minded boy, those who encountered him in sports or military exercise, now complained that, when heated by the strife, he was too apt to turn game into earnest, and to forget that he was only engaged in a friendly trial of strength.—But I speak to regardless ears," said Lord Menteith, interrupting himself, for the Captain's nose now gave the most indisputable signs that he was fast locked in the arms of oblivion.

"If you mean the ears of that snorting swine, my lord," said Anderson, "they are, indeed, shut to any thing that you can say; nevertheless, this place being unfit for more private conference, I hope you will have the goodness to proceed, for Sibbald's benefit and for mine. The history of this poor young fellow has a deep and wild interest in it."

"You must know, then," proceeded Lord Menteith, "that Allan continued to increase in strength and activity till his fifteenth year, about which time he assumed a total independence of character, and impatience of control, which much alarmed his surviving parent. He was absent in the woods for whole days and nights, under pretence of hunting, though he did not always bring home game. His father was the more alarmed, because several of the Children of the Mist, encouraged by the increasing troubles of the state, had ventured back to their old haunts, nor did he think it altogether safe to renew any attack upon them. The risk of Allan, in his wanderings, sustaining injury from these vindictive freebooters, was a perpetual source of apprehension.

"I was myself upon a visit to the castle when this matter was brought to a crisis. Allan had been absent since daybreak in the woods, where I had sought for him in vain; it was a dark stormy night, and he did not return. His father expressed the utmost anxiety, and spoke of detaching a party at the dawn of morning in quest of him; when, as we were sitting at the supper-table, the door suddenly opened, and Allan entered the room with a proud, firm, and confident air. His intractability of temper, as well as the unsettled state of his mind, had such an influence over his father, that he suppressed all other tokens of displeasure, excepting the observation that I had killed a fat buck, and had returned before sunset, while he supposed Allan, who had been on the hill till midnight, had returned with empty hands. 'Are you sure of that?' said Allan fiercely; 'here is something will tell you another tale.'

"We now observed his hands were bloody, and that there were spots of blood on his face, and waited the issue with impatience; when suddenly, undoing the corner of his plaid, he rolled down on the table a human head, bloody and new severed, saying at the same time, 'Lie thou where the head of a better man lay before ye.' From the haggard features, and matted red hair and beard, partly grizzled with age, his father and others present recognized the head of Hector of the Mist, a well-

known leader among the outlaws, redoubted for strength and ferocity, who had been active in the murder of the unfortunate Forester, uncle to Allan, and had escaped by a desperate defence and extraordinary agility, when so many of his companions were destroyed. We were all, it may be believed, struck with surprise, but Allan refused to gratify our curiosity; and we only conjectured that he must have overcome the outlaw after a desperate struggle, because we discovered that he had sustained several wounds from the contest. All measures were now taken to ensure him against the vengeance of the freebooters; but neither his wounds, nor the positive command of his father, nor even the locking of the gates of the castle and the doors of his apartment, were precautions adequate to prevent Allan from seeking out the very persons to whom he was peculiarly obnoxious. He made his escape by night from the window of the apartment, and laughing at his father's vain care, produced on one occasion the head of one, and upon another those of two, of the Children of the Mist. At length these men, fierce as they were, became appalled by the inveterate animosity and audacity with which Allan sought out their recesses. As he never hesitated to encounter any odds, they concluded that he must bear a charmed life, or fight under the guardianship of some supernatural influence. Neither gun, dirk, nor dourlach,[1] they said, availed aught against him. They imputed this to the remarkable circumstances under which he was born; and at length five or six of the stoutest caterans of the Highlands would have fled at Allan's halloo, or the blast of his horn.

"In the meanwhile, however, the Children of the Mist carried on their old trade, and did the M'Aulays, as well as their kinsmen and allies, as much mischief as they could. This provoked another expedition against the tribe, in which I had my share; we surprised them effectually, by besetting at once the upper and under passes of the country, and made such clean work as is usual on these occasions, burning and slaying right before us. In this terrible species of war, even the females and the helpless do not always escape. One little maiden alone, who smiled upon Allan's drawn dirk, escaped his vengeance upon my earnest entreaty. She was brought to the castle, and here bred up under the name of Annot Lyle, the most beautiful little fairy certainly that ever danced upon a heath by moonlight. It was long ere Allan could endure the presence of the child, until it occurred to his imagination, from her features perhaps, that she did not belong to the hated blood of his enemies, but had become their captive in some of their incursions: a circumstance not in itself impossible, but in which he believes as firmly as in holy writ. He is particularly delighted by her skill in music, which is so exquisite, that she far exceeds the best performers in this country in playing on the clairshach, or harp. It was discovered that this produced upon the disturbed spirits of Allan, in his gloomiest moods, beneficial effects, similar to those experienced by the Jewish monarch of old; and so engaging is the temper of Annot Lyle, so fascinating the innocence and gaiety of her disposition, that she is considered and treated in the castle rather as the sister of the proprietor, than as a dependant upon his charity. Indeed, it is impossible for any one to see her without being deeply interested by the ingenuity, liveliness, and sweetness of her disposition."

"Take care, my lord," said Anderson, smiling; "there is danger in such violent commendations. Allan M'Aulay, as your lordship describes him, would prove no very safe rival."

"Pooh! pooh!" said Lord Menteith, laughing, yet blushing at the same time; "Allan is not accessible to the passion of love; and for myself," said he more gravely, "Annot's unknown birth is a sufficient reason against serious designs, and her unprotected state precludes every other."

"It is spoken like yourself, my lord," said Anderson.—"But I trust you will proceed with your interesting story."

"It is well-nigh finished," said Lord Menteith; "I have only to add, that from the great strength and courage of Allan M'Aulay, from his energetic and uncontrollable disposition, and from an opinion generally entertained and encouraged by himself, that he holds communion with supernatural beings, and can predict future events, the clan pay a much greater degree of deference to him than even to his brother, who is a bold-hearted rattling Highlander, but with nothing which can possibly rival the extraordinary character of his younger brother."

"Such a character," said Anderson, "cannot but have the deepest effect on the minds of a Highland host. We must secure Allan, my lord, at all events. What between his bravery and his second sight——"

"Hush!" said Lord Menteith, "that owl is awaking."

"Do you talk of the second sight, or *deuteroscopia?*" said the soldier; "I remember memorable Major Munro telling me how Murdoch Mackenzie, born in Assint, a private gentleman in a company, and a pretty soldier, foretold the death of Donald Tough, a Lochaber man, and certain other persons, as well as the hurt of the major himself at a sudden onfall at the siege of Trailsund."

"I have often heard of this faculty," observed Anderson, "but I have always thought those pretending to it were either enthusiasts or impostors."

"I should be loath," said Lord Menteith, "to apply either character to my kinsman, Allan MacAulay. He has shewn on many occasions too much acuteness and sense, of which you this night had an instance, for the character of an enthusiast; and his high sense of honour, and manliness of disposition, free him from the charge of imposture."

"Your lordship, then," said Anderson, "is a believer in his supernatural attributes?"

"By no means," said the young nobleman; "I think that he persuades himself that the predictions, which are, in reality, the result of judgment and reflection, are supernatural impressions on his mind, just as fanatics conceive the workings of their own imagination to be divine inspiration—at least, if this will not serve you, Anderson, I have no better explanation to give; and it is time we were all asleep after the toilsome journey of the day."

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[1] *Dourlach*—quiver; literally, satchel—of arrows.

CHAPTER VI.

Coming events cast their shadows before.
CAMPBELL.

At an early hour in the morning the guests of the castle sprung from their repose; and, after a moment's private conversation with his attendants, Lord Menteith addressed the soldier, who was seated in a corner burnishing his corslet with rot-stone and shamois-leather, while he hummed the old song in honour of the victorious Gustavus Adolphus,—

"When cannons are roaring, and bullets are flying,
The lad that would have honour, boys, must never fear dying."

"Captain Dalgetty," said Lord Menteith, "the time is come that we must part, or become comrades in service."

"Not before breakfast, I hope?" said Captain Dalgetty.

"I should have thought," replied his lordship, "that your garrison was victualled for three days at least."

"I have still some stowage left for beef and bannocks," said the Captain; "and I never miss a favourable opportunity of renewing my supplies."

"But," said Lord Menteith, "no judicious commander allows either flags of truce or neutrals to remain in his camp longer than is prudent; and therefore we must know your mind exactly, according to which you shall either have a safe-conduct to depart in peace, or be welcome to remain with us."

"Truly," said the Captain, "that being the case, I will not attempt to protract the capitulation by a counterfeited parley, (a thing excellently practised by Sir James Ramsay at the siege of Hannau, in the year of God 1636,) but I will frankly own, that if I like your pay as well as your provant and your company, I care not how soon I take the oath to your colours."

"Our pay," said Lord Menteith, "must at present be small, since it is paid out of the common stock raised by the few amongst us who can command some funds—As major and adjutant, I dare not promise Captain Dalgetty more than half a dollar a-day."

"The devil take all halves and quarters!" said the Captain; "were it in my option, I could no more consent to the halving of that dollar, than the woman in the Judgment of Solomon to the disseverment of the child of her bowels."

"The parallel will scarce hold, Captain Dalgetty, for I think you would rather consent to the dividing of the dollar, than give it up entire to your competitor. However, in the way of arrears, I may promise you the other half-dollar at the end of the campaign."

"Ah! these arrearages!" said Captain Dalgetty, "that are always promised, and always go for nothing! Spain, Austria, and Sweden, all sing one song. Oh! long life to the Hoganmogans! if they were no officers or soldiers, they were good paymasters.—And yet, my lord, if I could but be made certiorate that my natural hereditament of Drumthwacket had fallen into possession of any of these loons of Covenanters, who could be, in the event of our success, conveniently made a traitor of, I have so much value for that fertile and pleasant spot, that I would e'en take on with you for the campaign."

"I can resolve Captain Dalgetty's question," said Sibbald, Lord Menteith's second attendant; "for if his estate of Drumthwacket be, as I conceive, the long waste moor so called, that lies five miles south of Aberdeen, I can tell him it was lately purchased by Elias Strachan, as rank a rebel as ever swore the Covenant."

"The crop-eared hound!" said Captain Dalgetty, in a rage; "what the devil gave him the assurance to purchase the inheritance of a family of four hundred years' standing?—*Cynthius aurem vellet*, as we used to say at Mareschal College; that is to say, I will pull him out of my father's house by the ears. And so, my Lord Menteith, I am yours, hand and sword, body and soul, till death do us part, or to the end of the next campaign, whichever event shall first come to pass."

"And I," said the young nobleman, "rivet the bargain by a month's pay in advance."

"That is more than necessary," said Dalgetty, pocketing the money, however. "But now I must go down, look after my war-saddle and abuilziements, and see that Gustavus has his morning, and tell him we have taken new service."

"There goes your precious recruit," said Lord Menteith to Anderson, as the Captain left the room; "I fear we shall have little credit of him."

"He is a man of the times, however," said Anderson; "and without such we should hardly be able to carry on our enterprise."

"Let us go down," answered Lord Menteith, "and see how our muster is likely to thrive, for I hear a good deal of bustle in the castle."

When they entered the hall, the domestics keeping modestly in the back-ground, morning greetings passed between Lord Menteith, Angus M'Aulay, and his English guests, while Allan, occupying the same settle which he had filled the preceding evening, paid no attention whatever to any one.

Old Donald hastily rushed into the apartment. "A message from Vich Alister More;[1] he is coming up in the evening."

"With how many attendants?" said M'Aulay.

"Some five-and-twenty or thirty," said Donald, "his ordinary retinue."

"Shake down plenty of straw in the great barn," said the Laird.

Another servant here stumbled hastily in, announcing the expected approach of Sir Hector M'Lean, "who is arriving with a large following."

"Put them in the malt-kiln," said M'Aulay; "and keep the breadth of the middenstead between them and the M'Donalds; they are but unfriends to each other."

Donald now re-entered, his visage considerably lengthened—"The teil's i' the folk," he said; "the haill Hielands are asteer, I think. Evan Dhu, of Lochiel, will be here in an hour, with Lord kens how many gillies."

"Into the great barn with them beside the M'Donalds," said the Laird.

More and more chiefs were announced, the least of whom would have accounted it derogatory to his dignity to stir without a retinue of six or seven persons. To every new annunciation, Angus MacAulay answered by naming some place of accommodation,—the stables, the loft, the cow-house, the sheds, every domestic office, were destined for the

[1] The patronymic of MacDonell of Glengarry.

night to some hospitable purpose or other. At length the arrival of M'Dougal of Lorn, after all his means of accommodation were exhausted, reduced him to some perplexity. "What the devil is to be done, Donald?" said he; "the great barn would hold fifty more, if they would lie heads and thraws; but there would be drawn dirks amang them which should lie uppermost, and so we should have bloody puddings before morning!"

"What needs all this?" said Allan, starting up, and coming forward with the stern abruptness of his usual manner; "are the Gael to-day of softer flesh or whiter blood than their fathers were? Knock the head out of a cask of usquebae; let that be their night-gear — their plaids their bed-clothes — the blue sky their canopy, and the heather their couch. — Come a thousand more, and they would not quarrel on the broad heath for want of room!"

"Allan is right," said his brother; "it is very odd how Allan, who, between ourselves," said he to Musgrave, "is a little wowf,[1] seems at times to have more sense than us all put together. Observe him now."

"Yes," continued Allan, fixing his eyes with a ghastly stare upon the opposite side of the hall, "they may well begin as they are to end; many a man will sleep this night upon the heath, that when the Martinmas wind shall blow shall lie there stark enough, and reck little of cold or lack of covering."

"Do not forespeak us, brother," said Angus; "that is not lucky."

"And what luck is it then that you expect?" said Allan; and straining his eyes until they almost started from their sockets, he fell with a convulsive shudder into the arms of Donald and his brother, who, knowing the nature of his fits, had come near to prevent his fall. They seated him upon a bench, and supported him until he came to himself, and was about to speak.

"For God's sake, Allan," said his brother, who knew the impression his mystical words were likely to make on many of the guests, "say nothing to discourage us."

"Am I he who discourages you?" said Allan; "let every man face his weird as I shall face mine. That which must come, will come; and we shall stride gallantly over many a field of victory, ere we reach yon fatal slaughter-place, or tread yon sable scaffolds."

"What slaughter-place? what scaffolds?" exclaimed several voices; for Allan's renown as a seer was generally established in the Highlands.

"You will know that but too soon," answered Allan. "Speak to me no more, I am weary of your questions." He then pressed his hand against his brow, rested his elbow upon his knee, and sunk into a deep reverie.

"Send for Annot Lyle, and the harp," said Angus, in a whisper, to his servant; "and let those gentlemen follow me who do not fear a Highland breakfast."

All accompanied their hospitable landlord excepting only Lord Menteith, who lingered in one of the deep embrasures formed by the windows of the hall. Annot Lyle shortly after glided into the room, not ill described by Lord Menteith as being the lightest and most fairy figure that ever trod the turf by moonlight. Her stature, considerably less than the ordinary size of women, gave her the appearance of extreme youth, insomuch, that although she was near eighteen, she might have passed for four years younger. Her figure, hands, and feet, were formed upon a model of exquisite symmetry with the size and lightness of her person, so that Titania herself could scarce have found a more fitting representative. Her hair was a dark shade of the colour usually termed flaxen, whose clustering ringlets suited admirably with her fair complexion, and with the playful, yet simple, expression of her features. When we add to these charms, that Annot, in her orphan state, seemed the gayest and happiest of maidens, the reader must allow us to claim for her the interest of almost all who looked on her. In fact, it was impossible to find a more universal favourite, and she often came among the rude inhabitants of the castle, as Allan himself, in a poetical mood, expressed it, "like a sunbeam on a sullen sea," communicating to all others the cheerfulness that filled her own mind.

Annot, such as we have described her, smiled and blushed, when, on entering the apartment, Lord Menteith came from his place of retirement, and kindly wished her good-morning.

"And good-morning to you, my lord," returned she, extending her hand to her friend; "we have seldom seen you of late at the castle, and now I fear it is with no peaceful purpose."

"At least, let me not interrupt your harmony, Annot," said Lord Monteith, "though my arrival may breed discord elsewhere. My cousin Allan needs the assistance of your voice and music."

"My preserver," said Annot Lyle, "has a right to my poor exertions; and you, too, my lord, — you, too, are my preserver, and were the most active to save a life that is worthless enough, unless it can benefit my protectors."

So saying, she sate down at a little distance upon the bench on which Allan M'Aulay was placed, and tuning her clairshach, a small harp, about thirty inches in height, she accompanied it with her voice. The air was an ancient Gaelic melody, and the words, which were supposed to be very old, were in the same language; but we subjoin a translation of them, by Secundus Macpherson, Esq. of Glenforgen, which, although submitted to the fetters of English rhythm, we trust will be found nearly as genuine as the version of Ossian by his celebrated namesake.

1.

"Birds of omen dark and foul,
Night-crow, raven, bat, and owl,
Leave the sick man to his dream —
All night long he heard your scream —
Haste to cave and ruin'd tower,
Ivy, tod, or dingled bower,
There to wink and mope, for, hark!
In the mid air sings the lark.

2

"Hie to moorish gills and rocks,
Prowling wolf and wily fox, —
Hie you fast, nor turn your view,
Though the lamb bleats to the ewe.
Couch your trains, and speed your flight,
Safety parts with parting night;
And on distant echo borne,
Comes the hunter's early horn.

3.

"The moon's wan crescent scarcely gleams,
Ghost-like she fades in morning beams;
Hie hence each peevish imp and fay,
That scare the pilgrim on his way: —

[1] *Wowf*, i. e. crazed.

Quench, kelpy! quench, in bog and fen,
Thy torch that cheats benighted men;
Thy dance is o'er, thy reign is done,
For Benyieglo hath seen the sun.

4.

"Wild thoughts, that, sinful, dark, and deep,
O'erpower the passive mind in sleep,
Pass from the slumberer's soul away,
Like night-mists from the brow of day:
Foul hag, whose blasted visage grim
Smothers the pulse, unnerves the limb,
Spur thy dark palfrey, and begone!
Thou darest not face the godlike sun."

As the strain proceeded, Allan M'Aulay gradually gave signs of recovering his presence of mind, and attention to the objects around him. The deep-knit furrows of his brow relaxed and smoothed themselves; and the rest of his features, which had seemed contorted with internal agony, relapsed into a more natural state. When he raised his head and sat upright, his countenance, though still deeply melancholy, was divested of its wildness and ferocity; and in its composed state, although by no means handsome, the expression of his features was striking, manly, and even noble. His thick, brown eyebrows, which had hitherto been drawn close together, were now slightly separated, as in the natural state; and his grey eyes, which had rolled and flashed from under them with an unnatural and portentous gleam, now recovered a steady and determined expression.

"Thank God!" he said, after sitting silent for about a minute, until the very last sounds of the harp had ceased to vibrate, "my soul is no longer darkened—the mist hath passed from my spirit."

"You owe thanks, cousin Allan," said Lord Menteith, coming forward, "to Annot Lyle, as well as to Heaven, for this happy change in your melancholy mood."

"My noble cousin Menteith," said Allan, rising and greeting him very respectfully, as well as kindly, "has known my unhappy circumstances so long, that his goodness will require no excuse for my being thus late in bidding him welcome to the castle."

"We are too old acquaintances, Allan," said Lord Menteith, "and too good friends, to stand on the ceremonial of outward greeting; but half the Highlands will be here to-day, and you know, with our mountain Chiefs, ceremony must not be neglected. What will you give little Annot for making you fit company to meet Evan Dhu, and I know not how many bonnets and feathers?"

"What will he give me?" said Annot, smiling; "nothing less, I hope, than the best ribbon at the Fair of Doune."

"The Fair of Doune, Annot?" said Allan sadly; "there will be bloody work before that day, and I may never see it; but you have well reminded me of what I have long intended to do."

Having said this, he left the room.

"Should he talk long in this manner," said Lord Menteith, "you must keep your harp in tune, my dear Annot."

"I hope not," said Annot, anxiously; "this fit has been a long one, and probably will not soon return. It is fearful to see a mind, naturally generous and affectionate, afflicted by this constitutional malady."

As she spoke in a low and confidential tone, Lord Menteith naturally drew close, and stooped forward, that he might the better catch the sense of what she said. When Allan suddenly entered the apartment, they as naturally drew back from each other with a manner expressive of consciousness, as if surprised in a conversation which they wished to keep secret from him. This did not escape Allan's observation; he stopt short at the door of the apartment—his brows were contracted—his eyes rolled; but it was only the paroxysm of a moment. He passed his broad sinewy hand across his brow, as if to obliterate these signs of emotion, and advanced towards Annot, holding in his hand a very small box, made of oak-wood, curiously inlaid. "I take you to witness," he said, "cousin Menteith, that I give this box and its contents to Annot Lyle. It contains a few ornaments that belonged to my poor mother—of trifling value, you may guess, for the wife of a Highland laird has seldom a rich jewel-casket"

"But these ornaments," said Annot Lyle, gently and timidly refusing the box, "belong to the family—I cannot accept——"

"They belong to me alone, Annot," said Allan, interrupting her; "they were my mother's dying bequest. They are all I can call my own, except my plaid and my claymore. Take them, therefore—they are to me valueless trinkets—and keep them for my sake—should I never return from these wars."

So saying, he opened the case, and presented it to Annot. "If," said he, "they are of any value, dispose of them for your own support, when this house has been consumed with hostile fire, and can no longer afford you protection. But keep one ring in memory of Allan, who has done, to requite your kindness, if not all he wished, at least all he could."

Annot Lyle endeavoured in vain to restrain the gathering tears, when she said, "*One* ring, Allan, I will accept from you as a memorial of your goodness to a poor orphan, but do not press me to take more; for I cannot, and will not, accept a gift of such disproportioned value."

"Make your choice, then," said Allan; "your delicacy may be well founded; the others will assume a shape in which they may be more useful to you."

"Think not of it," said Annot, choosing from the contents of the casket a ring, apparently the most trifling in value which it contained; "keep them for your own, or your brother's bride.—But, good heavens!" she said, interrupting herself, and looking at the ring, "what is this that I have chosen?"

Allan hastened to look upon it, with eyes of gloomy apprehension; it bore, in enamel, a death's head above two crossed daggers. When Allan recognized the device, he uttered a sigh so deep, that she dropped the ring from her hand, which rolled upon the floor. Lord Menteith picked it up, and returned it to the terrified Annot.

"I take God to witness," said Allan, in a solemn tone, "that *your* hand, young lord, and not mine, has again delivered to her this ill-omened gift. It was the mourning ring worn by my mother in memorial of her murdered brother."

"I fear no omens," said Annot, smiling through her tears; "and nothing coming through the hands of my two patrons," so she was wont to call Lord Menteith and Allan, "can bring bad luck to the poor orphan."

She put the ring on her finger, and, turning to her harp, sung, to a lively air, the following verses of one of the fashionable songs of the period, which had found its way, marked as it was with the quaint hyperbolical taste of King Charles's time, from some court masque to the wilds of Perthshire :—

"Gaze not upon the stars, fond sage,
In them no influence lies;
To read the fate of youth or age,
Look on my Helen's eyes.

"Yet, rash astrologer, refrain!
Too dearly would be won
The prescience of another's pain,
If purchased by thine own."

"She is right, Allan," said Lord Menteith; "and this end of an old song is worth all we shall gain by our attempt to look into futurity."

"She is WRONG, my lord," said Allan, sternly, "though you, who treat with lightness the warnings I have given you, may not live to see the event of the omen.—Laugh not so scornfully," he added, interrupting himself, "or rather laugh on as loud and as long as you will; your term of laughter will find a pause ere long."

"I care not for your visions, Allan," said Lord Menteith; "however short my span of life, the eye of no Highland seer can see its termination."

"For Heaven's sake," said Annot Lyle, interrupting him, "you know his nature, and how little he can endure——"

"Fear me not," said Allan, interruping her,—"my mind is now constant and calm.—But for you, young lord," said he, turning to Lord Menteith, "my eye has sought you through fields of battle, where Highlanders and Lowlanders lay strewed as thick as ever the rooks sat on those ancient trees," pointing to a rookery which was seen from the window—"my eye sought you, but your corpse was not there—my eye sought you among a train of unresisting and disarmed captives, drawn up within the bounding walls of an ancient and rugged fortress;—flash after flash—platoon after platoon—the hostile shot fell amongst them, they dropped like the dry leaves in autumn, but you were not among their ranks;—scaffolds were prepared—blocks were arranged, saw-dust was spread—the priest was ready with his book, the headsman with his axe—but there, too, mine eye found you not."

"The gibbet, then, I suppose, must be my doom?" said Lord Menteith. "Yet I wish they had spared me the halter, were it but for the dignity of the peerage."

He spoke this scornfully, yet not without a sort of curiosity, and a wish to receive an answer; for the desire of prying into futurity frequently has some influence even on the minds of those who disavow all belief in the possibility of such predictions.

"Your rank, my lord, will suffer no dishonour in your person, or by the manner of your death. Three times have I seen a Highlander plant his dirk in your bosom—and such will be your fate."

"I wish you would describe him to me," said Lord Menteith, "and I shall save him the trouble of fulfilling your prophecy, if his plaid be passible to sword or pistol."

"Your weapons," said Allan, "would avail you little; nor can I give you the information you desire. The face of the vision has been ever averted from me."

"So be it then," said Lord Menteith, "and let it rest in the uncertainty in which your augury has placed it. I shall dine not the less merrily among plaids, and dirks, and kilts to-day."

"It may be so," said Allan; "and, it may be, you do well to enjoy these moments, which to me are poisoned by auguries of future evil. But I," he continued—"I repeat to you, that this weapon—that is, such a weapon as this," touching the hilt of the dirk which he wore, "carries your fate."

"In the meanwhile," said Lord Menteith, "you, Allan, have frightened the blood from the cheeks of Annot Lyle—let us leave this discourse, my friend, and go to see what we both understand,—the progress of our military preparations."

They joined Angus M'Aulay and his English guests, and, in the military discussions which immediately took place, Allan shewed a clearness of mind, strength of judgment, and precision of thought, totally inconsistent with the mystical light in which his character has been hitherto exhibited.

CHAPTER VII.

When Albin her claymore indignantly draws,
When her bonneted chieftains around her shall crowd,
Clan-Ranald the dauntless, and Moray the proud,
All plaided and plumed in their tartan array——
Lochiel's Warning.

WHOEVER saw that morning the Castle of Darnlinvarach, beheld a busy and a gallant sight.

The various Chiefs, arriving with their different retinues, which, notwithstanding their numbers, formed no more than their usual equipage and bodyguard upon occasions of solemnity, saluted the lord of the castle and each other with overflowing kindness, or with haughty and distant politeness, according to the circumstances of friendship or hostility in which their clans had recently stood to each other. Each Chief, however small his comparative importance, shewed the full disposition to exact from the rest the deference due to a separate and independent prince; while the stronger and more powerful, divided among themselves by recent contentions or ancient feuds, were constrained in policy to use great deference to the feelings of their less powerful brethren, in order, in case of need, to attach as many well-wishers as might be to their own interest and standard. Thus the meeting of Chiefs resembled not a little those ancient Diets of the Empire, where the smallest *Frey-Graf*, who possessed a castle perched upon a barren crag, with a few hundred acres around it, claimed the state and honours of a sovereign prince, and a seat according to his rank among the dignitaries of the Empire.

The followers of the different leaders were separately arranged and accommodated, as room and circumstances best permitted, each retaining however his henchman, who waited, close as the shadow, upon his person, to execute whatever might be required by his patron.

The exterior of the castle afforded a singular scene. The Highlanders, from different islands, glens, and straths, eyed each other at a distance with looks of emulation, inquisitive curiosity, or hostile malevolence; but the most astounding part of the assembly, at least to a Lowland ear, was

the rival performance of the bagpipers. These warlike minstrels, who had the highest opinion, each, of the superiority of his own tribe, joined to the most overweening idea of the importance connected with his profession, at first performed their various pibrochs in front each of his own clan. At length, however, as the black-cocks towards the end of the season, when, in sportsman's language, they are said to flock or crowd, attracted together by the sound of each other's triumphant crow, even so did the pipers, swelling their plaids and tartans in the same triumphant manner in which the birds ruffle up their feathers, begin to approach each other within such distance as might give to their brethren a sample of their skill. Walking within a short interval, and eyeing each other with looks in which self-importance and defiance might be traced, they strutted, puffed, and plied their screaming instruments, each playing his own favourite tune with such a din, that if an Italian musician had lain buried within ten miles of them, he must have risen from the dead to run out of hearing.

The Chieftains meanwhile had assembled in close conclave in the great hall of the castle. Among them were the persons of the greatest consequence in the Highlands, some of them attracted by zeal for the royal cause, and many by aversion to that severe and general domination which the Marquis of Argyle, since his rising to such influence in the state, had exercised over his Highland neighbours. That statesman, indeed, though possessed of considerable abilities, and great power, had failings, which rendered him unpopular among the Highland chiefs. The devotion which he professed was of a morose and fanatical character ; his ambition appeared to be insatiable, and inferior chiefs complained of his want of bounty and liberality. Add to this, that although a Highlander, and of a family distinguished for valour before and since, Gillespie Grumach[1] (which, from an obliquity in his eyes, was the personal distinction he bore in the Highlands, where titles of rank are unknown) was suspected of being a better man in the cabinet than in the field. He and his tribe were particularly obnoxious to the M'Donalds and the M'Leans, two numerous septs, who, though disunited by ancient feuds, agreed in an intense dislike to the Campbells, or, as they were called, the Children of Diarmid.

For some time the assembled Chiefs remained silent, until some one should open the business of the meeting. At length one of the most powerful of them commenced the diet by saying,—"We have been summoned hither, M'Aulay, to consult of weighty matters concerning the King's affairs, and those of the state ; and we crave to know by whom they are to be explained to us ?"

M'Aulay, whose strength did not lie in oratory, intimated his wish that Lord Menteith should open the business of the council. With great modesty, and at the same time with spirit, that young lord said, "he wished what he was about to propose had come from some person of better known and more established character. Since, however, it lay with him to be spokesman, he had to state to the Chiefs assembled, that those who wished to throw off the base yoke which fanaticism had endeavoured to wreath round their necks, had not a moment to lose. The Covenanters," he said, "after having twice made war upon their sovereign, and having extorted from him every request, reasonable or unreasonable, which they thought proper to demand —after their Chiefs had been loaded with dignities and favours — after having publicly declared, when his Majesty, after a gracious visit to the land of his nativity, was upon his return to England, that he returned a contented king from a contented people, — after all this, and without even the pretext for a national grievance, the same men have, upon doubts and suspicions, equally dishonourable to the King, and groundless in themselves, detached a strong army to assist his rebels in England, in a quarrel with which Scotland had no more to do than she has with the wars in Germany. It was well," he said, "that the eagerness with which this treasonable purpose was pursued, had blinded the junta who now usurped the government of Scotland to the risk which they were about to incur. The army which they had despatched to England under old Leven comprehended their veteran soldiers, the strength of those armies which had been levied in Scotland during the two former wars——"

Here Captain Dalgetty endeavoured to rise, for the purpose of explaining how many veteran officers, trained in the German wars, were, to his certain knowledge, in the army of the Earl of Leven. But Allan M'Aulay, holding him down in his seat with one hand, pressed the fore-finger of the other upon his own lips, and, though with some difficulty, prevented his interference. Captain Dalgetty looked upon him with a very scornful and indignant air, by which the other's gravity was in no way moved, and Lord Menteith proceeded without farther interruption.

"The moment," he said, "was most favourable for all true-hearted and loyal Scotsmen to shew, that the reproach their country had lately undergone arose from the selfish ambition of a few turbulent and seditious men, joined to the absurd fanaticism which, disseminated from five hundred pulpits, had spread like a land-flood over the Lowlands of Scotland. He had letters from the Marquis of Huntly in the north, which he should shew to the Chiefs separately. That nobleman, equally loyal and powerful, was determined to exert his utmost energy in the common cause, and the powerful Earl of Seaforth was prepared to join the same standard. From the Earl of Airly, and the Ogilvies in Angusshire, he had had communications equally decided ; and there was no doubt that these, who, with the Hays, Leiths, Burnets, and other loyal gentlemen, would be soon on horseback, would form a body far more than sufficient to overawe the northern Covenanters, who had already experienced their valour in the well-known rout which was popularly termed the Trot of Turiff. South of Forth and Tay," he said, "the King had many friends, who, oppressed by enforced oaths, compulsatory levies, heavy taxes, unjustly imposed and unequally levied, by the tyranny of the Committee of Estates, and the inquisitorial insolence of the Presbyterian divines, waited but the waving of the royal banner to take up arms. Douglas, Traquair, Roxburgh, Hume, all friendly to the royal cause, would counterbalance," he said, "the Covenanting interest in the south ; and two gentlemen, of name and quality, here present, from the north of England, would answer for the zeal of Cumberland

[1] *Grumach*—ill-favoured.

Westmoreland, and Northumberland. Against so many gallant gentlemen the southern Covenanters could but arm raw levies; the Whigamores of the western shires, and the ploughmen and mechanics of the Low-country. For the West Highlands, he knew no interest which the Covenanters possessed there, except that of one individual, as well known as he was odious. But was there a single man, who, on casting his eye round this hall, and recognizing the power, the gallantry, and the dignity of the chiefs assembled, could entertain a moment's doubt of their success against the utmost force which Gillespie Grumach could collect against them? He had only farther to add, that considerable funds, both of money and ammunition, had been provided for the army,"—(Here Dalgetty pricked up his ears)—"that officers of ability and experience in the foreign wars, one of whom was now present," (the Captain drew himself up, and looked round,) "had engaged to train such levies as might require to be disciplined;—and that a numerous body of auxiliary forces from Ireland, having been detached from the Earl of Antrim, from Ulster, had successfully accomplished their descent upon the main land, and, with the assistance of Clanranald's people, having taken and fortified the Castle of Mingarry, in spite of Argyle's attempts to intercept them, were in full march to this place of rendezvous. It only remained," he said, "that the noble Chiefs assembled, laying aside every lesser consideration, should unite, heart and hand, in the common cause; send the fiery cross through their clans, in order to collect their utmost force, and form their junction with such celerity as to leave the enemy no time, either for preparation, or recovery from the panic which would spread at the first sound of their pibroch. He himself," he said, "though neither among the richest nor the most powerful of the Scottish nobility, felt that he had to support the dignity of an ancient and honourable house, the independence of an ancient and honourable nation, and to that cause he was determined to devote both life and fortune. If those who were more powerful were equally prompt, he trusted they would deserve the thanks of their King, and the gratitude of posterity."

Loud applause followed this speech of Lord Menteith, and testified the general acquiescence of all present in the sentiments which he had expressed; but when the shout had died away, the assembled Chiefs continued to gaze upon each other as if something yet remained to be settled. After some whispers among themselves, an aged man, whom his grey hairs rendered respectable, although he was not of the highest order of Chiefs, replied to what had been said.

"Thane of Menteith," he said, "you have well spoken; nor is there one of us in whose bosom the same sentiments do not burn like fire. But it is not strength alone that wins the fight; it is the head of the commander, as well as the arm of the soldier, that brings victory. I ask of you, who is to raise and sustain the banner under which we are invited to rise and muster ourselves? Will it be expected that we should risk our children, and the flower of our kinsmen, ere we know to whose guidance they are to be intrusted? This were leading those to slaughter, whom, by the laws of God and man, it is our duty to protect. Where is the royal commission, under which the lieges are to be convocated in arms? Simple and rude as we may be deemed, we know something of the established rules of war, as well as of the laws of our country; nor will we arm ourselves against the general peace of Scotland, unless by the express commands of the King, and under a leader fit to command such men as are here assembled."

"Where would you find such a leader," said another Chief, starting up, "saving the representative of the Lord of the Isles, entitled by birth and hereditary descent to lead forth the array of every clan of the Highlands; and where is that dignity lodged, save in the house of Vich Alister More?"

"I acknowledge," said another Chief, eagerly interrupting the speaker, "the truth in what has been first said, but not the inference. If Vich Alister More desires to be held representative of the Lord of the Isles, let him first shew his blood is redder than mine."

"That is soon tried," said Vich Alister More, laying his hand upon the basket hilt of his claymore. Lord Menteith threw himself between them, entreating and imploring each to remember that the interests of Scotland, the liberty of their country, and the cause of their King, ought to be superior in their eyes to any personal disputes respecting descent, rank, and precedence. Several of the Highland Chiefs, who had no desire to admit the claims of either chieftain, interfered to the same purpose, and none with more emphasis than the celebrated Evan Dhu.

"I have come from my lakes," he said, "as a stream descends from the hills, not to turn again, but to accomplish my course. It is not by looking back to our own pretensions that we shall serve Scotland or King Charles. My voice shall be for that general whom the King shall name, who will doubtless possess those qualities which are necessary to command men like us. High-born he must be, or we shall lose our rank in obeying him—wise and skilful, or we shall endanger the safety of our people—bravest among the brave, or we shall peril our own honour—temperate, firm, and manly, to keep us united. Such is the man that must command us. Are you prepared, Thane of Menteith, to say where such a general is to be found!"

"There is but ONE," said Allan M'Aulay; "and here," he said, laying his hand upon the shoulder of Anderson, who stood behind Lord Menteith, "here he stands!"

The general surprise of the meeting was expressed by an impatient murmur; when Anderson, throwing back the cloak in which his face was muffled, and stepping forward, spoke thus:—"I did not long intend to be a silent spectator of this interesting scene, although my hasty friend has obliged me to disclose myself somewhat sooner than was my intention. Whether I deserve the honour reposed in me by this parchment will best appear from what I shall be able to do for the King's service. It is a commission, under the great seal, to James Graham, Earl of Montrose, to command those forces which are to be assembled for the service of his Majesty in this kingdom."

A loud shout of approbation burst from the assembly. There was, in fact, no other person to whom, in point of rank, these proud mountaineers would have been disposed to submit. His inveterate and hereditary hostility to the Marquis of Argyle insured his engaging in the war with suffi-

cient energy, while his well-known military talents, and his tried valour, afforded every hope of his bringing it to a favourable conclusion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our plot is as good a plot as ever was laid; our friends true and constant: a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation: an excellent plot, very good friends.

Henry IV. Part I.

No sooner had the general acclamation of joyful surprise subsided, than silence was eagerly demanded for reading the royal commission; and the bonnets, which hitherto each Chief had worn, probably because unwilling to be the first to uncover, were now at once vailed in honour of the royal warrant. It was couched in the most full and ample terms, authorizing the Earl of Montrose to assemble the subjects in arms, for the putting down the present rebellion, which divers traitors and seditious persons had levied against the King, to the manifest forfaulture, as it stated, of their allegiance, and to the breach of the pacification between the two kingdoms. It enjoined all subordinate authorities to be obedient and assisting to Montrose in his enterprise; gave him the power of making ordinances and proclamations, punishing misdemeanours, pardoning criminals, placing and displacing governors and commanders. In fine, it was as large and full a commission as any with which a prince could intrust a subject. As soon as it was finished, a shout burst from the assembled Chiefs, in testimony of their ready submission to the will of their sovereign. Not contented with generally thanking them for a reception so favourable, Montrose hastened to address himself to individuals. The most important Chiefs had already been long personally known to him, but even to those of inferior consequence he now introduced himself, and by the acquaintance he displayed with their peculiar designations, and the circumstances and history of their clans, he shewed how long he must have studied the character of the mountaineers, and prepared himself for such a situation as he now held.

While he was engaged in these acts of courtesy, his graceful manner, expressive features, and dignity of deportment, made a singular contrast with the coarseness and meanness of his dress. Montrose possessed that sort of form and face, in which the beholder, at the first glance, sees nothing extraordinary, but of which the interest becomes more impressive the longer we gaze upon them. His stature was very little above the middle size, but in person he was uncommonly well-built, and capable both of exerting great force, and enduring much fatigue. In fact, he enjoyed a constitution of iron, without which he could not have sustained the trials of his extraordinary campaigns, through all of which he subjected himself to the hardships of the meanest soldier. He was perfect in all exercises, whether peaceful or martial, and possessed, of course, that graceful ease of deportment proper to those to whom habit has rendered all postures easy.

His long brown hair, according to the custom of men of quality among the Royalists, was parted on the top of his head, and trained to hang down on each side in curled locks, one of which, descending two or three inches lower than the others, intimated Montrose's compliance with that fashion against which it pleased Mr Prynne, the puritan, to write a treatise, entitled, "The Unloveliness of Lovelocks." The features which these tresses enclosed, were of that kind which derive their interest from the character of the man, rather than from the regularity of their form. But a high nose, a full, decided, well-opened, quick grey eye, and a sanguine complexion, made amends for some coarseness and irregularity in the subordinate parts of the face; so that, altogether, Montrose might be termed rather a handsome, than a hard-featured man. But those who saw him when his soul looked through those eyes with all the energy and fire of genius — those who heard him speak with the authority of talent, and the eloquence of nature, were impressed with an opinion even of his external form, more enthusiastically favourable than the portraits which still survive would entitle us to ascribe to it. Such, at least, was the impression he made upon the assembled Chiefs of the mountaineers, over whom, as upon all persons in their state of society, personal appearance has no small influence.

In the discussions which followed his discovering himself, Montrose explained the various risks which he had run in his present undertaking. His first attempt had been to assemble a body of loyalists in the north of England, who, in obedience to the orders of the Marquis of Newcastle, he expected would have marched into Scotland; but the disinclination of the English to cross the Border, and the delay of the Earl of Antrim, who was to have landed in the Solway Firth with his Irish army, prevented his executing this design. Other plans having in like manner failed, he stated that he found himself under the necessity of assuming a disguise to render his passage secure through the Lowlands, in which he had been kindly assisted by his kinsman of Menteith. By what means Allan M'Aulay had come to know him, he could not pretend to explain. Those who knew Allan's prophetic pretensions, smiled mysteriously; but he himself only replied, that "the Earl of Montrose need not be surprised if he was known to thousands, of whom he himself could retain no memory."

"By the honour of a cavalier," said Captain Dalgetty, finding at length an opportunity to thrust in his word, "I am proud and happy in having an opportunity of drawing a sword under your lordship's command; and I do forgive all grudge, malecontent, and malice of my heart, to Mr Allan M'Aulay, for having thrust me down to the lowest seat of the board yestreen. Certes, he hath this day spoken so like a man having full command of his senses, that I had resolved in my secret purpose that he was no way entitled to claim the privilege of insanity. But since I was only postponed to a noble earl, my future commander-in-chief, I do, before you all, recognize the justice of the preference, and heartily salute Allan as one who is to be his *bon-camarado*."

Having made this speech, which was little understood or attended to, without putting off his military glove, he seized on Allan's hand, and began to shake it with violence, which Allan, with a gripe like a smith's vice, returned with such force, as to drive the iron splents of the gauntlet into the hand of the wearer.

Captain Dalgetty might have construed this into

a new affront, had not his attention, as he stood blowing and shaking the injured member, been suddenly called by Montrose himself.

"Hear this news," he said, "Captain Dalgetty —I should say Major Dalgetty,—the Irish, who are to profit by your military experience, are now within a few leagues of us."

"Our deer-stalkers," said Angus M'Aulay, "who were abroad to bring in venison for this honourable party, have heard of a band of strangers, speaking neither Saxon nor pure Gaelic, and with difficulty making themselves understood by the people of the country, who are marching this way in arms, under the leading, it is said, of Alaster M'Donald, who is commonly called Young Colkitto."

"These must be our men," said Montrose; we must hasten to send messengers forward, both to act as guides and to relieve their wants."

"The last," said Angus M'Aulay, "will be no easy matter; for I am informed, that, excepting muskets and a very little ammunition, they want every thing that soldiers should have; and they are particularly deficient in money, in shoes, and in raiment."

"There is at least no use in saying so," said Montrose, "in so loud a tone. The puritan weavers of Glasgow shall provide them with plenty of broad-cloth, when we make a descent from the Highlands; and if the ministers could formerly preach the old women of the Scottish boroughs out of their webs of napery, to make tents to the fellows on Dunse Law,[1] I will try whether I have not a little interest both to make these godly dames renew their patriotic gift, and the prick-eared knaves, their husbands, open their purses."

"And respecting arms," said Captain Dalgetty, "if your lordship will permit an old cavalier to speak his mind, so that the one-third have muskets, my darling weapon would be the pike for the remainder, whether for resisting a charge of horse, or for breaking the infantry. A common smith will make a hundred pike-heads in a day; here is plenty of wood for shafts; and I will uphold, that, according to the best usages of war, a strong battalion of pikes, drawn up in the fashion of the Lion of the North, the immortal Gustavus, would beat the Macedonian phalanx, of which I used to read in the Mareschal College, when I studied in the ancient town of Bon-accord; and farther, I will venture to predicate ——"

The Captain's lecture upon tactics was here suddenly interrupted by Allan M'Aulay, who said, hastily,—"Room for an unexpected and unwelcome guest!"

At the same moment, the door of the hall opened, and a grey-haired man, of a very stately appearance, presented himself to the assembly. There was much dignity, and even authority, in his manner. His stature was above the common size, and his looks such as were used to command. He cast a severe, and almost stern glance upon the assembly of Chiefs. Those of the higher rank among them returned it with scornful indifference; but some of the western gentlemen of inferior power, looked as if they wished themselves elsewhere.

"To which of this assembly," said the stranger, "am I to address myself as leader? or have you not fixed upon the person who is to hold an office at least as perilous as it is honourable?"

"Address yourself to me, Sir Duncan Campbell," said Montrose, stepping forward.

"To you!" said Sir Duncan Campbell, with some scorn.

"Yes,—to me," repeated Montrose,—"to the Earl of Montrose, if you have forgotten him."

"I should now, at least," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "have had some difficulty in recognizing him in the disguise of a groom.—And yet I might have guessed that no evil influence inferior to your lordship's, distinguished as one who troubles Israel, could have collected together this rash assembly of misguided persons."

"I will answer unto you," said Montrose, "in the manner of your own Puritans. I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house.—But let us leave an altercation, which is of little consequence but to ourselves, and hear the tidings you have brought from your Chief of Argyle; for I must conclude that it is in his name that you have come to this meeting."

"It is in the name of the Marquis of Argyle," said Sir Duncan Campbell,—"in the name of the Scottish Convention of Estates, that I demand to know the meaning of this singular convocation. If it is designed to disturb the peace of the country, it were but acting like neighbours, and men of honour, to give us some intimation to stand upon our guard."

"It is a singular, and new state of affairs in Scotland," said Montrose, turning from Sir Duncan Campbell to the assembly, "when Scottish men of rank and family cannot meet in the house of a common friend without an inquisitorial visit and demand, on the part of our rulers, to know the subject of our conference. Methinks our ancestors were accustomed to hold Highland huntings, or other purposes of meeting, without asking the leave either of the great M'Callum More himself, or any of his emissaries or dependents."

"The times have been such in Scotland," answered one of the Western Chiefs, "and such they will again be, when the intruders on our ancient possessions are again reduced to be Lairds of Lochow, instead of overspreading us like a band of devouring locusts."

"Am I to understand, then," said Sir Duncan, "that it is against *my* name alone that these preparations are directed? or are the race of Diarmid only to be sufferers in common with the whole of the peaceful and orderly inhabitants of Scotland?"

"I would ask," said a wild-looking Chief, starting hastily up, "one question of the Knight of Ardenvohr, ere he proceeds farther in his daring catechism.—Has he brought more than one life to this castle, that he ventures to intrude among us for the purposes of insult?"

"Gentlemen," said Montrose, "let me implore your patience; a messenger who comes among us for the purpose of embassy, is entitled to freedom of speech, and a safe-conduct. And since Sir Duncan Campbell is so pressing, I care not if I inform him, for his guidance, that he is in an assembly of the King's loyal subjects, convoked by me, in his Majesty's name and authority, and as empowered by his Majesty's royal commission."

"We are to have, then, I presume," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "a civil war in all its forms?

[1] The Covenanters encamped on Dunse Law, during the troubles of 1639.

I have been too long a soldier to view its approach with anxiety; but it would have been for my Lord of Montrose's honour, if, in this matter, he had consulted his own ambition less, and the peace of the country more."

"Those consulted their own ambition and self-interest, Sir Duncan," answered Montrose, "who brought the country to the pass in which it now stands, and rendered necessary the sharp remedies which we are now reluctantly about to use."

"And what rank among these self-seekers," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "shall we assign to a noble Earl, so violently attached to the Covenant, that he was the first, in 1639, to cross the Tyne, wading middle deep, at the head of his regiment, to charge the royal forces? It was the same, I think, who imposed the Covenant upon the burgesses and colleges of Aberdeen, at the point of sword and pike."

"I understand your sneer, Sir Duncan," said Montrose, temperately; "and I can only add, that if sincere repentance can make amends for youthful error, and for yielding to the artful representation of ambitious hypocrites, I shall be pardoned for the crimes with which you taunt me. I will at least endeavour to deserve forgiveness, for I am here, with my sword in my hand, willing to spend the best blood of my body to make amends for my error; and mortal man can do no more."

"Well, my lord," said Sir Duncan, "I shall be sorry to carry back this language to the Marquis of Argyle. I had it in farther charge from the Marquis, that, to prevent the bloody feuds which must necessarily follow a Highland war, his lordship will be contented if terms of truce could be arranged to the north of the Highland line, as there is ground enough in Scotland to fight upon, without neighbours destroying each other's families and inheritances."

"It is a peaceful proposal," said Montrose, smiling, "such as it should be, coming from one whose personal actions have always been more peaceful than his measures. Yet, if the terms of such a truce could be equally fixed, and if we can obtain security,—for that, Sir Duncan, is indispensable,—that your Marquis will observe these terms with strict fidelity, I, for my part, should be content to leave peace behind us, since we must needs carry war before us. But, Sir Duncan, you are too old and experienced a soldier for us to permit you to remain in our leaguer, and witness our proceedings: we shall, therefore, when you have refreshed yourself, recommend your speedy return to Inverary, and we shall send with you a gentleman on our part to adjust the terms of the Highland armistice, in case the Marquis shall be found serious in proposing such a measure." Sir Duncan Campbell assented by a bow.

"My Lord of Menteith," continued Montrose, "will you have the goodness to attend Sir Duncan Campbell of Ardenvohr, while we determine who shall return with him to his Chief? M'Aulay will permit us to request that he be entertained with suitable hospitality."

"I will give orders for that," said Allan M'Aulay, rising and coming forward. "I love Sir Duncan Campbell; we have been joint sufferers in former days, and I do not forget it now."

"My Lord of Menteith," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "I am grieved to see you, at your early age, engaged in such desperate and rebellious courses."

"I am young," answered Menteith, "yet old enough to distinguish between right and wrong, between loyalty and rebellion; and the sooner a good course is begun, the longer and the better have I a chance of running it."

"And you too, my friend, Allan M'Aulay," said Sir Duncan, taking his hand, "must we also call each other enemies, that have been so often allied against a common foe?" Then turning round to the meeting, he said, "Farewell, gentlemen; there are so many of you to whom I wish well, that your rejection of all terms of mediation gives me deep affliction. May Heaven," he said, looking upwards, "judge between our motives, and those of the movers of this civil commotion!"

"Amen," said Montrose; "to that tribunal we all submit us."

Sir Duncan Campbell left the hall, accompanied by Allan M'Aulay and Lord Menteith. "There goes a true-bred Campbell," said Montrose, as the envoy departed, "for they are ever fair and false."

"Pardon me, my lord," said Evan Dhu; "hereditary enemy as I am to their name, I have ever found the Knight of Ardenvohr brave in war, honest in peace, and true in council."

"Of his own disposition," said Montrose, "such he is undoubtedly; but he now acts as the organ or mouth-piece of his Chief, the Marquis, the falsest man that ever drew breath. And, M'Aulay," he continued in a whisper to his host, "lest he should make some impression upon the inexperience of Menteith, or the singular disposition of your brother you had better send music into their chamber, to prevent his inveigling them into any private conference."

"The devil a musician have I," answered M'Aulay, "excepting the piper, who has nearly broke his wind by an ambitious contention for superiority with three of his own craft; but I can send Annot Lyle and her harp." And he left the apartment to give orders accordingly.

Meanwhile a warm discussion took place, who should undertake the perilous task of returning with Sir Duncan to Inverary. To the higher dignitaries, accustomed to consider themselves upon an equality even with M'Callum More, this was an office not to be proposed; unto others who could not plead the same excuse, it was altogether unacceptable. One would have thought Inverary had been the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the inferior chiefs shewed such reluctance to approach it. After a considerable hesitation, the plain reason was at length spoken out, namely, that whatever Highlander should undertake an office so distasteful to M'Callum More, he would be sure to treasure the offence in his remembrance, and one day or other to make him bitterly repent of it.

In this dilemma, Montrose, who considered the proposed armistice as a mere stratagem on the part of Argyle, although he had not ventured bluntly to reject it in presence of those whom it concerned so nearly, resolved to impose the danger and dignity upon Captain Dalgetty, who had neither clan nor estate in the Highlands upon which the wrath of Argyle could wreak itself.

"But I have a neck though," said Dalgetty, bluntly; "and what if he chooses to avenge himself upon that? I have known a case where an honourable ambassador has been hanged as a spy before now. Neither did the Romans use ambassadors

much more mercifully at the siege of Capua, although I read that they only cut off their hands and noses, put out their eyes, and suffered them to depart in peace."

"By my honour, Captain Dalgetty," said Montrose, "should the Marquis, contrary to the rules of war, dare to practise any atrocity against you, you may depend upon my taking such signal vengeance that all Scotland shall ring of it."

"That will do but little for Dalgetty," returned the Captain; "but, corragio! as the Spaniard says. With the Land of Promise full in view, the Moor of Drumthwacket, *mea paupera regna*, as we said at Mareschal College, I will not refuse your Excellency's commission, being conscious it becomes a cavalier of honour to obey his commander's orders, in defiance both of gibbet and sword."

"Gallantly resolved," said Montrose; "and if you will come apart with me, I will furnish you with the conditions to be laid before M'Callum More, upon which we are willing to grant him a truce for his Highland dominions."

With these we need not trouble our readers. They were of an evasive nature, calculated to meet a proposal which Montrose considered to have been made only for the purpose of gaining time. When he had put Captain Dalgetty in complete possession of his instructions, and when that worthy, making his military obeisance, was near the door of his apartment, Montrose made him a sign to return.

"I presume," said he, "I need not remind an officer who has served under the great Gustavus, that a little more is required of a person sent with a flag of truce than mere discharge of his instructions, and that his general will expect from him, on his return, some account of the state of the enemy's affairs, as far as they come under his observation. In short, Captain Dalgetty, you must be *un peu clair-voyant*."

"Ah ha! your Excellency," said the Captain, twisting his hard features into an inimitable expression of cunning and intelligence, "if they do not put my head in a poke, which I have known practised upon honourable soldados who have been suspected to come upon such errands as the present, your Excellency may rely on a preceese narration of whatever Dugald Dalgetty shall hear or see, were it even how many turns of tune there are in M'Callum More's pibroch, or how many checks in the sett of his plaid and trews."

"Enough," answered Montrose; "farewell, Captain Dalgetty: and as they say that a lady's mind is always expressed in her postscript, so I would have you think that the most important part of your commission lies in what I have last said to you."

Dalgetty once more grinned intelligence, and withdrew to victual his charger and himself, for the fatigues of his approaching mission.

At the door of the stable,—for Gustavus always claimed his first care,—he met Angus M'Aulay and Sir Miles Musgrave, who had been looking at his horse; and, after praising his points and carriage, both united in strongly dissuading the Captain from taking an animal of such value with him upon his present very fatiguing journey.

Angus painted in the most alarming colours the roads, or rather wild tracks, by which it would be necessary for him to travel into Argyleshire, and the wretched huts or bothies where he would be condemned to pass the night, and where no forage could be procured for his horse, unless he could eat the stumps of old heather. In short, he pronounced it absolutely impossible, that, after undertaking such a pilgrimage, the animal could be in any case for military service. The Englishman strongly confirmed all that Angus had said, and gave himself, body and soul, to the devil, if he thought it was not an act little short of absolute murder to carry a horse worth a farthing into such a waste and inhospitable desert. Captain Dalgetty for an instant looked steadily, first at one of the gentlemen and next at the other, and then asked them, as if in a state of indecision, what they would advise him to do with Gustavus under such circumstances.

"By the hand of my father, my dear friend," answered M'Aulay, "if you leave the beast in my keeping, you may rely on his being fed and sorted according to his worth and quality, and that upon your happy return, you will find him as sleek as an onion boiled in butter."

"Or," said Sir Miles Musgrave, "if this worthy cavalier chooses to part with his charger for a reasonable sum, I have some part of the silver candlesticks still dancing the heys in my purse, which I shall be very willing to transfer to his."

"In brief, mine honourable friends," said Captain Dalgetty, again eyeing them both with an air of comic penetration, "I find it would not be altogether unacceptable to either of you, to have some token to remember the old soldier by, in case it shall please M'Callum More to hang him up at the gate of his own castle. And doubtless it would be no small satisfaction to me, in such an event, that a noble and loyal cavalier like Sir Miles Musgrave, or a worthy and hospitable chieftain like our excellent landlord, should act as my executor."

Both hastened to protest that they had no such object, and insisted again upon the impassable character of the Highland paths. Angus M'Aulay mumbled over a number of hard Gaelic names, descriptive of the difficult passes, precipices, corries, and beals, through which he said the road lay to Inverary, when old Donald, who had now entered, sanctioned his master's account of these difficulties, by holding up his hands, and elevating his eyes, and shaking his head, at every guttural which M'Aulay pronounced. But all this did not move the inflexible Captain.

"My worthy friends," said he, "Gustavus is not new to the dangers of travelling, and the mountains of Bohemia; and (no disparagement to the beals and corries Mr Angus is pleased to mention, and of which Sir Miles, who never saw them, confirms the horrors,) these mountains may compete with the vilest roads in Europe. In fact, my horse hath a most excellent and social quality; for although he cannot pledge in my cup, yet we share our loaf between us, and it will be hard if he suffers famine where cakes or bannocks are to be found. And, to cut this matter short, I beseech you, my good friends, to observe the state of Sir Duncan Campbell's palfrey, which stands in that stall before us, fat and fair; and, in return for your anxiety on my account, I give you my honest asseveration, that while we travel the same road, both that palfrey and his rider shall lack for food before either Gustavus or I."

Having said this, he filled a large measure with corn, and walked up with it to his charger, who, by his low whinnying neigh, his pricked ears, and

his pawing, shewed how close the alliance was betwixt him and his rider. Nor did he taste his corn until he had returned his master's caresses, by licking his hands and face. After this interchange of greeting, the steed began to his provender with an eager despatch, which shewed old military habits; and the master, after looking on the animal with great complacency for about five minutes, said,—"Much good may it do your honest heart, Gustavus;—now must I go and lay in provant myself for the campaign."

He then departed, having first saluted the Englishman and Angus M'Aulay, who remained looking at each other for some time in silence, and then burst out into a fit of laughter.

"That fellow," said Sir Miles Musgrave, "is formed to go through the world."

"I shall think so too," said M'Aulay, "if he can slip through M'Callum More's fingers as easily as he has done through ours."

"Do you think," said the Englishman, "that the Marquis will not respect, in Captain Dalgetty's person, the laws of civilized war?"

"No more than I would respect a Lowland proclamation," said Angus M'Aulay.—"But come along, it is time I were returning to my guests."

CHAPTER IX.

——— In a rebellion,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen; in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' the dust.
Coriolanus.

In a small apartment, remote from the rest of the guests assembled at the castle, Sir Duncan Campbell was presented with every species of refreshment, and respectfully attended by Lord Menteith, and by Allan M'Aulay. His discourse with the latter turned upon a sort of hunting campaign, in which they had been engaged together against the Children of the Mist, with whom the Knight of Ardenvohr, as well as the M'Aulays, had a deadly and irreconcilable feud. Sir Duncan, however, speedily endeavoured to lead back the conversation to the subject of his present errand to the castle of Darnlinvarach.

"It grieved him to the very heart," he said, "to see that friends and neighbours, who should stand shoulder to shoulder, were likely to be engaged hand to hand in a cause which so little concerned them. What signifies it," he said, "to the Highland Chiefs, whether King or Parliament got uppermost? Were it not better to let them settle their own differences without interference, while the Chiefs, in the meantime, took the opportunity of establishing their own authority in a manner not to be called in question hereafter by either King or Parliament?" He reminded Allan M'Aulay that the measures taken in the last reign to settle the peace, as was alleged, of the Highlands, were in fact levelled at the patriarchal power of the Chieftains; and he mentioned the celebrated settlement of the Fife Undertakers, as they were called, in the Lewis, as part of a deliberate plan, formed to introduce strangers among the Celtic tribes, to destroy by degrees their ancient customs and mode of government, and to despoil them of the inheritance of their fathers.[1] "And yet," he continued, addressing Allan, "it is for the purpose of giving despotic authority to the monarch by whom these designs have been nursed, that so many Highland Chiefs are upon the point of quarreling with, and drawing the sword against, their neighbours, allies, and ancient confederates."

"It is to my brother," said Allan, "it is to the eldest son of my father's house, that the Knight of Ardenvohr must address these remonstrances. I am, indeed, the brother of Angus; but in being so, I am only the first of his clansmen, and bound to shew an example to the others by my cheerful and ready obedience to his commands."

"The cause also," said Lord Menteith, interposing, "is far more general than Sir Duncan Campbell seems to suppose it. It is neither limited to Saxon nor to Gael, to mountain nor to strath, to Highlands nor to Lowlands. The question is, if we will continue to be governed by the unlimited authority assumed by a set of persons in no respect superior to ourselves, instead of returning to the natural government of the Prince against whom they have rebelled. And respecting the interest of the Highlands in particular," he added, "I crave Sir Duncan Campbell's pardon for my plainness; but it seems very clear to me, that the only effect produced by the present usurpation, will be the aggrandisement of one overgrown clan at the expense of every independent Chief in the Highlands."

"I will not reply to you, my lord," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "because I know your prejudices, and from whom they are borrowed; yet you will pardon my saying, that being at the head of the rival branch of the House of Graham, I have both read of and known an Earl of Menteith, who would have disdained to have been tutored in politics, or to have been commanded in war, by an Earl of Montrose."

"You will find it in vain, Sir Duncan," said Lord Menteith, haughtily, "to set my vanity in arms against my principles. The King gave my ancestors their title and rank; and these shall never prevent my acting, in the royal cause, under any one who is better qualified than myself to be a commander-in-chief. Least of all, shall any miserable jealousy prevent me from placing my hand and sword under the guidance of the bravest, the most loyal, the most heroic spirit among our Scottish nobility."

"Pity," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "that you cannot add to his panegyric the farther epithets of the most steady, and the most consistent. But I have no purpose of debating these points with you, my lord," waving his hand, as if to avoid farther discussion; "the die is cast with you; allow me only to express my sorrow for the disastrous fate to which Angus M'Aulay's natural rashness, and your lordship's influence, are dragging my gallant

[1] In the reign of James VI., an attempt of rather an extraordinary kind was made to civilize the extreme northern part of the Hebridean Archipelago. That monarch granted the property of the Island of Lewis, as if it had been an unknown and savage country, to a number of Lowland gentlemen, called undertakers, chiefly natives of the shire of Fife, that they might colonize and settle there. The enterprise was at first successful, but the natives of the island, MacLeods and MacKenzies, rose on the Lowland adventurers, and put most of them to the sword.

friend Allan here, with his father's clan, and many a brave man besides."

"The die is cast for us all, Sir Duncan," replied Allan, looking gloomy, and arguing on his own hypochondriac feelings; "the iron hand of destiny branded our fate upon our forehead long ere we could form a wish, or raise a finger in our own behalf. Were this otherwise, by what means does the Seer ascertain the future from those shadowy presages which haunt his waking and his sleeping eye? Nought can be foreseen but that which is certain to happen."

Sir Duncan Campbell was about to reply, and the darkest and most contested point of metaphysics might have been brought into discussion betwixt two Highland disputants, when the door opened, and Annot Lyle, with her clairshach in her hand, entered the apartment. The freedom of a Highland maiden was in her step and in her eye; for, bred up in the closest intimacy with the Laird of M'Aulay and his brother, with Lord Menteith, and other young men who frequented Darnlinvarach, she possessed none of that timidity which a female, educated chiefly among her own sex, would either have felt, or thought necessary to assume, on an occasion like the present.

Her dress partook of the antique, for new fashions seldom penetrated into the Highlands, nor would they easily have found their way to a castle inhabited chiefly by men, whose sole occupation was war and the chase. Yet Annot's garments were not only becoming, but even rich. Her open jacket, with a high collar, was composed of blue cloth, richly embroidered, and had silver clasps to fasten, when it pleased the wearer. Its sleeves, which were wide, came no lower than the elbow, and terminated in a golden fringe; under this upper coat, if it can be so termed, she wore an under dress of blue satin, also richly embroidered, but which was several shades lighter in colour than the upper garment. The petticoat was formed of tartan silk, in the set, or pattern, of which the colour of blue greatly predominated, so as to remove the tawdry effect too frequently produced in tartan, by the mixture and strong opposition of colours. An antique silver chain hung round her neck, and supported the *wrest*, or key, with which she tuned her instrument. A small ruff rose above her collar, and was secured by a brooch of some value, an old keepsake of Lord Menteith. Her profusion of light hair almost hid her laughing eyes, while, with a smile and a blush, she mentioned that she had M'Aulay's directions to ask them if they chose music. Sir Duncan Campbell gazed with considerable surprise and interest at the lovely apparition, which thus interrupted his debate with Allan M'Aulay.

"Can this," he said to him in a whisper, "a creature so beautiful and so elegant, be a domestic musician of your brother's establishment?"

"By no means," answered Allan, hastily, yet with some hesitation; "she is a——a—near relation of our family—and treated," he added, more firmly, "as an adopted daughter of our father's house."

As he spoke thus, he arose from his seat, and with that air of courtesy which every Highlander can assume when it suits him to practise it, he resigned it to Annot, and offered to her, at the same time, whatever refreshments the table afforded, with an assiduity which was probably designed to give Sir Duncan an impression of her rank and consequence. If such was Allan's purpose, however, it was unnecessary. Sir Duncan kept his eyes fixed upon Annot with an expression of much deeper interest than could have arisen from any impression that she was a person of consequence. Annot even felt embarrassed under the old knight's steady gaze, and it was not without considerable hesitation, that, tuning her instrument, and receiving an assenting look from Lord Menteith and Allan, she executed the following ballad, which our friend, Mr Secundus M'Pherson, whose goodness we had before to acknowledge, has thus translated into the English tongue:

THE ORPHAN MAID.

November's hail-cloud drifts away,
November's sunbeam wan
Looks coldly on the castle grey,
When forth comes Lady Anne.

The orphan by the oak was set,
Her arms, her feet, were bare,
The hail-drops had not melted yet,
Amid her raven hair.

"And, Dame," she said, "by all the ties
That child and mother know,
Aid one who never knew these joys,
Relieve an orphan's wo."

The lady said, "An orphan's state
Is hard and sad to bear;
Yet worse the widow'd mother's fate,
Who mourns both lord and heir.

"Twelve times the rolling year has sped,
Since, when from vengeance wild
Of fierce Strathallan's Chief I fled,
Forth's eddies whelm'd my child."

"Twelve times the year its course has borne,"
The wandering maid replied,
"Since fishers on St Bridget's morn
Drew nets on Campsie side.

"St Bridget sent no scaly spoil;—
An infant, well-nigh dead,
They saved, and rear'd in want and toil,
To beg from you her bread."

That orphan maid the lady kiss'd—
"My husband's looks you bear;
St Bridget and her morn be bless'd!
You are his widow's heir."

They 've robed that maid so poor and pale,
In silk and sandals rare;
And pearls, for drops of frozen hail,
Are glistening in her hair.*

* The admirers of pure Celtic antiquity, notwithstanding the elegance of the above translation, may be desirous to see a literal version from the original Gaelic, which we therefore subjoin; and have only to add, that the original is deposited with Mr Jedediah Cleishbotham.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

The hail-blast had drifted away upon the wings of the gale of autumn. The sun looked from between the clouds, pale as the wounded hero who rears his head feebly on the heath when the roar of battle hath passed over him.

Finele, the Lady of the Castle, came forth to see her maidens pass to the herds with their leglins.†

There sat an orphan maiden beneath the old oak-tree of appointment. The withered leaves fell around her, and her heart was more withered than they.

The parent of the ice [poetically taken for the frost] still congealed the hail-drops in her hair; they were like the specks of white ashes on the twisted boughs of the blackened and half-consumed oak that blazes in the hall.

And the maiden said, "Give me comfort, Lady, I am an orphan child." And the Lady replied, "How can I give that which I have not? I am the widow of a slain lord,—the

† Milk-pails.

While the song proceeded, Lord Menteith observed, with some surprise, that it appeared to produce a much deeper effect upon the mind of Sir Duncan Campbell, than he could possibly have anticipated from his age and character. He well knew that the Highlanders of that period possessed a much greater sensibility both for tale and song than was found among their Lowland neighbours; but even this, he thought, hardly accounted for the embarrassment with which the old man withdrew his eyes from the songstress, as if unwilling to suffer them to rest on an object so interesting. Still less was it to be expected, that features which expressed pride, stern common sense, and the austere habit of authority, should have been so much agitated by so trivial a circumstance. As the Chief's brow became clouded, he drooped his large shaggy grey eyebrows until they almost concealed his eyes, on the lids of which something like a tear might be seen to glisten. He remained silent and fixed in the same posture for a minute or two, after the last note had ceased to vibrate. He then raised his head, and having looked at Annot Lyle, as if purposing to speak to her, he as suddenly changed that purpose, and was about to address Allan, when the door opened, and the Lord of the Castle made his appearance.

CHAPTER X.

Dark on their journey lour'd the gloomy day,
Wild were the hills, and doubtful grew the way;
More dark, more gloomy, and more doubtful, shew'd
The mansion which received them from the road.
The Travellers, a Romance.

Angus M'Aulay was charged with a message which he seemed to find some difficulty in communicating; for it was not till after he had framed his speech several different ways, and blundered them all, that he succeeded in letting Sir Duncan Campbell know, that the cavalier who was to accompany him was waiting in readiness, and that all was prepared for his return to Inverary. Sir Duncan Campbell rose up very indignantly; the affront which this message implied immediately driving out of his recollection the sensibility which had been awakened by the music.

"I little expected this," he said, looking indignantly at Angus M'Aulay. "I little thought that there was a Chief in the West Highlands, who, at the pleasure of a Saxon, would have bid the Knight of Ardenvohr leave his castle, when the sun was declining from the meridian, and ere the second cup had been filled. But farewell, sir, the food of a churl does not satisfy the appetite; when I next revisit Darnlinvarach, it shall be with a naked sword in one hand, and a firebrand in the other."

"And if you so come," said Angus, "I pledge myself to meet you fairly, though you brought five hundred Campbells at your back, and to afford you and them such entertainment, that you shall not again complain of the hospitality of Darnlinvarach."

"Threatened men," said Sir Duncan, "live long. Your turn for gasconading, Laird of M'Aulay, is too well known, that men of honour should regard your vaunts. To you, my lord, and to Allan, who have supplied the place of my churlish host, I leave my thanks. And to you, pretty mistress," he said, addressing Annot Lyle, "this little token, for having opened a fountain which hath been dry for many a year." So saying, he left the apartment, and commanded his attendants to be summoned. Angus M'Aulay, equally embarrassed and incensed at the charge of inhospitality, which was the greatest possible affront to a Highlander, did not follow Sir Duncan to the court-yard, where, mounting his palfrey, which was in readiness, followed by six mounted attendants, and accompanied by the noble Captain Dalgetty, who had also awaited him, holding Gustavus ready for action, though he did not draw his girths and mount till Sir Duncan appeared, the whole cavalcade left the castle.

The journey was long and toilsome, but without any of the extreme privations which the Laird of M'Aulay had prophesied. In truth, Sir Duncan was very cautious to avoid those nearer and more secret paths, by means of which the county of Argyle was accessible from the westward; for his relation and chief, the Marquis, was used to boast, that he would not for a hundred thousand crowns any mortal should know the passes by which an armed force could penetrate into his country.

Sir Duncan Campbell, therefore, rather shunned the Highlands, and falling into the Low-country, made for the nearest seaport in the vicinity, where he had several half-decked galleys, or birlings, as they were called, at his command. In one of these they embarked, with Gustavus in company, who was so seasoned to adventure, that land and sea seemed as indifferent to him as to his master.

The wind being favourable, they pursued their way rapidly with sails and oars; and early the next morning it was announced to Captain Dalgetty, then in a small cabin beneath the half-deck, that the galley was under the walls of Sir Duncan Campbell's castle.

Ardenvohr accordingly rose high above him, when he came upon the deck of the galley. It was a gloomy square tower, of considerable size and great height, situated upon a headland projecting into the salt-water lake, or arm of the sea, which they had entered on the preceding evening. A wall, with flanking towers at each angle, surrounded the castle to landward; but, towards the lake, it was built so near the brink of the precipice as only to leave room for a battery of seven guns, designed to protect the fortress from any insult from that side, although situated too high to be of any effectual use according to the modern system of warfare.

The eastern sun, rising behind the old tower, flung its shadow far on the lake, darkening the deck of the galley, on which Captain Dalgetty now walked, waiting with some impatience the signal to land. Sir Duncan Campbell, as he was informed by his attendants, was already within the walls of

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mother of a perished child. When I fled in my fear from the vengeance of my husband's foe, our bark was overwhelmed in the tide, and my infant perished. This was on St Bridget's morn, near the strong Lyns of Campsie. May ill luck light upon the day." And the maiden answered, "It was on St Bridget's morn, and twelve harvests before this time, that the fishermen of Campsie drew in their nets neither grilse nor salmon, but an infant half dead, who hath since lived in misery, and must die, unless she is now aided." And the Lady answered, "Blessed be Saint Bridget and her morn, for these are the dark eyes and the falcon look of my slain lord; and thine shall be the inheritance of his widow." And she called for her waiting attendants, and she bade them clothe that maiden in silk, and in sumite; and the pearls which they wove among her black tresses, were whiter than the frozen hail-drops.

the castle; but no one encouraged the Captain's proposal of following him ashore, until, as they stated, they should receive the direct permission or order of the Knight of Ardenvohr.

In a short time afterwards the mandate arrived, while a boat, with a piper in the bow, bearing the Knight of Ardenvohr's crest in silver upon his left arm, and playing with all his might the family march entitled "The Campbells are coming," approached to conduct the envoy of Montrose to the castle of Ardenvohr. The distance between the galley and the beach was so short as scarce to require the assistance of the eight sturdy rowers, in bonnets, short coats, and trews, whose efforts sent the boat to the little creek in which they usually landed, before one could have conceived that it had left the side of the birling. Two of the boatmen, in spite of Dalgetty's resistance, horsed the Captain on the back of a third Highlander, and, wading through the surf with him, landed him high and dry upon the beach beneath the castle rock. In the face of this rock there appeared something like the entrance of a low-browed cavern, towards which the assistants were preparing to hurry our friend Dalgetty, when, shaking himself loose from them with some difficulty, he insisted upon seeing Gustavus safely landed before he proceeded one step farther. The Highlanders could not comprehend what he meant, until one who had picked up a little English, or rather Lowland Scotch, exclaimed, "Houts! it's a' about her horse, ta useless baste." Farther remonstrance on the part of Captain Dalgetty was interrupted by the appearance of Sir Duncan Campbell himself, from the mouth of the cavern which we have described, for the purpose of inviting Captain Dalgetty to accept of the hospitality of Ardenvohr, pledging his honour, at the same time, that Gustavus should be treated as became the hero from whom he derived his name, not to mention the important person to whom he now belonged. Notwithstanding this satisfactory guarantee, Captain Dalgetty would still have hesitated, such was his anxiety to witness the fate of his companion Gustavus, had not two Highlanders seized him by the arms, two more pushed him on behind, while a fifth exclaimed, "Hout awa wi' the daft Sassenach! does she no hear the Laird bidding her up to her ain castle, wi' her special voice, and isna that very mickle honour for the like o' her."

Thus impelled, Captain Dalgetty could only for a short space keep a reverted eye towards the galley in which he had left the partner of his military toils. In a few minutes afterwards he found himself involved in the total darkness of a staircase, which, entering from the low-browed cavern we have mentioned, winded upwards through the entrails of the living rock.

"The cursed Highland salvages!" muttered the Captain, half aloud; "what is to become of me, if Gustavus, the namesake of the invincible Lion of the Protestant League, should be lamed among their untenty hands!"

"Have no fear of that," said the voice of Sir Duncan, who was nearer to him than he imagined; "my men are accustomed to handle horses, both in embarking and dressing them, and you will soon see Gustavus as safe as when you last dismounted from his back."

Captain Dalgetty knew the world too well to offer any farther remonstrance, whatever uneasiness he might suppress within his own bosom. A step or two higher up the stair shewed light and a door, and an iron-grated wicket led him out upon a gallery cut in the open face of the rock, extending a space of about six or eight yards, until he reached a second door, where the path re-entered the rock, and which was also defended by an iron portcullis. "An admirable traverse," observed the Captain; "and if commanded by a field-piece, or even a few muskets, quite sufficient to ensure the place against a storming party."

Sir Duncan Campbell made no answer at the time; but, the moment afterwards, when they had entered the second cavern, he struck with the stick which he had in his hand, first on the one side, and then on the other of the wicket, and the sullen ringing sound which replied to the blows, made Captain Dalgetty sensible that there was a gun placed on each side, for the purpose of raking the gallery through which they had passed, although the embrasures, through which they might be fired on occasion, were masked on the outside with sods and loose stones. Having ascended the second staircase, they found themselves again on an open platform and gallery, exposed to a fire both of musketry and wall-guns, if, being come with hostile intent, they had ventured farther. A third flight of steps, cut in the rock like the former, but not caverned over, led them finally into the battery at the foot of the tower. This last stair also was narrow and steep, and, not to mention the fire which might be directed on it from above, one or two resolute men, with pikes and battle-axes, could have made the pass good against hundreds; for the staircase would not admit two persons abreast, and was not secured by any sort of balustrade, or railing, from the sheer and abrupt precipice, on the foot of which the tide now rolled with a voice of thunder. So that, under the jealous precautions used to secure this ancient Celtic fortress, a person of weak nerves, and a brain liable to become dizzy, might have found it something difficult to have achieved the entrance to the castle, even supposing no resistance had been offered.

Captain Dalgetty, too old a soldier to feel such tremors, had no sooner arrived in the court-yard, than he protested to God, the defences of Sir Duncan's castle reminded him more of the notable fortress of Spandau, situated in the March of Brandenburg, than of any place whilk it had been his fortune to defend in the course of his travels. Nevertheless, he criticised considerably the mode of placing the guns on the battery we have noticed, observing, that "where cannon were perched, like to scarts, or sea-gulls, on the top of a rock, he had ever observed that they astonished more by their noise than they dismayed by the skaith or damage which they occasioned."

Sir Duncan, without replying, conducted the soldier into the tower; the defences of which were a portcullis and iron-clenched oaken door, the thickness of the wall being the space between them. He had no sooner arrived in a hall hung with tapestry, than the Captain prosecuted his military criticism. It was indeed suspended by the sight of an excellent breakfast, of which he partook with great avidity; but no sooner had he secured this meal, than he made the tour of the apartment, examining the ground around the castle very carefully from each window in the room. He then returned

to his chair, and throwing himself back into it at his length, stretched out one manly leg, and tapping his jack-boot with the riding-rod which he carried in his hand, after the manner of a half-bred man who affects ease in the society of his betters, he delivered his unasked opinion as follows:—"This house of yours, now, Sir Duncan, is a very pretty defensible sort of a tenement, and yet it is hardly such as a cavaliero of honour would expect to maintain his credit by holding out for many days. For, Sir Duncan, if it pleases you to notice, your house is overcrowed, and slighted, or commanded, as we military men say, by yonder round hillock to the landward, whereon an enemy might stell such a battery of cannon as would make ye glad to beat a chamade within forty-eight hours, unless it pleased the Lord extraordinarily to shew mercy."

"There is no road," replied Sir Duncan, somewhat shortly, "by which cannon can be brought against Ardenvohr. The swamps and morasses around my house would scarce carry your horse and yourself, excepting by such paths as could be rendered impassable within a few hours."

"Sir Duncan," said the Captain, "it is your pleasure to suppose so; and yet we martial men say, that where there is a sea-coast there is always a naked side, seeing that cannon and munition, where they cannot be transported by land, may be right easily brought by sea near to the place where they are to be put in action. Neither is a castle, however secure in its situation, to be accounted altogether invincible, or, as they say, impregnable; for I protest t'ye, Sir Duncan, that I have known twenty-five men, by the mere surprise and audacity of the attack, win, at point of pike, as strong a hold as this of Ardenvohr, and put to the sword, captivate, or hold to the ransom, the defenders, being ten times their own number."

Notwithstanding Sir Duncan Campbell's knowledge of the world, and his power of concealing his internal emotion, he appeared piqued and hurt at these reflections, which the Captain made with the most unconscious gravity, having merely selected the subject of conversation as one upon which he thought himself capable of shining, and, as they say, of laying down the law, without exactly recollecting that the topic might not be equally agreeable to his landlord.

"To cut this matter short," said Sir Duncan, with an expression of voice and countenance somewhat agitated, "it is unnecessary for you to tell me, Captain Dalgetty, that a castle may be stormed if it is not valorously defended, or surprised if it is not heedfully watched. I trust this poor house of mine will not be found in any of these predicaments, should even Captain Dalgetty himself choose to beleaguer it."

"For all that, Sir Duncan," answered the persevering commander, "I would premonish you, as a friend, to trace out a sconce upon that round hill, with a good graffe, or ditch, whilk may be easily accomplished by compelling the labour of the boors in the vicinity; it being the custom of the valorous Gustavus Adolphus to fight as much by the spade and shovel, as by sword, pike, and musket. Also, I would advise you to fortify the said sconce, not only by a foussie, or graffe, but also by certain stackets, or palisades."—(Here Sir Duncan, becoming impatient, left the apartment, the Captain following him to the door, and raising his voice as he retreated, until he was fairly out of hearing.)—"The whilk stackets, or palisades, should be artificially framed with re-entering angles and loopholes, or crenelles, for musketry, whereof it shall arise that the foemen——The Highland brute! the old Highland brute! They are as proud as peacocks, and as obstinate as tups—and here he has missed an opportunity of making his house as pretty an irregular fortification as an invading army ever broke their teeth upon.—But I see," he continued, looking down from the window upon the bottom of the precipice, "they have got Gustavus safe ashore—Proper fellow! I would know that toss of his head among a whole squadron. I must go to see what they are to make of him."

He had no sooner reached, however, the court to the seaward, and put himself in the act of descending the staircase, than two Highland sentinels, advancing their Lochaber axes, gave him to understand that this was a service of danger.

"Diavolo!" said the soldier, "and I have got no pass-word. I could not speak a syllable of their salvage gibberish, an it were to save me from the provost-marshal."

"I will be your surety, Captain Dalgetty," said Sir Duncan, who had again approached him without his observing from whence; "and we will go together, and see how your favourite charger is accommodated."

He conducted him accordingly down the staircase to the beach, and from thence by a short turn behind a large rock, which concealed the stables and other offices belonging to the castle. Captain Dalgetty became sensible, at the same time, that the side of the castle to the land was rendered totally inaccessible by a ravine, partly natural and partly scarped with great care and labour, so as to be only passed by a drawbridge. Still, however, the Captain insisted, notwithstanding the triumphant air with which Sir Duncan pointed out his defences, that a sconce should be erected on Drumsnab, the round eminence to the east of the castle, in respect the house might be annoyed from thence by burning bullets full of fire, shot out of cannon, according to the curious invention of Stephen Bathian, King of Poland, whereby that Prince utterly ruined the great Muscovite city of Moscow. This invention, Captain Dalgetty owned, he had not yet witnessed, but observed, "that it would give him particular delectation to witness the same put to the proof against Ardenvohr, or any other castle of similar strength;" observing, "that so curious an experiment could not but afford the greatest delight to all admirers of the military art."

Sir Duncan Campbell diverted this conversation by carrying the soldier into his stables, and suffering him to arrange Gustavus according to his own will and pleasure. After this duty had been carefully performed, Captain Dalgetty proposed to return to the castle, observing, it was his intention to spend the time betwixt this and dinner, which, he presumed, would come upon the parade about noon, in burnishing his armour, which, having sustained some injury from the sea-air, might, he was afraid, seem discreditable in the eyes of M'Callum More. Yet, while they were returning to the castle, he failed not to warn Sir Duncan Campbell against the great injury he might sustain by any sudden onfall of an enemy, whereby his horses, cattle, and granaries, might be cut off and consumed, to his

great prejudice ; wherefore he again strongly conjured him to construct a sconce upon the round hill called Drumsnab, and offered his own friendly services in lining out the same. To this disinterested advice Sir Duncan only replied by ushering his guest to his apartment, and informing him that the tolling of the castle bell would make him aware when dinner was ready.

CHAPTER XI.

Is this thy castle, Baldwin? Melancholy
Displays her sable banner from the donjon,
Darkening the foam of the whole surge beneath.
Were I a habitant, to see this gloom
Pollute the face of nature, and to hear
The ceaseless sound of wave, and seabird's scream,
I 'd wish me in the hut that poorest peasant
E'er framed, to give him temporary shelter.
BROWN.

THE gallant Ritt-master would willingly have employed his leisure in studying the exterior of Sir Duncan's castle, and verifying his own military ideas upon the nature of its defences. But a stout sentinel, who mounted guard with a Lochaber-axe at the door of his apartment, gave him to understand, by very significant signs, that he was in a sort of honourable captivity.

It is strange, thought the Ritt-master to himself, how well these salvages understand the rules and practique of war. Who would have pre-supposed their acquaintance with the maxim of the great and godlike Gustavus Adolphus, that a flag of truce should be half a messenger half a spy? — And, having finished burnishing his arms, he sate down patiently to compute how much half a dollar per diem would amount to at the end of a six-months' campaign ; and, when he had settled that problem, proceeded to the more abstruse calculations necessary for drawing up a brigade of two thousand men on the principle of extracting the square root.

From his musings, he was roused by the joyful sound of the dinner bell, on which the Highlander, lately his guard, became his gentleman-usher, and marshalled him to the hall, where a table with four covers bore ample proofs of Highland hospitality. Sir Duncan entered, conducting his lady, a tall, faded, melancholy female, dressed in deep mourning. They were followed by a Presbyterian clergyman, in his Geneva cloak, and wearing a black silk scull-cap, covering his short hair so closely, that it could scarce be seen at all, so that the unrestricted ears had an undue predominance in the general aspect. This ungraceful fashion was universal at the time, and partly led to the nick-names of roundheads, prick-eared curs, and so forth, which the insolence of the cavaliers liberally bestowed on their political enemies.

Sir Duncan presented his military guest to his lady, who received his technical salutation with a stiff and silent reverence, in which it could scarce be judged whether pride or melancholy had the greater share. The churchman, to whom he was next presented, eyed him with a glance of mingled dislike and curiosity.

The Captain, well accustomed to worse looks from more dangerous persons, cared very little either for those of the lady or of the divine, but bent his whole soul upon assaulting a huge piece of beef, which smoked at the nether end of the table. But the onslaught, as he would have termed it, was delayed, until the conclusion of a very long grace, betwixt every section of which Dalgetty handled his knife and fork, as he might have done his musket or pike when going upon action, and as often resigned them unwillingly when the prolix chaplain commenced another clause of his benediction. Sir Duncan listened with decency, though he was supposed rather to have joined the Covenanters out of devotion to his chief, than real respect for the cause either of liberty or of Presbytery. His lady alone attended to the blessing, with symptoms of deep acquiescence.

The meal was performed almost in Carthusian silence ; for it was none of Captain Dalgetty's habits to employ his mouth in talking, while it could be more profitably occupied. Sir Duncan was absolutely silent, and the lady and churchman only occasionally exchanged a few words, spoken low, and indistinctly.

But, when the dishes were removed, and their place supplied by liquors of various sorts, Captain Dalgetty no longer had, himself, the same weighty reasons for silence, and began to tire of that of the rest of the company. He commenced a new attack upon his landlord, upon the former ground.

"Touching that round monticle, or hill, or eminence, termed Drumsnab, I would be proud to hold some dialogue with you, Sir Duncan, on the nature of the sconce to be there constructed ; and whether the angles thereof should be acute or obtuse — anent whilk I have heard the great Velt-Mareschal Bannier hold a learned argument with General Tiefenbach during a still-stand of arms."

"Captain Dalgetty," answered Sir Duncan very drily, "it is not our Highland usage to debate military points with strangers. This castle is like to hold out against a stronger enemy than any force which the unfortunate gentlemen we left at Darnlinvarach are able to bring against it."

A deep sigh from the lady accompanied the conclusion of her husband's speech, which seemed to remind her of some painful circumstance.

"He who gave," said the clergyman, addressing her in a solemn tone, "hath taken away. May you, honourable lady, be long enabled to say, Blessed be His name!"

To this exhortation, which seemed intended for her sole behoof, the lady answered by an inclination of her head, more humble than Captain Dalgetty had yet observed her make. Supposing he should now find her in a more conversible humour, he proceeded to accost her.

"It is indubitably very natural that your ladyship should be downcast at the mention of military preparations, whilk I have observed to spread perturbation among women of all nations, and almost all conditions. Nevertheless, Penthesilea, in ancient times, and also Joan of Arc, and others, were of a different kidney. And, as I have learned while I served the Spaniard, the Duke of Alva in former times had the leaguer-lasses who followed his camp marshalled into *tertias*, (whilk we call regiments,) and officered and commanded by those of their own feminine gender, and regulated by a commander-in-chief, called in German Hureweibler, or, as we would say vernacularly, Captain of the Queans. True it is, they were persons not to be named as parallel to your ladyship, being such

quæ quæstum corporibus faciebant, as we said of Jean Drochiels at Mareschal College; the same whom the French term *curtisannes*, and we in Scottish ——"

"The lady will spare you the trouble of farther exposition, Captain Dalgetty," said his host, somewhat sternly; to which the clergyman added, "that such discourse better befitted a watch-tower guarded by profane soldiery than the board of an honourable person, and the presence of a lady of quality."

"Craving your pardon, Dominie, or Doctor, *aut quocunque alio nomine gaudes*, for I would have you to know I have studied polite letters," said the unabashed envoy, filling a great cup of wine, "I see no ground for your reproof, seeing I did not speak of those *turpes personæ*, as if their occupation or character was a proper subject of conversation for this lady's presence, but simply *par accidens*, as illustrating the matter in hand, namely their natural courage and audacity, much enhanced, doubtless, by the desperate circumstances of their condition."

"Captain Dalgetty," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "to break short this discourse, I must acquaint you, that I have some business to despatch to-night, in order to enable me to ride with you to-morrow towards Inverary; and therefore ——"

"To ride with this person to-morrow!" exclaimed his lady; "such cannot be your purpose, Sir Duncan, unless you have forgotten that the morrow is a sad anniversary, and dedicated to as sad a solemnity."

"I had not forgotten," answered Sir Duncan; "how is it possible I can ever forget? but the necessity of the times requires I should send this officer onward to Inverary, without loss of time."

"Yet, surely, not that you should accompany him in person?" inquired the lady.

"It were better I did," said Sir Duncan; "yet I can write to the Marquis, and follow on the subsequent day.—Captain Dalgetty, I will despatch a letter for you, explaining to the Marquis of Argyle your character and commission, with which you will please to prepare to travel to Inverary early to-morrow morning."

"Sir Duncan Campbell," said Dalgetty, "I am doubtless at your discretionary disposal in this matter; not the less, I pray you to remember the blot which will fall upon your own escutcheon, if you do in any way suffer me, being a commissionate flag of truce, to be circumvented in this matter, whether *clam, vi, vel precario;* I do not say by your assent to any wrong done to me, but even through absence of any due care on your part to prevent the same."

"You are under the safeguard of my honour, sir," answered Sir Duncan Campbell, "and that is more than a sufficient security. And now," continued he, rising, "I must set the example of retiring."

Dalgetty saw himself under the necessity of following the hint, though the hour was early; but, like a skilful general, he availed himself of every instant of delay which circumstances permitted. "Trusting to your honourable parole," said he, filling his cup, "I drink to you, Sir Duncan, and to the continuance of your honourable house." A sigh from Sir Duncan was the only reply.—"Also, madam," said the soldier, replenishing the quaigh with all possible despatch, "I drink to your honourable health, and fulfilment of all your virtuous desires—and, reverend sir," (not forgetting to fit the action to the words,) "I fill this cup to the drowning of all unkindness betwixt you and Captain Dalgetty—I should say Major—and, in respect the flagon contains but one cup more, I drink to the health of all honourable cavaliers and brave soldados—and, the flask being empty, I am ready, Sir Duncan, to attend your functionary, or sentinel to my place of private repose."

He received a formal permission to retire, and an assurance, that as the wine seemed to be to his taste, another measure of the same vintage should attend him presently, in order to soothe the hours of his solitude.

No sooner had the Captain reached the apartment than this promise was fulfilled; and, in a short time afterwards, the added comforts of a pasty of red-deer venison rendered him very tolerant both of confinement and want of society. The same domestic, a sort of chamberlain, who placed this good cheer in his apartment, delivered to Dalgetty a packet, sealed and tied up with a silken thread, according to the custom of the time, addressed with many forms of respect to the High and Mighty Prince, Archibald, Marquis of Argyle, Lord of Lorne, and so forth. The chamberlain at the same time apprized the Ritt-master, that he must take horse at an early hour for Inverary, where the packet of Sir Duncan would be at once his introduction and his passport. Not forgetting that it was his object to collect information as well as to act as an envoy, and desirous, for his own sake, to ascertain Sir Duncan's reasons for sending him onward without his personal attendance, the Ritt-master inquired at the domestic, with all the precaution that his experience suggested, what were the reasons which detained Sir Duncan at home on the succeeding day. The man, who was from the Lowlands, replied, "that it was the habit of Sir Duncan and his lady to observe as a day of solemn fast and humiliation the anniversary on which their castle had been taken by surprise, and their children, to the number of four, destroyed cruelly by a band of Highland freebooters during Sir Duncan's absence upon an expedition which the Marquis of Argyle had undertaken against the Macleans of the Isle of Mull."

"Truly," said the soldier, "your lord and lady have some cause for fast and humiliation. Nevertheless, I will venture to pronounce, that if he had taken the advice of any experienced soldier, having skill in the practiques of defending places of advantage, he would have built a sconce upon the small hill which is to the left of the draw-brigg. And this I can easily prove to you, mine honest friend; for, holding that pasty to be the castle—What's your name, friend?"

"Lorimer, sir," replied the man.

"Here is to your health, honest Lorimer.—I say, Lorimer—holding that pasty to be the main body or citadel of the place to be defended, and taking the marrow-bone for the sconce to be erected ——"

"I am sorry, sir," said Lorimer, interrupting him, "that I cannot stay to hear the rest of your demonstration; but the bell will presently ring. As worthy Mr Graneangowl, the Marquis's own chaplain, does family worship, and only seven of our household out of sixty persons understand the

Scottish tongue, it would misbecome any one of them to be absent, and greatly prejudice me in the opinion of my lady. There are pipes and tobacco, sir, if you please to drink a whiff of smoke, and if you want any thing else, it shall be forthcoming two hours hence, when prayers are over." So saying, he left the apartment.

No sooner was he gone, than the heavy toll of the castle-bell summoned its inhabitants together; and was answered by the shrill clamour of the females, mixed with the deeper tones of the men, as, talking Earse at the top of their throats, they hurried from different quarters by a long but narrow gallery, which served as a communication to many rooms, and, among others, to that in which Captain Dalgetty was stationed. There they go as if they were beating to the roll-call, thought the soldier to himself; if they all attend the parade, I will look out, take a mouthful of fresh air, and make mine own observations on the practicabilities of this place.

Accordingly, when all was quiet, he opened his chamber-door, and prepared to leave it, when he saw his friend with the axe advancing towards him from the distant end of the gallery, half whistling half humming a Gaelic tune. To have shewn any want of confidence, would have been at once impolitic, and unbecoming his military character; so the Captain, putting the best face upon his situation he could, whistled a Swedish retreat, in a tone still louder than the notes of his sentinel; and retreating pace by pace, with an air of indifference, as if his only purpose had been to breathe a little fresh air, he shut the door in the face of his guard, when the fellow had approached within a few paces of him.

It is very well, thought the Ritt-master to himself; he annuls my parole by putting guards upon me, for, as we used to say at Mareschal College, *fides et fiducia sunt relativa;*[1] and if he does not trust my word, I do not see how I am bound to keep it, if any motive should occur for my desiring to depart from it. Surely the moral obligation of the parole is relaxed, in as far as physical force is substituted instead thereof.

Thus comforting himself in the metaphysical immunities which he deduced from the vigilance of his sentinel, Ritt-master Dalgetty retired to his apartment, where, amid the theoretical calculations of tactics, and the occasional more practical attacks on the flask and pasty, he consumed the evening until it was time to go to repose. He was summoned by Lorimer at break of day, who gave him to understand, that, when he had broken his fast, for which he produced ample materials, his guide and horse were in attendance for his journey to Inverary. After complying with the hospitable hint of the chamberlain, the soldier proceeded to take horse. In passing through the apartments, he observed that domestics were busily employed in hanging the great hall with black cloth, a ceremony which, he said, he had seen practised when the immortal Gustavus Adolphus lay in state in the Castle of Wolgast, and which, therefore, he opined, was a testimonial of the strictest and deepest mourning.

When Dalgetty mounted his steed, he found himself attended, or perhaps guarded, by five or six Campbells, well armed, commanded by one, who, from the target at his shoulder, and the short cock's feather in his bonnet, as well as from the state which he took upon himself, claimed the rank of a Dunniewassel, or clansman of superior rank; and indeed, from his dignity of deportment, could not stand in a more distant degree of relationship to Sir Duncan, than that of tenth or twelfth cousin at farthest. But it was impossible to extract positive information on this or any other subject, inasmuch as neither this commander nor any of his party spoke English. The Captain rode, and his military attendants walked; but such was their activity, and so numerous the impediments which the nature of the road presented to the equestrian mode of travelling, that far from being retarded by the slowness of their pace, his difficulty was rather in keeping up with his guides. He observed that they occasionally watched him with a sharp eye, as if they were jealous of some effort to escape; and once, as he lingered behind at crossing a brook, one of the gillies began to blow the match of his piece, giving him to understand that he would run some risk in case of an attempt to part company. Dalgetty did not augur much good from the close watch thus maintained upon his person; but there was no remedy, for an attempt to escape from his attendants in an impervious and unknown country, would have been little short of insanity. He therefore plodded patiently on through a waste and savage wilderness, treading paths which were only known to the shepherds and cattle-drivers, and passing with much more of discomfort than satisfaction many of those sublime combinations of mountainous scenery which now draw visiters from every corner of England, to feast their eyes upon Highland grandeur, and mortify their palates upon Highland fare.

At length they arrived on the southern verge of that noble lake upon which Inverary is situated; and a bugle, which the Dunniewassel winded till rock and greenwood rang, served as a signal to a well-manned galley, which, starting from a creek where it lay concealed, received the party on board, including Gustavus; which sagacious quadruped, an experienced traveller both by water and land, walked in and out of the boat with the discretion of a Christian.

Embarked on the bosom of Loch Fine, Captain Dalgetty might have admired one of the grandest scenes which nature affords. He might have noticed the rival rivers Aray and Shiray, which pay tribute to the lake, each issuing from its own dark and wooded retreat. He might have marked, on the soft and gentle slope that ascends from the shores, the noble old Gothic castle, with its varied outline, embattled walls, towers, and outer and inner courts, which, so far as the picturesque is

[1] The military men of the times agreed upon dependencies of honour, as they called them, with all the metaphysical argumentation of civilians, or school divines.

The English officer, to whom Sir James Turner was prisoner after the rout at Uttoxeter, demanded his parole of honour not to go beyond the walls of Hull without liberty. "He brought me the message himself, — I told him I was ready to do so, provided he removed his guards from me, for *fides et fiducia sunt relativa;* and, if he took my word for my fidelity, he was obliged to trust it, otherwise. it was needless for him to seek it, and in vain for me to give it; and therefore I beseeched him either to give trust to my word, which I would not break, or his own guards, who I supposed would not deceive him. In this manner I dealt with him, because I knew him to be a scholar."— *Turner's Memoirs*, p. 80. The English officer allowed the strength of the reasoning; but that concise reasoner, Cromwell, soon put an end to the dilemma: "Sir James Turner must give his parole or be laid in irons."

concerned, presented an aspect much more striking than the present massive and uniform mansion. He might have admired those dark woods which for many a mile surrounded this strong and princely dwelling, and his eye might have dwelt on the picturesque peak of Duniquoich, starting abruptly from the lake, and raising its scathed brow into the mists of middle sky, while a solitary watch-tower, perched on its top like an eagle's nest, gave dignity to the scene by awakening a sense of possible danger. All these, and every other accompaniment of this noble scene, Captain Dalgetty might have marked, if he had been so minded. But, to confess the truth, the gallant Captain, who had eaten nothing since daybreak, was chiefly interested by the smoke which ascended from the castle chimneys, and the expectations which this seemed to warrant of his encountering an abundant stock of provant, as he was wont to call supplies of this nature.

The boat soon approached the rugged pier, which abutted into the loch from the little town of Inverary, then a rude assemblage of huts, with a very few stone mansions interspersed, stretching upwards from the banks of Loch Fine to the principal gate of the castle, before which a scene presented itself that might easily have quelled a less stout heart, and turned a more delicate stomach, than those of Ritt-master Dugald Dalgetty, titular of Drumthwacket.

CHAPTER XII.

> For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
> Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
> Restless, unfix'd in principle and place,
> In power unpleased, impatient in disgrace.
> *Absalom and Achitophel.*

The village of Inverary, now a neat country town, then partook of the rudeness of the seventeenth century, in the miserable appearance of the houses, and the irregularity of the unpaved street. But a stronger and more terrible characteristic of the period appeared in the market-place, which was a space of irregular width, half-way betwixt the harbour, or pier, and the frowning castle-gate, which terminated with its gloomy archway, portcullis, and flankers, the upper end of the vista. Midway this space was erected a rude gibbet, on which hung five dead bodies, two of which from their dress seemed to have been Lowlanders, and the other three corpses were muffled in their Highland plaids. Two or three women sate under the gallows, who seemed to be mourning, and singing the coronach of the deceased in a low voice. But the spectacle was apparently of too ordinary occurrence to have much interest for the inhabitants at large, who, while they thronged to look at the military figure, the horse of an unusual size, and the burnished panoply of Captain Dalgetty, seemed to bestow no attention whatever on the piteous spectacle which their own market-place afforded.

The envoy of Montrose was not quite so indifferent; and, hearing a word or two of English escape from a Highlander of decent appearance, he immediately halted Gustavus and addressed him. "The Provost-Marshal has been busy here, my friend. May I crave of you what these delinquents have been justified for?"

He looked towards the gibbet as he spoke; and the Gael, comprehending his meaning rather by his action than his words, immediately replied, "Three gentlemen caterans, — God sain them" (crossing himself) — "twa Sassenach bits o' bodies, that wadna do something that M'Callum More bade them;" and turning from Dalgetty with an air of indifference, away he walked, staying no farther question.

Dalgetty shrugged his shoulders and proceeded, for Sir Duncan Campbell's tenth or twelfth cousin had already shewn some signs of impatience.

At the gate of the castle another terrible spectacle of feudal power awaited him. Within a stockade or palisado, which seemed lately to have been added to the defences of the gate, and which was protected by two pieces of light artillery, was a small enclosure, where stood a huge block, on which lay an axe. Both were smeared with recent blood, and a quantity of saw-dust strewed around, partly retained and partly obliterated the marks of a very late execution.

As Dalgetty looked on this new object of terror, his principal guide suddenly twitched him by the skirt of his jerkin, and having thus attracted his attention, winked and pointed with his finger to a pole fixed on the stockade, which supported a human head, being that, doubtless, of the late sufferer. There was a leer on the Highlander's face, as he pointed to this ghastly spectacle, which seemed to his fellow-traveller ominous of nothing good.

Dalgetty dismounted from his horse at the gateway, and Gustavus was taken from him without his being permitted to attend him to the stable, according to his custom.

This gave the soldier a pang which the apparatus of death had not conveyed. — "Poor Gustavus!" said he to himself, "if any thing but good happens to me, I had better have left him at Darnlinvarach than brought him here among these Highland salvages, who scarce know the head of a horse from his tail. But duty must part a man from his nearest and dearest —

> "When the cannons are roaring, lads, and the colours are flying,
> The lads that seek honour must never fear dying;
> Then stout cavaliers, let us toil our brave trade in,
> And fight for the Gospel and the bold King of Sweden."

Thus silencing his apprehensions with the but-end of a military ballad, he followed his guide into a sort of guard-room filled with armed Highlanders. It was intimated to him that he must remain here until his arrival was communicated to the Marquis. To make this communication the more intelligible, the doughty Captain gave to the Dunniewassel Sir Duncan Campbell's packet, desiring, as well as he could, by signs, that it should be delivered into the Marquis's own hand. His guide nodded, and withdrew.

The Captain was left about half an hour in this place, to endure with indifference, or return with scorn, the inquisitive, and, at the same time, the inimical glances of the armed Gael, to whom his exterior and equipage were as much subject of curiosity, as his person and country seemed matter of dislike. All this he bore with military nonchalance, until, at the expiration of the above period, a person dressed in black velvet, and wearing a gold chain like a modern magistrate of Edinburgh, but who was, in fact, steward of the house-

hold to the Marquis of Argyle, entered the apartment, and invited, with solemn gravity, the Captain to follow him to his master's presence.

The suite of apartments through which he passed, were filled with attendants or visiters of various descriptions, disposed, perhaps, with some ostentation, in order to impress the envoy of Montrose with an idea of the superior power and magnificence belonging to the rival house of Argyle. One anteroom was filled with lacqueys, arrayed in brown and yellow, the colours of the family, who, ranged in double file, gazed in silence upon Captain Dalgetty as he passed betwixt their ranks. Another was occupied by Highland gentlemen and chiefs of small branches, who were amusing themselves with chess, backgammon, and other games, which they scarce intermitted to gaze with curiosity upon the stranger. A third was filled with Lowland gentlemen and officers, who seemed also in attendance: and, lastly, the presence-chamber of the Marquis himself shewed him attended by a levee which marked his high importance.

This apartment, the folding doors of which were opened for the reception of Captain Dalgetty, was a long gallery, decorated with tapestry and family portraits, and having a vaulted ceiling of open woodwork, the extreme projections of the beams being richly carved and gilded. The gallery was lighted by long lanceolated Gothic casements, divided by heavy shafts, and filled with painted glass, where the sunbeams glimmered dimly through boars'-heads, and galleys, and batons, and swords, armorial bearings of the powerful house of Argyle, and emblems of the high hereditary offices of Justiciary of Scotland, and Master of the Royal Household, which they long enjoyed. At the upper end of this magnificent gallery stood the Marquis himself, the centre of a splendid circle of Highland and Lowland gentlemen, all richly dressed, among whom were two or three of the clergy, called in, perhaps, to be witnesses of his lordship's zeal for the Covenant.

The Marquis himself was dressed in the fashion of the period, which Vandyke has so often painted; but his habit was sober and uniform in colour, and rather rich than gay. His dark complexion, furrowed forehead, and downcast look, gave him the appearance of one frequently engaged in the consideration of important affairs, and who has acquired, by long habit, an air of gravity and mystery, which he cannot shake off even where there is nothing to be concealed. The cast with his eyes, which had procured him in the Highlands the nick-name of Gillespie Grumach (or the grim) was less perceptible when he looked downward, which perhaps was one cause of his having adopted that habit. In person, he was tall and thin, but not without that dignity of deportment and manners, which became his high rank. Something there was cold in his address, and sinister in his look, although he spoke and behaved with the usual grace of a man of such quality. He was adored by his own clan, whose advancement he had greatly studied, although he was in proportion disliked by the Highlanders of other septs, some of whom he had already stripped of their possessions, while others conceived themselves in danger from his future schemes, and all dreaded the height to which he was elevated.

We have already noticed, that in displaying himself amidst his councillors, his officers of the household, and his train of vassals, allies, and dependents, the Marquis of Argyle probably wished to make an impression on the nervous system of Captain Dugald Dalgetty. But that doughty person had fought his way, in one department or another, through the greater part of the Thirty Years' War in Germany, a period when a brave and successful soldier was a companion for princes. The King of Sweden, and, after his example, even the haughty Princes of the Empire, had found themselves fain, frequently, to compound with their dignity, and silence, when they could not satisfy, the pecuniary claims of their soldiers, by admitting them to unusual privileges and familiarity. Captain Dugald Dalgetty had it to boast, that he had sate with princes at feasts made for monarchs, and therefore was not a person to be brow-beat even by the dignity which surrounded M'Callum More. Indeed he was naturally by no means the most modest man in the world, but, on the contrary, had so good an opinion of himself, that into whatever company he chanced to be thrown, he was always proportionally elevated in his own conceit; so that he felt as much at ease in the most exalted society as among his own ordinary companions. In this high opinion of his own rank, he was greatly fortified by his ideas of the military profession, which, in his phrase, made a valiant cavalier a camarado to an emperor.

When introduced, therefore, into the Marquis's presence-chamber, he advanced to the upper end with an air of more confidence than grace, and would have gone close up to Argyle's person before speaking, had not the latter waved his hand, as a signal to him to stop short. Captain Dalgetty did so accordingly, and having made his military congee with easy confidence, he thus accosted the Marquis: "Give you good-morrow, my lord—or rather I should say, good-even; *Beso a usted los manos*, as the Spaniard says."

"Who are you, sir, and what is your business?" demanded the Marquis, in a tone which was intended to interrupt the offensive familiarity of the soldier.

"That is a fair interrogative, my lord," answered Dalgetty, "which I shall forthwith answer as becomes a cavalier, and that *peremptorie*, as we used to say at Mareschal College."

"See who or what he is, Neal," said the Marquis sternly, to a gentleman who stood near him.

"I will save the honourable gentleman the labour of investigation," continued the Captain. "I am Dugald Dalgetty, of Drumthwacket, that should be, late Ritt-master in various services, and now Major of I know not what or whose regiment of Irishes; and I am come with a flag of truce from a high and powerful lord, James Earl of Montrose, and other noble persons now in arms for his Majesty. And so, God save King Charles!"

"Do you know where you are, and the danger of dallying with us, sir," again demanded the Marquis, "that you reply to me as if I were a child or a fool? The Earl of Montrose is with the English malignants; and I suspect you are one of those Irish runagates, who are come into this country to burn and slay, as they did under Sir Phelim O'Neale."

"My lord," replied Captain Dalgetty, "I am no renegade, though a Major of Irishes, for which

I might refer your lordship to the invincible Gustavus Adolphus the Lion of the North, to Bannier, to Oxenstiern, to the warlike Duke of Saxe-Weimar, Tilly, Wallenstein, Piccolomini, and other great captains, both dead and living; and touching the noble Earl of Montrose, I pray your lordship to peruse these my full powers for treating with you in the name of that right honourable commander."

The Marquis looked slightingly at the signed and sealed paper which Captain Dalgetty handed to him, and, throwing it with contempt upon a table, asked those around him what he deserved who came as the avowed envoy and agent of malignant traitors, in arms against the state?

"A high gallows and a short shrift" was the ready answer of one of the bystanders.

"I will crave of that honourable cavalier who hath last spoken," said Dalgetty, "to be less hasty in forming his conclusions, and also of your lordship to be cautelous in adopting the same, in respect such threats are to be held out only to base bisognos, and not to men of spirit and action, who are bound to peril themselves as freely in services of this nature, as upon sieges, battles, or onslaughts of any sort. And albeit I have not with me a trumpet, or a white flag, in respect our army is not yet equipped with its full appointments, yet the honourable cavaliers and your lordship must concede unto me, that the sanctity of an envoy who cometh on matter of truce or parley, consisteth not in the fanfare of a trumpet, whilk is but a sound, or in the flap of a white flag, whilk is but an old rag in itself, but in the confidence reposed by the party sending, and the party sent, in the honour of those to whom the message is to be carried, and their full reliance that they will respect the *jus gentium*, as weel as the law of arms, in the person of the commissionate."

"You are not come hither to lecture us upon the law of arms, sir," said the Marquis, "which neither does nor can apply to rebels and insurgents; but to suffer the penalty of your insolence and folly for bringing a traitorous message to the Lord Justice General of Scotland, whose duty calls upon him to punish such an offence with death."

"Gentlemen," said the Captain, who began much to dislike the turn which his mission seemed about to take, "I pray you to remember, that the Earl of Montrose will hold you and your possessions liable for whatever injury my person, or my horse, shall sustain by these unseemly proceedings, and that he will be justified in executing retributive vengeance on your persons and possessions."

This menace was received with a scornful laugh, while one of the Campbells replied, "It is a far cry to Lochow;" a proverbial expression of the tribe, meaning that their ancient hereditary domains lay beyond the reach of an invading enemy. "But, gentlemen," farther urged the unfortunate Captain, who was unwilling to be condemned without at least the benefit of a full hearing, "although it is not for me to say how far it may be to Lochow, in respect I am a stranger to these parts, yet, what is more to the purpose, I trust you will admit that I have the guarantee of an honourable gentleman of your own name, Sir Duncan Campbell of Ardenvohr, for my safety on this mission; and I pray you to observe, that in breaking the truce towards me, you will highly prejudicate his honour and fair fame."

This seemed to be new information to many of the gentlemen, for they spoke aside with each other, and the Marquis's face, notwithstanding his power of suppressing all external signs of his passions, shewed impatience and vexation.

"Does Sir Duncan of Ardenvohr pledge his honour for this person's safety, my lord?" said one of the company, addressing the Marquis.

"I do not believe it," answered the Marquis; "but I have not yet had time to read his letter."

"We will pray your lordship to do so," said another of the Campbells; "our name must not suffer discredit through the means of such a fellow as this."

"A dead fly," said a clergyman, "maketh the ointment of the apothecary to stink."

"Reverend sir," said Captain Dalgetty, "in respect of the use to be derived, I forgive you the unsavouriness of your comparison; and also remit to the gentleman in the red bonnet, the disparaging epithet of *fellow* which he has discourteously applied to me, who am no way to be distinguished by the same, unless in so far as I have been called fellow-soldier by the great Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, and other choice commanders, both in Germany and the Low Countries. But, touching Sir Duncan Campbell's guarantee of my safety, I will gage my life upon his making my words good thereanent, when he comes hither to-morrow."

"If Sir Duncan be soon expected, my lord," said one of the intercessors, "it would be a pity to anticipate matters with this poor man."

"Besides that," said another, "your lordship—I speak with reverence—should, at least, consult the Knight of Ardenvohr's letter, and learn the terms on which this Major Dalgetty, as he calls himself, has been sent hither by him."

They closed around the Marquis, and conversed together in a low tone, both in Gaelic and English. The patriarchal power of the Chiefs was very great, and that of the Marquis of Argyle, armed with all his grants of hereditary jurisdiction, was particularly absolute. But there interferes some check of one kind or other even in the most despotic government. That which mitigated the power of the Celtic Chiefs, was the necessity which they lay under of conciliating the kinsmen, who, under them, led out the lower orders to battle, and who formed a sort of council of the tribe in time of peace. The Marquis on this occasion thought himself under the necessity of attending to the remonstrances of this senate, or more properly *Couroultai*, of the name of Campbell, and, slipping out of the circle, gave orders for the prisoner to be removed to a place of security.

"Prisoner!" exclaimed Dalgetty, exerting himself with such force as well-nigh to shake off two Highlanders, who for some minutes past had waited the signal to seize him, and kept for that purpose close at his back. Indeed the soldier had so nearly attained his liberty, that the Marquis of Argyle changed colour, and stepped back two paces, laying, however, his hand on his sword, while several of his clan, with ready devotion, threw themselves betwixt him and the apprehended vengeance of the prisoner. But the Highland guards were too strong to be shaken off, and the unlucky Captain,

after having had his offensive weapons taken from him, was dragged off and conducted through several gloomy passages to a small side-door grated with iron, within which was another of wood. These were opened by a grim old Highlander with a long white beard, and displayed a very steep and narrow flight of steps leading downward. The Captain's guards pushed him down two or three steps, then, unloosing his arms, left him to grope his way to the bottom as he could; a task which became difficult and even dangerous, when the two doors being successively locked left the prisoner in total darkness.

CHAPTER XIII.

Whatever stranger visits here,
We pity his sad case,
Unless to worship he draw near
The King of Kings—his Grace.
BURNS'S *Epigram on a Visit to Inverary.*

THE Captain, finding himself deprived of light in the manner we have described, and placed in a very uncertain situation, proceeded to descend the narrow and broken stair with all the caution in his power, hoping that he might find at the bottom some place to repose himself. But with all his care he could not finally avoid making a false step, which brought him down the four or five last steps too hastily to preserve his equilibrium. At the bottom he stumbled over a bundle of something soft, which stirred and uttered a groan, so deranging the Captain's descent, that he floundered forward, and finally fell upon his hands and knees on the floor of a damp and stone-paved dungeon.

When Dalgetty had recovered, his first demand was to know over whom he had stumbled.

"He was a man a month since," answered a hollow and broken voice.

"And what is he now, then," said Dalgetty, "that he thinks it fitting to lie upon the lowest step of the stairs, and clew'd up like a hurchin, that honourable cavaliers, who chance to be in trouble, may break their noses over him?"

"What is he now?" replied the same voice; "he is a wretched trunk, from which the boughs have one by one been lopped away, and which cares little how soon it is torn up and hewed into billets for the furnace."

"Friend," said Dalgetty, "I am sorry for you; but *patienza*, as the Spaniard says. If you had but been as quiet as a log, as you call yourself, I should have saved some excoriations on my hands and knees."

"You are a soldier," replied his fellow-prisoner; "do you complain on account of a fall for which a boy would not bemoan himself?"

"A soldier?" said the Captain; "and how do you know, in this cursed dark cavern, that I am a soldier?"

"I heard your armour clash as you fell," replied the prisoner, "and now I see it glimmer. When you have remained as long as I in this darkness, your eyes will distinguish the smallest eft that crawls on the floor."

"I had rather the devil picked them out!" said Dalgetty; "if this be the case, I shall wish for a short turn of the rope, a soldier's prayer, and a leap from a ladder. But what sort of provant have you got here—what food, I mean, brother in affliction?"

"Bread and water once a-day," replied the voice.

"Prithee, friend, let me taste your loaf," said Dalgetty; "I hope we shall play good comrades while we dwell together in this abominable pit."

"The loaf and jar of water," answered the other prisoner, "stand in the corner, two steps to your right hand. Take them, and welcome. With earthly food I have well-nigh done."

Dalgetty did not wait for a second invitation, but, groping out the provisions, began to munch at the stale black oaten loaf with as much heartiness as we have seen him play his part at better viands.

"This bread," he said, muttering, (with his mouth full at the same time,) "is not very savoury; nevertheless, it is not much worse than that which we ate at the famous leaguer at Werben, where the valorous Gustavus foiled all the efforts of the celebrated Tilly, that terrible old hero, who had driven two kings out of the field—namely, Ferdinand of Bohemia and Christian of Denmark. And anent this water, which is none of the most sweet, I drink in the same to your speedy deliverance, comrade, not forgetting mine own, and devoutly wishing it were Rhenish wine, or humming Lubeck beer, at the least, were it but in honour of the pledge."

While Dalgetty ran on in this way, his teeth kept time with his tongue, and he speedily finished the provisions which the benevolence or indifference of his companion in misfortune had abandoned to his voracity. When this task was accomplished, he wrapped himself in his cloak, and seating himself in a corner of the dungeon in which he could obtain a support on each side, (for he had always been an admirer of elbow-chairs, he remarked, even from his youth upward,) he began to question his fellow-captive.

"Mine honest friend," said he, "you and I, being comrades at bed and board, should be better acquainted. I am Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket, and so forth, Major in a regiment of loyal Irishes, and Envoy Extraordinary of a High and Mighty Lord, James Earl of Montrose.—Pray, what may your name be?"

"It will avail you little to know," replied his more taciturn companion.

"Let me judge of that matter," answered the soldier.

"Well, then—Ranald MacEagh is my name—that is, Ranald Son of the Mist."

"Son of the Mist!" ejaculated Dalgetty. "Son of utter darkness, say I. But, Ranald, since that is your name, how came you in possession of the provost's court of guard? what the devil brought you here, that is to say?"

"My misfortunes and my crimes," answered Ranald. "Know ye the Knight of Ardenvohr?"

"I do know that honourable person," replied Dalgetty.

"But know ye where he now is?" replied Ranald.

"Fasting this day at Ardenvohr," answered the Envoy, "that he may feast to-morrow at Inverary in which last purpose if he chance to fail, my lease of human service will be something precarious."

"Then let him know, one claims his interces-

sion, who is his worst foe and his best friend," answered Ranald.

"Truly, I shall desire to carry a less questionable message," answered Dalgetty. "Sir Duncan is not a person to play at reading riddles with."

"Craven Saxon," said the prisoner, "tell him I am the raven that, fifteen years since, stooped on his tower of strength and the pledges he had left there—I am the hunter that found out the wolf's den on the rock, and destroyed his offspring—I am the leader of the band which surprised Ardenvohr yesterday was fifteen years, and gave his four children to the sword."

"Truly, my honest friend," said Dalgetty, "if that is your best recommendation to Sir Duncan's favour, I would pretermit my pleading thereupon, in respect I have observed that even the animal creation are incensed against those who intromit with their offspring forcibly, much more any rational and Christian creatures, who have had violence done upon their small family. But I pray you in courtesy to tell me, whether you assailed the castle from the hillock called Drumsnab, whilk I uphold to be the true point of attack, unless it were to be protected by a sconce."

"We ascended the cliff by ladders of withies or saplings," said the prisoner, "drawn up by an accomplice and clansman, who had served six months in the castle to enjoy that one night of unlimited vengeance. The owl whooped around us as we hung betwixt heaven and earth; the tide roared against the foot of the rock, and dashed asunder our skiff, yet no man's heart failed him. In the morning there was blood and ashes, where there had been peace and joy at the sunset."

"It was a pretty camisade, I doubt not, Ranald MacEagh, a very sufficient onslaught, and not unworthily discharged. Nevertheless, I would have pressed the house from that little hillock called Drumsnab. But yours is a pretty irregular Scythian fashion of warfare, Ranald, much resembling that of Turks, Tartars, and other Asiatic people.—But the reason, my friend, the cause of this war—the *teterrima causa*, as I may say? Deliver me that, Ranald."

"We had been pushed at by the M'Aulays, and other western tribes," said Ranald, "till our possessions became unsafe for us."

"Ah ha!" said Dalgetty; "I have faint remembrance of having heard of that matter. Did you not put bread and cheese into a man's mouth, when he had never a stomach whereunto to transmit the same?"

"You have heard, then," said Ranald, "the tale of our revenge on the haughty Forester?"

"I bethink me that I have," said Dalgetty, "and that not of an old date. It was a merry jest that, of cramming the bread into the dead man's mouth, but somewhat too wild and salvage for civilized acceptation, besides wasting the good victuals. I have seen when at a siege or a leaguer, Ranald, a living soldier would have been the better, Ranald, for that crust of bread, whilk you threw away on a dead pow."

"We were attacked by Sir Duncan," continued MacEagh, "and my brother was slain—his head was withering on the battlements which we scaled—I vowed revenge, and it is a vow I have never broken."

"It may be so," said Dalgetty; "and every thorough-bred soldier will confess that revenge is a sweet morsel; but in what manner this story will interest Sir Duncan in your justification, unless it should move him to intercede with the Marquis to change the manner thereof from hanging, or simple suspension, to breaking your limbs on the roue or wheel, with the coulter of a plough, or otherwise putting you to death by torture, surpasses my comprehension. Were I you, Ranald, I would be for miskenning Sir Duncan, keeping my own secret, and departing quietly by suffocation, like your ancestors before you."

"Yet hearken, stranger," said the Highlander. "Sir Duncan of Ardenvohr had four children. Three died under our dirks, but the fourth survives; and more would he give to dandle on his knee the fourth child which remains, than to rack these old bones, which care little for the utmost indulgence of his wrath. One word, if I list to speak it, could turn his day of humiliation and fasting into a day of thankfulness and rejoicing, and breaking of bread. O, I know it by my own heart! Dearer to me is the child Kenneth, who chaseth the butterfly on the banks of the Aven, than ten sons who are mouldering in earth, or are preyed on by the fowls of the air."

"I presume, Ranald," continued Dalgetty, "that the three pretty fellows whom I saw yonder in the market-place, strung up by the head like rizzered haddocks, claimed some interest in you."

There was a brief pause ere the Highlander replied, in a tone of strong emotion,—"They were my sons, stranger—they were my sons!—blood of my blood—bone of my bone!—fleet of foot—unerring in aim—unvanquished by foemen till the sons of Diarmid overcame them by numbers! Why do I wish to survive them? The old trunk will less feel the rending up of its roots, than it has felt the lopping off of its graceful boughs. But Kenneth must be trained to revenge—the young eagle must learn from the old how to stoop on his foes. I will purchase for his sake my life and my freedom, by discovering my secret to the Knight of Ardenvohr."

"You may attain your end more easily," said a third voice, mingling in the conference, "by intrusting it to me."

All Highlanders are superstitious. "The Enemy of Mankind is among us!" said Ranald MacEach, springing to his feet. His chains clattered as he rose, while he drew himself as far as they permitted from the quarter whence the voice appeared to proceed. His fear in some degree communicated itself to Captain Dalgetty, who began to repeat, in a sort of polyglot gibberish, all the exorcisms he had ever heard of, without being able to remember more than a word or two of each.

"*In nomine Domini*, as we said at Mareschal College—*santissima madre di Dios*, as the Spaniard has it—*alle guten geister loben den Herrn*, saith the blessed Psalmist, in Dr Luther's translation——"

"A truce with your exorcisms," said the voice they had heard before; "though I come strangely among you, I am mortal like yourselves, and my assistance may avail you in your present strait, if you are not too proud to be counselled."

While the stranger thus spoke, he withdrew the shade of a dark lantern, by whose feeble light Dalgetty could only discern that the speaker who had thus mysteriously united himself to their company,

and mixed in their conversation, was a tall man, dressed in a livery cloak of the Marquis. His first glance was to his feet, but he saw neither the cloven foot which Scottish legends assign to the foul fiend, nor the horse's hoof by which he is distinguished in Germany. His first inquiry was, how the stranger had come among them?

"For," said he, "the creak of these rusty bars would have been heard had the door been made patent; and if you passed through the keyhole, truly, sir, put what face you will on it, you are not fit to be enrolled in a regiment of living men."

"I reserve my secret," answered the stranger, "until you shall merit the discovery by communicating to me some of yours. It may be that I shall be moved to let you out where I myself came in."

"It cannot be through the keyhole, then," said Captain Dalgetty, "for my corslet would stick in the passage, were it possible that my head-piece could get through. As for secrets, I have none of my own, and but few appertaining to others. But impart to us what secrets you desire to know; or, as Professor Snufflegreek used to say at the Mareschal College, Aberdeen, speak that I may know thee."

"It is not with you I have first to do," replied the stranger, turning his light full on the wild and wasted features, and the limbs of the Highlander, Ranald MacEagh, who, close drawn up against the walls of the dungeon, seemed yet uncertain whether his guest was a living being.

"I have brought you something, my friend," said the stranger, in a more soothing tone, "to mend your fare; if you are to die to-morrow, it is no reason wherefore you should not live to-night."

"None at all—no reason in the creation," replied the ready Captain Dalgetty, who forthwith began to unpack the contents of a small basket which the stranger had brought under his cloak, while the Highlander, either in suspicion or disdain, paid no attention to the good cheer.

"Here's to thee, my friend," said the Captain, who, having already despatched a huge piece of roasted kid, was now taking a pull at the wine-flask. "What is thy name, my good friend?"

"Murdoch Campbell, sir," answered the servant, "a lackey of the Marquis of Argyle, and occasionally acting as under-warden."

"Then here is to thee once more, Murdoch," said Dalgetty, "drinking to you by your proper name for the better luck sake. This wine I take to be Calcavella. Well, honest Murdoch, I take it on me to say, thou deservest to be upper-warden, since thou shewest thyself twenty times better acquainted with the way of victualling honest gentlemen that are under misfortune, than thy principal. Bread and water? out upon him! It was enough, Murdoch, to destroy the credit of the Marquis's dungeon. But I see you would converse with my friend, Ranald MacEagh here. Never mind my presence; I'll get me into this corner with the basket, and I will warrant my jaws make noise enough to prevent my ears from hearing you."

Notwithstanding this promise, however, the veteran listened with all the attention he could to gather their discourse, or, as he described it himself, "laid his ears back in his neck, like Gustavus, when he heard the key turn in the girnell-kist." He could, therefore, owing to the narrowness of the dungeon, easily overhear the following dialogue.

"Are you aware, Son of the Mist," said the Campbell, "that you will never leave this place, excepting for the gibbet?"

"Those who are dearest to me," answered MacEagh, "have trode that path before me."

"Then you would do nothing," asked the visiter, "to shun following them?"

The prisoner writhed himself in his chains before returning an answer.

"I would do much," at length he said; "not for my own life, but for the sake of the pledge in the glen of Strathaven."

"And what would you do to turn away the bitterness of the hour?" again demanded Murdoch; "I care not for what cause ye mean to shun it."

"I would do what a man might do, and still call himself a man."

"Do you call yourself a man," said the interrogator, "who have done the deeds of a wolf?"

"I do," answered the outlaw; "I am a man like my forefathers—while wrapt in the mantle of peace, we were lambs—it was rent from us, and ye now call us wolves. Give us the huts ye have burned, our children whom ye have murdered, our widows whom ye have starved—collect from the gibbet and the pole the mangled carcasses, and whitened skulls of our kinsmen—bid them live and bless us, and we will be your vassals and brothers—till then, let death, and blood, and mutual wrong, draw a dark veil of division between us."

"You will then do nothing for your liberty," said the Campbell.

"Any thing—but call myself the friend of your tribe," answered MacEagh.

"We scorn the friendship of banditti and caterans," retorted Murdoch, "and would not stoop to accept it.—What I demand to know from you, in exchange for your liberty, is, where the daughter and heiress of the Knight of Ardenvohr is now to be found?"

"That you may wed her to some beggarly kinsman of your great master," said Ranald, "after the fashion of the Children of Diarmid! Does not the valley of Glenorquhy, to this very hour, cry shame on the violence offered to a helpless infant whom her kinsmen were conveying to the court of the Sovereign? Were not her escort compelled to hide her beneath a cauldron, round which they fought till not one remained to tell the tale? and was not the girl brought to this fatal castle, and afterwards wedded to the brother of M'Callum More, and all for the sake of her broad lands?"[1]

"And if the tale be true," said Murdoch, "she had a preferment beyond what the King of Scots would have conferred on her. But this is far from the purpose. The daughter of Sir Duncan of Ardenvohr is of our own blood, not a stranger; and who has so good a right to know her fate as M'Callum More, the chief of her clan?"

"It is on his part, then, that you demand it?" said the outlaw. The domestic of the Marquis assented.

"And you will practise no evil against the maiden?—I have done her wrong enough already."

[1] Such a story is told of the heiress of the clan of Calder, who was made prisoner in the manner described, and afterwards wedded to Sir Duncan Campbell, from which union the Campbells of Cawdor have their descent.

"No evil, upon the word of a Christian man," replied Murdoch.

"And my guerdon is to be life and liberty?" said the Child of the Mist.

"Such is our paction," replied the Campbell.

"Then know, that the child whom I saved out of compassion at the spoiling of her father's tower of strength, was bred as an adopted daughter of our tribe, until we were worsted at the pass of Ballenduthil, by the fiend incarnate and mortal enemy of our tribe, Allan M'Aulay of the Bloody hand, and by the horsemen of Lennox, under the heir of Menteith."

"Fell she into the power of Allan of the Bloody hand," said Murdoch, "and she a reputed daughter of thy tribe? Then her blood has gilded the dirk, and thou hast said nothing to rescue thine own forfeited life."

"If my life rests on hers," answered the outlaw, "it is secure, for she still survives; but it has a more insecure reliance — the frail promise of a son of Diarmid."

"That promise shall not fail you," said the Campbell, "if you can assure me that she survives, and where she is to be found."

"In the Castle of Darnlinvarach," said Ranald MacEagh, "under the name of Annot Lyle. I have often heard of her from my kinsmen, who have again approached their native woods, and it is not long since mine old eyes beheld her."

"You!" said Murdoch, in astonishment, "you, a chief among the Children of the Mist, and ventured so near your mortal foe?"

"Son of Diarmid, I did more," replied the outlaw; "I was in the hall of the castle, disguised as a harper from the wild shores of Skianach. My purpose was to have plunged my dirk in the body of the M'Aulay with the Bloody hand, before whom our race trembles, and to have taken thereafter what fate God should send me. But I saw Annot Lyle, even when my hand was on the hilt of my dagger. She touched her clairshach[1] to a song of the Children of the Mist, which she had learned when her dwelling was amongst us. The woods in which we had dwelt pleasantly, rustled their green leaves in the song, and our streams were there with the sound of all their waters. My hand forsook the dagger; the fountains of mine eyes were opened, and the hour of revenge passed away.— And now, Son of Diarmid, have I not paid the ransom of my head?"

"Ay," replied Murdoch, "if your tale be true; but what proof can you assign for it?"

"Bear witness, heaven and earth," exclaimed the outlaw, "he already looks how he may step over his word!"

"Not so," replied Murdoch; "every promise shall be kept to you when I am assured you have told me the truth.—But I must speak a few words with your companion in captivity."

"Fair and false — ever fair and false," muttered the prisoner, as he threw himself once more on the floor of his dungeon.

Meanwhile, Captain Dalgetty, who had attended to every word of this dialogue, was making his own remarks on it in private. "What the *henker* can this sly fellow have to say to me? I have no child, either of my own, so far as I know, or of any other person, to tell him a tale about. But let him come on — he will have some manœuvring ere he turn the flank of the old soldier."

Accordingly, as if he had stood pike in hand to defend a breach, he waited with caution, but without fear, the commencement of the attack.

"You are a citizen of the world, Captain Dalgetty," said Murdoch Campbell, "and cannot be ignorant of our old Scottish proverb, *gif-gaf*,[1] which goes through all nations and all services."

"Then I should know something of it," said Dalgetty; "for, except the Turks, there are few powers in Europe whom I have not served; and I have sometimes thought of taking a turn either with Bethlem Gabor, or with the Janizaries."

"A man of your experience and unprejudiced ideas then, will understand me at once," said Murdoch, "when I say, I mean that your freedom shall depend on your true and upright answer to a few trifling questions respecting the gentlemen you have left; their state of preparation; the number of their men; and nature of their appointments; and as much as you chance to know about their plan of operations."

"Just to satisfy your curiosity," said Dalgetty, "and without any farther purpose?"

"None in the world," replied Murdoch; "what interest should a poor devil like me take in their operations?"

"Make your interrogations, then," said the Captain, "and I will answer them *peremptorie*."

"How many Irish may be on their march to join James Graham the delinquent?"

"Probably ten thousand," said Captain Dalgetty.

"Ten thousand!" replied Murdoch angrily; "we know that scarce two thousand landed at Ardnamurchan."

"Then you know more about them than I do," answered Captain Dalgetty, with great composure. "I never saw them mustered yet, or even under arms."

"And how many men of the clans may be expected?" demanded Murdoch.

"As many as they can make," replied the Captain.

"You are answering from the purpose, sir," said Murdoch; "speak plainly, will there be five thousand men?"

"There and thereabouts," answered Dalgetty.

"You are playing with your life, sir, if you trifle with me," replied the catechist; "one whistle of mine, and in less than ten minutes your head hangs on the drawbridge."

"But to speak candidly, Mr Murdoch," replied the Captain, "do you think it is a reasonable thing to ask me after the secrets of our army, and I engaged to serve for the whole campaign? If I taught you how to defeat Montrose, what becomes of my pay, arrears, and chance of booty?"

"I tell you," said Campbell, "that if you be stubborn, your campaign shall begin and end in a march to the block at the castle-gate, which stands ready for such land-laufers; but if you answer my questions faithfully, I will receive you into my — into the service of M'Callum More."

"Does the service afford good pay?" said Captain Dalgetty.

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* Harp.

1 In old English *ka me ka thee*, i. e. mutually serving each other.

"He will double yours, if you will return to Montrose and act under his direction."

"I wish I had seen you, sir, before taking on with him," said Dalgetty, appearing to meditate.

"On the contrary, I can afford you more advantageous terms now," said the Campbell; "always supposing that you are faithful."

"Faithful, that is, to you, and a traitor to Montrose," answered the Captain.

"Faithful to the cause of religion and good order," answered Murdoch, "which sanctifies any deception you may employ to serve it."

"And the Marquis of Argyle—should I incline to enter his service, is he a kind master?" demanded Dalgetty.

"Never man kinder," quoth Campbell.

"And bountiful to his officers?" pursued the Captain.

"The most open hand in Scotland," replied Murdoch.

"True and faithful to his engagements?" continued Dalgetty.

"As honourable a nobleman as breathes," said the clansman.

"I never heard so much good of him before," said Dalgetty; "you must know the Marquis well,—or rather you must be the Marquis himself!—Lord of Argyle," he added, throwing himself suddenly on the disguised nobleman, "I arrest you in the name of King Charles, as a traitor. If you venture to call for assistance, I will wrench round your neck."

The attack which Dalgetty made upon Argyle's person was so sudden and unexpected, that he easily prostrated him on the floor of the dungeon, and held him down with one hand, while his right, grasping the Marquis's throat, was ready to strangle him on the slightest attempt to call for assistance.

"Lord of Argyle," he said, "it is now my turn to lay down the terms of capitulation. If you list to shew me the private way by which you entered the dungeon, you shall escape, on condition of being my *locum tenens*, as we said at the Mareschal College, until your warder visits his prisoners. But if not, I will first strangle you—I learned the art from a Polonian heyduck, who had been a slave in the Ottoman seraglio—and then seek out a mode of retreat."

"Villain! you would not murder me for my kindness," murmured Argyle.

"Not for your kindness, my lord," replied Dalgetty: "but first, to teach your lordship the *jus gentium* towards cavaliers who come to you under safe-conduct; and secondly, to warn you of the danger of proposing dishonourable terms to any worthy soldado, in order to tempt him to become false to his standard during the term of his service."

"Spare my life," said Argyle, "and I will do as you require."

Dalgetty maintained his gripe upon the Marquis's throat, compressing it a little while he asked questions, and relaxing it so far as to give him the power of answering them.

"Where is the secret door into the dungeon?" he demanded.

"Hold up the lantern to the corner on your right hand, you will discern the iron which covers the spring," replied the Marquis.

"So far so good.—Where does the passage lead to?"

"To my private apartment behind the tapestry," answered the prostrate nobleman.

"From thence how shall I reach the gateway?"

"Through the grand gallery, the anteroom, the lackey's waiting hall, the grand guardroom——"

"All crowded with soldiers, factionaries, and attendants?—that will never do for me, my lord;—have you no secret passage to the gate, as you have to your dungeons? I have seen such in Germany."

"There is a passage through the chapel," said the Marquis, "opening from my apartment."

"And what is the pass-word at the gate?"

"The sword of Levi," replied the Marquis; "but if you will receive my pledge of honour, I will go with you, escort you through every guard, and set you at full liberty with a passport."

"I might trust you, my lord, were your throat not already black with the grasp of my fingers;—as it is, *beso los manos a usted*, as the Spaniard says. Yet you may grant me a passport;—are there writing materials in your apartment?"

"Surely; and blank passports ready to be signed. I will attend you there," said the Marquis, "instantly."

"It were too much honour for the like of me," said Dalgetty; "your lordship shall remain under charge of mine honest friend Ranald MacEagh; therefore, prithee let me drag you within reach of his chain.—Honest Ranald, you see how matters stand with us. I shall find the means, I doubt not, of setting you at freedom. Meantime, do as you see me do; clap your hand thus on the weasand of this high and mighty prince, under his ruff, and if he offer to struggle or cry out, fail not, my worthy Ranald, to squeeze doughtily; and if it be *ad deliquium*, Ranald, that is, till he swoon, there is no great matter, seeing he designed your gullet and mine to still harder usage."

"If he offer at speech or struggle," said Ranald, "he dies by my hand."

"That is right, Ranald—very spirited:—A thorough-going friend that understands a hint is worth a million!"

Thus resigning the charge of the Marquis to his new confederate, Dalgetty pressed the spring, by which the secret door flew open, though so well were its hinges polished and oiled, that it made not the slightest noise in revolving. The opposite side of the door was secured by very strong bolts and bars, beside which hung one or two keys, designed apparently to undo fetterlocks. A narrow staircase, ascending up through the thickness of the castle-wall, landed, as the Marquis had truly informed him, behind the tapestry of his private apartment. Such communications were frequent in old feudal castles, as they gave the lord of the fortress, like a second Dionysius, the means of hearing the conversation of his prisoners, or, if he pleased, of visiting them in disguise, an experiment which had terminated so unpleasantly on the present occasion for Gillespie Grumach. Having examined previously whether there was any one in the apartment, and finding the coast clear, the Captain entered, and hastily possessing himself of a blank passport, several of which lay on the table, and of writing materials, securing, at the same time, the Marquis's dagger, and a silk cord from the hang-

lngs, he again descended into the cavern, where, listening a moment at the door, he could hear the half-stifled voice of the Marquis making great proffers to MacEagh, on condition he would suffer him to give an alarm. "Not for a forest of deer — not for a thousand head of cattle," answered the freebooter; "not for all the lands that ever called a son of Diarmid master, will I break the troth I have plighted to him of the iron garment!"

"He of the iron garment," said Dalgetty, entering, "is bounden unto you, MacEagh, and this noble lord shall be bounden also; but first he must fill up this passport with the names of Major Dugald Dalgetty and his guide, or he is like to have a passport to another world."

The Marquis subscribed and wrote, by the light of the dark lantern, as the soldier prescribed to him.

"And now, Ranald," said Dalgetty, "strip thy upper garment — thy plaid I mean, Ranald, and in it will I muffle the M'Callum More, and make of him, for the time, a Child of the Mist — Nay, I must bring it over your head, my lord, so as to secure us against your mistimed clamour — So, now he is sufficiently muffled — hold down your hands, or, by Heaven, I will stab you to the heart with your own dagger! — nay, you shall be bound with nothing less than silk, as your quality deserves. — So, now he is secure till some one comes to relieve him. If he ordered us a late dinner, Ranald, he is like to be the sufferer; at what hour, my good Ranald, did the jailor usually appear?"

"Never till the sun was beneath the western wave," said MacEagh.

"Then, my friend, we shall have three hours good," said the cautious Captain. "In the meantime, let us labour for your liberation."

To examine Ranald's chain was the next occupation. It was undone by means of one of the keys which hung behind the private door, probably deposited there, that the Marquis might, if he pleased, dismiss a prisoner, or remove him elsewhere without the necessity of summoning the warden. The outlaw stretched his benumbed arms, and bounded from the floor of the dungeon in all the ecstasy of recovered freedom.

"Take the livery-coat of that noble prisoner," said Captain Dalgetty; "put it on, and follow close at my heels."

The outlaw obeyed. They ascended the private stair, having first secured the door behind them, and thus safely reached the apartment of the Marquis.[1]

[1] The precarious state of the feudal nobles introduced a great deal of espionage into their castles. Sir Robert Carey mentions his having put on the cloak of one of his own wardens to obtain a confession from the mouth of Geordie Bourne, his prisoner, whom he caused presently to be hanged in return for the frankness of his communication. The fine old Border castle of Naworth contains a private stair from the apartment of the Lord William Howard, by which he could visit the dungeon, as is alleged in the preceding chapter to have been practised by the Marquis of Argyle.

CHAPTER XIV.

This was the entry, then, these stairs — but whither after
Yet he that 's sure to perish on the land
May quit the nicety of card and compass,
And trust the open sea without a pilot.
Tragedy of Brennovalt.

"Look out for the private way through the chapel, Ranald," said the Captain, "while I give a hasty regard to these matters."

Thus speaking, he seized with one hand a bundle of Argyle's most private papers, and with the other a purse of gold, both of which lay in a drawer of a rich cabinet, which stood invitingly open. Neither did he neglect to possess himself of a sword and pistols, with powder-flask and balls, which hung in the apartment. "Intelligence and booty," said the veteran, as he pouched the spoils, "each honourable cavalier should look to, the one on his general's behalf, and the other on his own. This sword is an Andrew Ferrara, and the pistols better than mine own. But a fair exchange is no robbery. Soldados are not to be endangered, and endangered gratuitously, my Lord of Argyle. — But soft, soft, Ranald; wise Man of the Mist, whither art thou bound?"

It was indeed full time to stop MacEagh's proceedings; for, not finding the private passage readily, and impatient, it would seem, of farther delay, he had caught down a sword and target, and was about to enter the great gallery, with the purpose, doubtless, of fighting his way through all opposition.

"Hold, while you live," whispered Dalgetty, laying hold on him. "We must lie perdue, if possible. So bar we this door, that it may be thought M'Callum More would be private — and now let me make a reconnoissance for the private passage."

By looking behind the tapestry in various places, the Captain at length discovered a private door, and behind that a winding passage, terminated by another door, which doubtless entered the chapel. But what was his disagreeable surprise to hear, on the other side of this second door, the sonorous voice of a divine in the act of preaching.

"This made the villain," he said, "recommend this to us as a private passage. I am strongly tempted to return and cut his throat."

He then opened very gently the door, which led into a latticed gallery used by the Marquis himself, the curtains of which were drawn, perhaps with the purpose of having it supposed that he was engaged in attendance upon divine worship, when, in fact, he was absent upon his secular affairs. There was no other person in the seat; for the family of the Marquis, — such was the high state maintained in those days, — sate during service in another gallery, placed somewhat lower than that of the great man himself. This being the case, Captain Dalgetty ventured to ensconce himself in the gallery, of which he carfully secured the door.

Never (although the expression be a bold one) was a sermon listened to with more impatience, and less edification, on the part of one, at least, of the audience. The Captain heard *sixteenthly — seventeenthly — eighteenthly*, and *to conclude*, with a sort of feeling like distracted despair. But no man can lecture (for the service was called a lecture) for ever; and the discourse was at length closed, the clergyman not failing to make a profound bow towards the latticed gallery, little suspecting whom he

honoured by that reverence. To judge from the haste with which they dispersed, the domestics of the Marquis were scarce more pleased with their late occupation than the anxious Captain Dalgetty; indeed, many of them being Highlandmen, had the excuse of not understanding a single word which the clergyman spoke, although they gave their attendance on his doctrine by the special order of M'Callum More, and would have done so had the preacher been a Turkish Imaum.

But although the congregation dispersed thus rapidly, the divine remained behind in the chapel, and, walking up and down its Gothic precincts, seemed either to be meditating on what he had just been delivering, or preparing a fresh discourse for the next opportunity. Bold as he was, Dalgetty hesitated what he ought to do. Time, however, pressed, and every moment increased the chance of their escape being discovered by the jailor visiting the dungeon perhaps before his wonted time, and discovering the exchange which had been made there. At length, whispering Ranald, who watched all his motions, to follow him and preserve his countenance, Captain Dalgetty, with a very composed air, descended a flight of steps which led from the gallery into the body of the chapel. A less experienced adventurer would have endeavoured to pass the worthy clergyman rapidly, in hopes to escape unnoticed. But the Captain, who foresaw the manifest danger of failing in such an attempt, walked gravely to meet the divine upon his walk in the midst of the chancel, and, pulling off his cap, was about to pass him after a formal reverence. But what was his surprise to view in the preacher the very same person with whom he had dined in the castle of Ardenvohr! Yet he speedily recovered his composure; and, ere the clergyman could speak, was the first to address him. "I could not," he said, "leave this mansion without bequeathing to you, my very reverend sir, my humble thanks for the homily with which you have this evening favoured us."

"I did not observe, sir," said the clergyman, "that you were in the chapel."

"It pleased the honourable Marquis," said Dalgetty, modestly, "to grace me with a seat in his own gallery." The divine bowed low at this intimation, knowing that such an honour was only vouchsafed to persons of very high rank. "It has been my fate, sir," said the Captain, "in the sort of wandering life which I have led, to have heard different preachers of different religions — as for example, Lutheran, Evangelical, Reformed, Calvinistical, and so forth, but never have I listened to such a homily as yours."

"Call it a lecture, worthy sir," said the divine, "such is the phrase of our church."

"Lecture or homily," said Dalgetty, "it was, as the High German say, *ganz fortre flich;* and I could not leave this place without testifying unto you what inward emotions I have undergone during your edifying prelection; and how I am touched to the quick, that I should yesterday, during the refection, have seemed to infringe on the respect due to such a person as yourself."

"Alas! my worthy sir," said the clergyman, "we meet in this world as in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, not knowing against whom we may chance to encounter. In truth, it is no matter of marvel, if we sometimes jostle those, to whom, if known, we would yield all respect. Surely, sir, I would rather have taken you for a profane malignant than for such a devout person as you prove, who reverences the great Master even in the meanest of his servants."

"It is always my custom to do so, learned sir," answered Dalgetty; "for in the service of the immortal Gustavus — but I detain you from your meditations," — his desire to speak of the King of Sweden being for once overpowered by the necessity of his circumstances.

"By no means, my worthy sir," said the clergyman. "What was, I pray you, the order of that great Prince, whose memory is so dear to every Protestant bosom?"

"Sir, the drums beat to prayers morning and evening, as regularly as for parade; and if a soldier passed without saluting the chaplain, he had an hour's ride on the wooden mare for his pains. Sir, I wish you a very good evening — I am obliged to depart the castle under M'Callum More's passport."

"Stay one instant, sir," said the preacher; "is there nothing I can do to testify my respect for the pupil of the great Gustavus, and so admirable a judge of preaching?"

"Nothing, sir," said the Captain, "but to shew me the nearest way to the gate — and if you would have the kindness," he added, with great effrontery, "to let a servant bring my horse with him, the dark grey gelding — call him Gustavus, and he will prick up his ears — for I know not where the castle stables are situated, and my guide," he added, looking at Ranald, "speaks no English."

"I hasten to accommodate you," said the clergyman; "your way lies through that cloistered passage."

"Now, Heaven's blessing upon your vanity!" said the Captain to himself. "I was afraid I would have had to march off without Gustavus."

In fact, so effectually did the chaplain exert himself in behalf of so excellent a judge of composition, that while Dalgetty was parleying with the sentinels at the drawbridge, shewing his passport, and giving the watchword, a servant brought him his horse, ready saddled for the journey. In another place, the Captain's sudden appearance at large after having been publicly sent to prison, might have excited suspicion and inquiry; but the officers and domestics of the Marquis were accustomed to the mysterious policy of their master, and never supposed aught else than that he had been liberated and intrusted with some private commission by their master. In this belief, and having received the parole, they gave him free passage.

Dalgetty rode slowly through the town of Inverary, the outlaw attending upon him like a footpage at his horse's shoulder. As they passed the gibbet, the old man looked on the bodies and wrung his hands. The look and gesture were momentary, but expressive of indescribable anguish. Instantly recovering himself, Ranald, in passing, whispered somewhat to one of the females, who, like Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, seemed engaged in watching and mourning the victims of feudal injustice and cruelty. The woman started at his voice, but immediately collected herself, and returned for answer a slight inclination of the head.

Dalgetty continued his way out of the town, uncertain whether he should try to seize or hire a boat

and cross the lake, or plunge into the woods, and there conceal himself from pursuit. In the former event he was liable to be instantly pursued by the galleys of the Marquis, which lay ready for sailing, their long yard-arms pointing to the wind, and what hope could he have in an ordinary Highland fishing-boat to escape from them? If he made the latter choice, his chance either of supporting or concealing himself in those waste and unknown wildernesses, was in the highest degree precarious. The town lay now behind him, yet what hand to turn to for safety he was unable to determine, and began to be sensible, that in escaping from the dungeon at Inverary, desperate as the matter seemed, he had only accomplished the easiest part of a difficult task. If retaken, his fate was now certain; for the personal injury he had offered to a man, so powerful and so vindictive, could be atoned for only by instant death. While he pondered these distressing reflections, and looked around with a countenance which plainly expressed indecision, Ranald MacEagh suddenly asked him, "which way he intended to journey?"

"And that, honest comrade," answered Dalgetty, "is precisely the question which I cannot answer you. Truly I begin to hold the opinion, Ranald, that we had better have stuck by the brown loaf and water pitcher until Sir Duncan arrived, who, for his own honour, must have made some fight for me."

"Saxon," answered MacEagh, "do not regret having exchanged the foul breath of yonder dungeon for the free air of heaven. Above all, repent not that you have served a Son of the Mist. Put yourself under my guidance, and I will warrant your safety with my head."

"Can you guide me safe through these mountains, and back to the army of Montrose?" said Dalgetty.

"I can," answered MacEagh; "there lives not a man to whom the mountain passes, the caverns, the glens, the thickets, and the corries are known, as they are to the Children of the Mist. While others crawl on the level ground, by the sides of lakes and streams, ours are the steep hollows of the inaccessible mountains, the birth-place of the desert springs. Not all the bloodhounds of Argyle can trace the fastnesses through which I can guide you."

"Say'st thou so, honest Ranald?" replied Dalgetty; "then have on with thee; for of a surety I shall never save the ship by my own pilotage."

The outlaw accordingly led the way into the wood, by which the castle is surrounded for several miles, walking with so much despatch as kept Gustavus at a round trot, and taking such a number of cross cuts and turns, that Captain Dalgetty speedily lost all idea where he might be, and all knowledge of the points of the compass. At length, the path, which had gradually become more difficult, altogether ended among thickets and underwood. The roaring of a torrent was heard in the neighbourhood, the ground became in some places broken, in others boggy, and every where unfit for riding.

"What the foul fiend," said Dalgetty, "is to be done here? I must part with Gustavus, I fear."

"Take no care for your horse," said the outlaw; "he shall soon be restored to you."

As he spoke, he whistled in a low tone, and a lad, half dressed in tartan, half naked, having only his own shaggy hair, tied with a thong of leather, to protect his head and face from sun and weather, lean, and half-starved in aspect, his wild grey eyes appearing to fill up ten times the proportion usually allotted to them in the human face, crept out, as a wild beast might have done, from a thicket of brambles and briars.

"Give your horse to the gillie," said Ranald MacEagh; "your life depends upon it."

"Och! och!" exclaimed the despairing veteran; "Eheu! as we used to say at Mareschal College, must I leave Gustavus in such grooming?"

"Are you frantic, to lose time thus?" said his guide; "do we stand on friend's ground, that you should part with your horse as if he were your brother? I tell you, you shall have him again; but if you never saw the animal, is not life better than the best colt ever mare foaled?"

"And that is true too, mine honest friend," sighed Dalgetty; "yet if you knew but the value of Gustavus, and the things we two have done and suffered together — See, he turns back to look at me! — Be kind to him, my good breechless friend, and I will requite you well." So saying, and withal sniffling a little to swallow his grief, he turned from the heart-rending spectacle in order to follow his guide.

To follow his guide was no easy matter, and soon required more agility than Captain Dalgetty could master. The very first plunge after he had parted from his charger, carried him, with little assistance from a few overhanging boughs, or projecting roots of trees, eight feet sheer down into the course of a torrent, up which the Son of the Mist led the way. Huge stones, over which they scrambled, — thickets of thorn and brambles, through which they had to drag themselves, — rocks which were to be climbed on the one side with much labour and pain, for the purpose of an equally precarious descent upon the other; all these, and many such interruptions, were surmounted by the light-footed and half-naked mountaineer with an ease and velocity which excited the surprise and envy of Captain Dalgetty, who, encumbered by his head-piece, corslet, and other armour, not to mention his ponderous jack-boots, found himself at length so much exhausted by fatigue, and the difficulties of the road, that he sate down upon a stone in order to recover his breath, while he explained to Ranald MacEagh the difference betwixt travelling *expeditus* and *impeditus*, as these two military phrases were understood at Mareschal College, Aberdeen. The sole answer of the mountaineer was to lay his hand on the soldier's arm, and point backward in the direction of the wind. Dalgetty could spy nothing, for evening was closing fast, and they were at the bottom of a dark ravine. But at length he could distinctly hear at a distance the sullen toll of a large bell.

"That," said he, "must be the alarm — the storm-clock, as the Germans call it."

"It strikes the hour of your death," answered Ranald, "unless you can accompany me a little farther. For every toll of that bell a brave man has yielded up his soul."

"Truly, Ranald, my trusty friend," said Dalgetty, "I will not deny that the case may be soon my own; for I am so forfouchten, (being, as I explained to you, *impeditus*, for had I been *expeditus*, I mind not pedestrian exercise the flourish of a fife,) that I

think I had better ensconce myself in one of these bushes, and even lie quiet there to abide what fortune God shall send me. I entreat you, mine honest friend Ranald, to shift for yourself, and leave me to my fortune, as the Lion of the North, the immortal Gustavus Adolphus, my never-to-be-forgotten master, (whom you must surely have heard of, Ranald, though you may have heard of no one else,) said to Francis Albert, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburgh, when he was mortally wounded on the plains of Lutzen. Neither despair altogether of my safety, Ranald, seeing I have been in as great pinches as this in Germany—more especially, I remember me, that at the fatal battle of Nerlingen—after which I changed service——"

"If you would save your father's son's breath to help his child out of trouble, instead of wasting it upon the tales of Seannachies," said Ranald, who now grew impatient of the Captain's loquacity, "or if your feet could travel as fast as your tongue, you might yet lay your head on an unbloody pillow to-night."

"Something there is like military skill in that," replied the Captain, "although wantonly and irreverently spoken to an officer of rank. But I hold it good to pardon such freedoms on a march, in respect of the Saturnalian licence indulged in such cases to the troops of all nations. And now, resume thine office, friend Ranald, in respect I am well-breathed; or, to be more plain, *I præ, sequar*, as we used to say at Mareschal College."

Comprehending his meaning rather from his motions than his language, the Son of the Mist again led the way, with an unerring precision that looked like instinct, through a variety of ground the most difficult and broken that could well be imagined. Dragging along his ponderous boots, encumbered with thigh-pieces, gauntlets, corslet, and back-piece, not to mention the buff jerkin which he wore under all these arms, talking of his former exploits the whole way, though Ranald paid not the slightest attention to him, Captain Dalgetty contrived to follow his guide a considerable space farther, when the deep-mouthed baying of a hound was heard coming down the wind, as if opening on the scent of its prey.

"Black hound," said Ranald, "whose throat never boded good to a Child of the Mist, ill fortune to her who littered thee! hast thou already found our trace? But thou art too late, swart hound of darkness, and the deer has gained the herd."

So saying, he whistled very softly, and was answered in a tone equally low from the top of a pass, up which they had for some time been ascending. Mending their pace, they reached the top, where the moon, which had now risen bright and clear, shewed to Dalgetty a party of ten or twelve Highlanders, and about as many women and children, by whom Ranald MacEagh was received with such transports of joy, as made his companion easily sensible that those by whom he was surrounded, must of course be Children of the Mist. The place which they occupied well suited their name and habits. It was a beetling crag, round which winded a very narrow and broken footpath, commanded in various places by the position which they held.

Ranald spoke anxiously and hastily to the children of his tribe, and the men came one by one to shake hands with Dalgetty, while the women, clamorous in their gratitude, pressed round to kiss even the hem of his garment.

"They plight their faith to you," said Ranald MacEagh; "for requital of the good deed you have done to the tribe this day."

"Enough said, Ranald," answered the soldier, "enough said—tell them I love not this shaking of hands—it confuses ranks and degrees in military service; and as to kissing of gauntlets, puldrons, and the like, I remember that the immortal Gustavus, as he rode through the streets of Nuremberg, being thus worshipped by the populace, (being doubtless far more worthy of it than a poor though honourable cavalier like myself,) did say unto them, in the way of rebuke, 'If you idolize me thus like a god, who shall assure you that the vengeance of Heaven will not soon prove me to be a mortal?'—And so here, I suppose, you intend to make a stand against your followers, Ranald?—*voto a Dios*, as the Spaniard says—a very pretty position—as pretty a position for a small peloton of men as I have seen in my service—no enemy can come towards it by the road without being at the mercy of cannon and musket.—But then, Ranald, my trusty comrade, you have no cannon, I dare to aver, and I do not see that any of these fellows have muskets either. So with what artillery you propose making good the pass, before you come to hand blows, truly, Ranald, it passeth my apprehension."

"With the weapons and with the courage of our fathers," said MacEagh; and made the Captain observe, that the men of his party were armed with bows and arrows.

"Bows and arrows!" exclaimed Dalgetty; "ha! ha! ha! have we Robin Hood and Little John back again? Bows and arrows! why, the sight has not been seen in civilized war for a hundred years. Bows and arrows! and why not weavers'-beams, as in the days of Goliah? Ah! that Dugald Dalgetty, of Drumthwacket, should live to see men fight with bows and arrows?—The immortal Gustavus would never have believed it—nor Wallenstein—nor Butler—nor old Tilly.—Well, Ranald, a cat can have but its claws—since bows and arrows are the word, e'en let us make the best of it. Only, as I do not understand the scope and range of such old-fashioned artillery, you must make the best disposition you can out of your own head; for *my* taking the command, whilk I would have gladly done had you been to fight with any Christian weapons, is out of the question, when you are to combat like quivered Numidians. I will, however, play my part with my pistols in the approaching mellay, in respect my carabine unhappily remains at Gustavus's saddle.—My service and thanks to you," he continued, addressing a mountaineer who offered him a bow; "Dugald Dalgetty may say of himself, as he learned at Mareschal College,

> Non eget Mauri jaculis, neque arcu,
> Nec venenatis gravida sagittis,
> Fusce, pharetra;

whilk is to say——"

Ranald MacEagh a second time imposed silence on the talkative commander as before, by pulling his sleeve, and pointing down the pass. The bay of the bloodhound was now approaching nearer and nearer, and they could hear the voices of several persons who accompanied the animal, and hallooed to each other as they dispersed occasionally, either in the hurry of their advance, or in order to search

more accurately the thickets as they came along. They were obviously drawing nearer and nearer every moment. MacEagh, in the meantime, proposed to Captain Dalgetty to disencumber himself of his armour, and gave him to understand that the women should transport it to a place of safety.

"I crave your pardon, sir," said Dalgetty, "such is not the rule of our foreign service; in respect I remember the regiment of Finland cuirassiers reprimanded, and their kettle-drums taken from them, by the immortal Gustavus, because they had assumed the permission to march without their corslets, and to leave them with the baggage. Neither did they strike kettle-drums again at the head of that famous regiment until they behaved themselves so notably at the field of Leipsic; a lesson whilk is not to be forgotten, any more than that exclamation of the immortal Gustavus, 'Now shall I know if my officers love me, by their putting on their armour; since, if my officers are slain, who shall lead my soldiers into victory?' Nevertheless, friend Ranald, this is without prejudice to my being rid of these somewhat heavy boots, providing I can obtain any other succedaneum; for I presume not to say that my bare soles are fortified so as to endure the flints and thorns, as seems to be the case with your followers."

To rid the Captain of his cumbrous greaves, and case his feet in a pair of brogues made out of deer-skin, which a Highlander stripped off for his accommodation, was the work of a minute, and Dalgetty found himself much lightened by the exchange. He was in the act of recommending to Ranald MacEagh, to send two or three of his followers a little lower to reconnoitre the pass, and, at the same time, somewhat to extend his front, placing two detached archers at each flank by way of posts of observation, when the near cry of the hound apprized them that the pursuers were at the bottom of the pass. All was then dead silence; for, loquacious as he was on other occasions, Captain Dalgetty knew well the necessity of an ambush keeping itself under covert.

The moon gleamed on the broken path-way, and on the projecting cliffs of rock round which it winded, its light intercepted here and there by the branches of bushes and dwarf-trees, which, finding nourishment in the crevices of the rocks, in some places overshadowed the brow and ledge of the precipice. Below, a thick copse-wood lay in deep and dark shadow, somewhat resembling the billows of a half-seen ocean. From the bosom of that darkness, and close to the bottom of the precipice, the hound was heard at intervals baying fearfully, sounds which were redoubled by the echoes of the woods and rocks around. At intervals, these sunk into deep silence, interrupted only by the plashing noise of a small runnel of water, which partly fell from the rock, partly found a more silent passage to the bottom along its projecting surface. Voices of men were also heard in stifled converse below; it seemed as if the pursuers had not discovered the narrow path which led to the top of the rock, or that, having discovered it, the peril of the ascent, joined to the imperfect light, and the uncertainty whether it might not be defended, made them hesitate to attempt it.

At length a shadowy figure was seen, which raised itself up from the abyss of darkness below, and, emerging into the pale moonlight, began cautiously and slowly to ascend the rocky path. The outline was so distinctly marked, that Captain Dalgetty could discover not only the person of a Highlander, but the long gun which he carried in his hand, and the plume of feathers which decorated his bonnet. "*Tausend teiflen!* that I should say so, and so like to be near my latter end!" ejaculated the Captain but under his breath, "what will become of us, now they have brought musketry to encounter our archers?"

But just as the pursuer had attained a projecting piece of rock about half way up the ascent, and pausing, made a signal for those who were still at the bottom to follow him, an arrow whistled from the bow of one of the Children of the Mist, and transfixed him with so fatal a wound, that, without a single effort to save himself, he lost his balance, and fell headlong from the cliff on which he stood, into the darkness below. The crash of the boughs which received him, and the heavy sound of his fall from thence to the ground, was followed by a cry of horror and surprise, which burst from his followers. The Children of the Mist, encouraged in proportion to the alarm this first success had caused among the pursuers, echoed back the clamour with a loud and shrill yell of exultation, and, shewing themselves on the brow of the precipice, with wild cries and vindictive gestures, endeavoured to impress on their enemies a sense at once of their courage, their numbers, and their state of defence. Even Captain Dalgetty's military prudence did not prevent his rising up, and calling out to Ranald, more loud than prudence warranted, "*Carocco*, comrade, as the Spaniard says! The long-bow for ever! In my poor apprehension now, were you to order a file to advance and take position——"

"The Sassenach!" cried a voice from beneath, "mark the Sassenach sidier! I see the glitter of his breastplate." At the same time three muskets were discharged; and while one ball rattled against the corslet of proof, to the strength of which our valiant Captain had been more than once indebted for his life, another penetrated the armour which covered the front of his left thigh, and stretched him on the ground. Ranald instantly seized him in his arms, and bore him back from the edge of the precipice, while he dolefully ejaculated, "I always told the immortal Gustavus, Wallenstein, Tilly, and other men of the sword, that, in my poor mind, taslets ought to be made musket-proof."

With two or three earnest words in Gaelic, MacEagh commended the wounded man to the charge of the females, who were in the rear of his little party, and was then about to return to the contest. But Dalgetty detained him, grasping a firm hold of his plaid.—"I know not how this matter may end—but I request you will inform Montrose, that I died like a follower of the immortal Gustavus—and I pray you, take heed how you quit your present strength, even for the purpose of pursuing the enemy, if you gain any advantage—and—and——"

Here Dalgetty's breath and eyesight began to fail him through loss of blood, and MacEagh, availing himself of this circumstance, extricated from his grasp the end of his own mantle, and substituted that of a female, by which the Captain held stoutly, thereby securing, as he conceived, the outlaw's attention to the military instructions which he continued to pour forth while he had any breath to utter them, though they became gradually more

and more incoherent—"And, comrade, you will be sure to keep your musketeers in advance of your stand of pikes, Lochaber-axes, and two-handed swords—Stand fast, dragoons, on the left flank! where was I?—Ay, and, Ranald, if ye be minded to retreat, leave some lighted matches burning on the branches of the trees—it shews as if they were lined with shot—But I forget—ye have no match-locks nor habergeons—only bows and arrows—bows and arrows! ha! ha! ha!"

Here the Captain sunk back in an exhausted condition, altogether unable to resist the sense of the ludicrous which, as a modern man-at-arms, he connected with the idea of these ancient weapons of war. It was a long time ere he recovered his senses; and, in the meantime, we leave him in the care of the Daughters of the Mist; nurses as kind and attentive, in reality, as they were wild and uncouth in outward appearance.

CHAPTER XV.

But if no faithless action stain
Thy true and constant word,
I'll make thee famous by my pen,
And glorious by my sword.

I'll serve thee in such noble ways
As ne'er were known before;
I'll deck and crown thy head with bays,
And love thee more and more.

MONTROSE'S *Lines*.

WE must now leave, with whatever regret, the valiant Captain Dalgetty, to recover of his wounds or otherwise as fate shall determine, in order briefly to trace the military operations of Montrose, worthy as they are of a more important page, and a better historian. By the assistance of the chieftains whom we have commemorated, and more especially by the junction of the Murrays, Stewarts, and other clans of Athole, which were peculiarly zealous in the royal cause, he soon assembled an army of two or three thousand Highlanders, to whom he successfully united the Irish under Colkitto. This last leader, who, to the great embarrassment of Milton's commentators, is commemorated in one of that great poet's sonnets,[1] was properly named Alister, or Alexander M'Donnell, by birth a Scottish islesman, and related to the Earl of Antrim, to whose patronage he owed the command assigned him in the Irish troops. In many respects he merited this distinction. He was brave to intrepidity, and almost to insensibility; very strong and active in person, completely master of his weapons, and always ready to shew the example in the extremity of danger. To counterbalance these good qualities, it must be recorded, that he was inexperienced in military tactics, and of a jealous and presumptuous disposition, which often lost to Montrose the fruits of Colkitto's gallantry. Yet such is the predominance of outward personal qualities in the eyes of a wild people, that the feats of strength and courage shewn by this champion, seem to have made a stronger impression upon the minds of the Highlanders, than the military skill and chivalrous spirit of the great Marquis of Montrose. Numerous traditions are still preserved in the Highland glens concerning Alister M'Donnell, though the name of Montrose is rarely mentioned among them.

The point upon which Montrose finally assembled his little army, was in Strathearn, on the verge of the Highlands of Perthshire, so as to menace the principal town of that county.

His enemies were not unprepared for his reception. Argyle, at the head of his Highlanders, was dogging the steps of the Irish from the west to the east, and by force, fear, or influence, had collected an army nearly sufficient to have given battle to Montrose. The Lowlands were also prepared, for reasons which we assigned at the beginning of this tale. A body of six thousand infantry, and six or seven thousand cavalry, which profanely assumed the title of God's army, had been hastily assembled from the shires of Fife, Angus, Perth, Stirling, and the neighbouring counties. A much less force in former times, nay, even in the preceding reign, would have been sufficient to have secured the Lowlands against a more formidable descent of Highlanders, than those united under Montrose; but times had changed strangely within the last half century. Before that period, the Lowlanders were as constantly engaged in war as the mountaineers, and were incomparably better disciplined and armed. The favourite Scottish order of battle somewhat resembled the Macedonian phalanx Their infantry formed a compact body, armed with long spears, impenetrable even to the men-at-arms of the age, though well mounted, and arrayed in complete proof. It may easily be conceived, therefore, that their ranks could not be broken by the disorderly charge of Highland infantry armed for close combat only, with swords, and ill furnished with missile weapons, and having no artillery whatever.

This habit of fight was in a great measure changed by the introduction of muskets into the Scottish Lowland service, which, not being as yet combined with the bayonet, was a formidable weapon at a distance, but gave no assurance against the enemy who rushed on to close quarters. The pike, indeed, was not wholly disused in the Scottish army; but it was no longer the favourite weapon, nor was it relied upon as formerly by those in whose hands it was placed; insomuch that Daniel Lupton, a tactician of the day, has written a book expressly upon the superiority of the musket. This change commenced as early as the wars of Gustavus Adolphus, whose marches were made with such rapidity, that the pike was very soon thrown aside in his army, and exchanged for fire-arms. A circumstance which necessarily accompanied this change, as well as the establishment of standing armies, whereby war became a trade, was the introduction of a laborious and complicated system of discipline, combining a variety of words of command with corresponding operations and manœuvres, the

[1] Milton's book, entitled Tetrachordon, had been ridiculed, it would seem, by the divines assembled at Westminster, and others, on account of the hardness of the title; and Milton in his sonnet retaliates upon the barbarous Scottish names which the Civil War had made familiar to English ears:—

——— why is it harder, sirs, than Gordon,
Colkitto, or M'Donald, or Gallasp?
These rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.

"We may suppose," says Bishop Newton, "that these were persons of note among the Scotch ministers, who were for pressing and enforcing the Covenant;" whereas Milton only intends to ridicule the barbarism of Scottish names in general and quotes, indiscriminately, that of Gillespie, one of the Apostles of the Covenant, and those of Colkitto and M'Donnell, (both belonging to one person,) one of its bitterest enemies.

neglect of any one of which was sure to throw the whole into confusion. War, therefore, as practised among most nations of Europe, had assumed much more than formerly the character of a profession or mystery, to which previous practice and experience were indispensable requisites. Such was the natural consequence of standing armies, which had almost every where, and particularly in the long German wars, superseded what may be called the natural discipline of the feudal militia.

The Scottish Lowland militia, therefore, laboured under a double disadvantage when opposed to Highlanders. They were divested of the spear, a weapon which, in the hands of their ancestors, had so often repelled the impetuous assaults of the mountaineer; and they were subjected to a new and complicated species of discipline, well adapted, perhaps, to the use of regular troops, who could be rendered completely masters of it, but tending only to confuse the ranks of citizen soldiers, by whom it was rarely practised, and imperfectly understood. So much has been done in our own time in bringing back tactics to their first principles, and in getting rid of the pedantry of war, that it is easy for us to estimate the disadvantages under which a half-trained militia laboured, who were taught to consider success as depending upon their exercising with precision a system of tactics, which they probably only so far comprehended as to find out when they were wrong, but without the power of getting right again. Neither can it be denied, that, in the material points of military habits and warlike spirit, the Lowlanders of the seventeenth century had sunk far beneath their Highland countrymen.

From the earliest period down to the union of the crowns, the whole kingdom of Scotland, Lowlands as well as Highlands, had been the constant scene of war, foreign and domestic; and there was probably scarce one of its hardy inhabitants, between the age of sixteen and sixty, who was not as willing in point of fact, as he was literally bound in law, to assume arms at the first call of his liege lord, or of a royal proclamation. The law remained the same in sixteen hundred and forty-five as a hundred years before, but the race of those subjected to it had been bred up under very different feelings. They had sat in quiet under their vine and under their fig-tree, and a call to battle involved a change of life as new as it was disagreeable. Such of them, also, who lived near unto the Highlands, were in continual and disadvantageous contact with the restless inhabitants of those mountains, by whom their cattle were driven off, their dwellings plundered, and their persons insulted, and who had acquired over them that sort of superiority arising from a constant system of aggression. The Lowlanders, who lay more remote, and out of reach of these depredations, were influenced by the exaggerated reports circulated concerning the Highlanders, whom, as totally differing in laws, language, and dress, they were induced to regard as a nation of savages, equally void of fear and of humanity. These various prepossessions, joined to the less warlike habits of the Lowlanders, and their imperfect knowledge of the new and complicated system of discipline for which they had exchanged their natural mode of fighting, placed them at great disadvantage when opposed to the Highlander in the field of battle. The mountaineers, on the contrary, with the arms and courage of their fathers, possessed also their simple and natural system of tactics, and bore down with the fullest confidence upon an enemy, to whom any thing they had been taught of discipline was, like Saul's armour upon David, a hinderance rather than a help, "because they had not proved it."

It was with such disadvantages on the one side, and such advantages on the other, to counterbalance the difference of superior numbers and the presence of artillery and cavalry, that Montrose encountered the army of Lord Elcho upon the field of Tippermuir. The Presbyterian clergy had not been wanting in their efforts to rouse the spirit of their followers; and one of them, who harangued the troops on the very day of battle, hesitated not to say, that if ever God spoke by his mouth, he promised them, in His name, that day, a great and assured victory. The cavalry and artillery were also reckoned sure warrants of success, as the novelty of their attack had upon former occasions been very discouraging to the Highlanders. The place of meeting was an open heath, and the ground afforded little advantage to either party, except that it allowed the horse of the Covenanters to act with effect.

A battle, upon which so much depended, was never more easily decided. The Lowland cavalry made a show of charging; but, whether thrown into disorder by the fire of musketry, or deterred by a disaffection to the service said to have prevailed among the gentlemen, they made no impression on the Highlanders whatever, and recoiled in disorder from ranks which had neither bayonets nor pikes to protect them. Montrose saw, and instantly availed himself of this advantage. He ordered his whole army to charge, which they performed with the wild and desperate valour peculiar to mountaineers. One officer of the Covenanters alone, trained in the Italian wars, made a desperate defence upon the right wing. In every other point their line was penetrated at the first onset; and this advantage once obtained, the Lowlanders were utterly unable to contend at close quarters with their more agile and athletic enemies. Many were slain on the field, and such a number in the pursuit, that above one-third of the Covenanters were reported to have fallen; in which number, however, must be computed a great many fat burgesses who broke their wind in the flight, and thus died without stroke of sword.[1]

The victors obtained possession of Perth, and obtained considerable sums of money, as well as ample supplies of arms and ammunition. But those advantages were to be balanced against an almost insurmountable inconvenience that uniformly attended a Highland army. The clans could be in no respect induced to consider themselves as regular soldiers, or to act as such. Even so late as the year 1745-6, when the Chevalier Charles Edward, by way of making an example, caused a soldier to be shot for desertion, the Highlanders, who composed his army, were affected as much by indignation as by fear. They could not conceive any principle of justice upon which a man's life could be taken, for merely going home

[1] We choose to quote our authority for a fact so singular:—"A great many burgesses were killed—twenty-five householders in St Andrews—many were bursten in the flight, and died without stroke."—*See* BAILLIE'S *Letters, vol. II. page* 92

when it did not suit him to remain longer with the army. Such had been the uniform practice of their fathers. When a battle was over, the campaign was, in their opinion, ended; if it was lost, they sought safety in their mountains — if won, they returned there to secure their booty. At other times they had their cattle to look after, and their harvests to sow or reap, without which their families would have perished for want. In either case, there was an end of their services for the time; and though they were easily enough recalled by the prospect of fresh adventures and more plunder, yet the opportunity of success was, in the meantime, lost, and could not afterwards be recovered. This circumstance serves to shew, even if history had not made us acquainted with the same fact, that the Highlanders had never been accustomed to make war with the view of permanent conquest, but only with the hope of deriving temporary advantage, or deciding some immediate quarrel. It also explains the reason why Montrose, with all his splendid successes, never obtained any secure or permanent footing in the Lowlands, and why even those Lowland noblemen and gentlemen, who were inclined to the royal cause, shewed diffidence and reluctance to join an army of a character so desultory and irregular, as might lead them at all times to apprehend that the Highlanders, securing themselves by a retreat to their mountains, would leave whatever Lowlanders might have joined them to the mercy of an offended and predominant enemy. The same consideration will also serve to account for the sudden marches which Montrose was obliged to undertake, in order to recruit his army in the mountains, and for the rapid changes of fortune, by which we often find him obliged to retreat from before those enemies over whom he had recently been victorious. If there should be any who read these tales for any farther purpose than that of immediate amusement, they will find these remarks not unworthy of their recollection.

It was owing to such causes, the slackness of the Lowland loyalists and the temporary desertion of his Highland followers, that Montrose found himself, even after the decisive victory of Tippermuir, in no condition to face the second army with which Argyle advanced upon him from the westward. In this emergency, supplying by velocity the want of strength, he moved suddenly from Perth to Dundee, and being refused admission into that town, fell northward upon Aberdeen, where he expected to be joined by the Gordons and other loyalists. But the zeal of these gentlemen was, for the time, effectually bridled by a large body of Covenanters, commanded by the Lord Burleigh, and supposed to amount to three thousand men. These Montrose boldly attacked with half their number. The battle was fought under the walls of the city, and the resolute valour of Montrose's followers was again successful against every disadvantage.

But it was the fate of this great commander always to gain the glory, but seldom to reap the fruits of victory. He had scarcely time to repose his small army in Aberdeen, ere he found, on the one hand, that the Gordons were likely to be deterred from joining him, by the reasons we have mentioned, with some others peculiar to their chief, the Marquis of Huntly; on the other hand, Argyle, whose forces had been augmented by those of several Lowland noblemen, advanced towards Montrose at the head of an army much larger than he had yet had to cope with. These troops moved, indeed, with slowness, corresponding to the cautious character of their commander; but even that caution rendered Argyle's approach formidable, since his very advance implied, that he was at the head of an army irresistibly superior.

There remained one mode of retreat open to Montrose, and he adopted it. He threw himself into the Highlands, where he could set pursuit at defiance, and where he was sure, in every glen, to recover those recruits who had left his standard to deposit their booty in their native fastnesses. It was thus that the singular character of the army which Montrose commanded, while, on the one hand, it rendered his victory in some degree nugatory, enabled him, on the other, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, to secure his retreat, recruit his forces, and render himself more formidable than ever to the enemy, before whom he had lately been unable to make a stand.

On the present occasion he threw himself into Badenoch, and rapidly traversing that district, as well as the neighbouring country of Athole, he alarmed the Covenanters by successive attacks upon various unexpected points, and spread such general dismay, that repeated orders were despatched by the Parliament to Argyle, their commander, to engage, and disperse Montrose at all rates.

These commands from his superiors neither suited the haughty spirit, nor the temporizing and cautious policy, of the nobleman to whom they were addressed. He paid, accordingly, no regard to them, but limited his efforts to intrigues among Montrose's few Lowland followers, many of whom had become disgusted with the prospect of a Highland campaign, which exposed their persons to intolerable fatigue, and left their estates at the Covenanters' mercy. Accordingly, several of them left Montrose's camp at this period. He was joined, however, by a body of forces of more congenial spirit, and far better adapted to the situation in which he found himself. This reinforcement consisted of a large body of Highlanders, whom Colkitto, despatched for that purpose, had levied in Argyleshire. Among the most distinguished was John of Moidart, called the Captain of Clan Ranald, with the Stewarts of Appin, the Clan Gregor, the Clan M'Nab, and other tribes of inferior distinction. By these means, Montrose's army was so formidably increased, that Argyle cared no longer to remain in the command of that opposed to him, but returned to Edinburgh, and there threw up his commission, under pretence that his army was not supplied with reinforcements and provisions in the manner in which they ought to have been. From thence the Marquis returned to Inverary, there, in full security, to govern his feudal vassals, and patriarchal followers, and to repose himself in safety on the faith of the Clan proverb already quoted—"It is a far cry to Lochow."

CHAPTER XVI.

Such mountains steep, such craggy hills,
His army on one side enclose:
The other side, great griesly gills
Did fence with fenny mire and moss.

Which when the Earl understood,
He counsel craved of captains all,
Who bade set forth with mournful mood,
And take such fortune as would fall.
Flodden Field, an Ancient Poem.

Montrose had now a splendid career in his view, provided he could obtain the consent of his gallant, but desultory troops, and their independent chieftains. The Lowlands lay open before him without an army adequate to check his career; for Argyle's followers had left the Covenanters' host when their master threw up his commission, and many other troops, tired of the war, had taken the same opportunity to disband themselves. By descending Strath-Tay, therefore, one of the most convenient passes from the Highlands, Montrose had only to present himself in the Lowlands, in order to rouse the slumbering spirit of chivalry and of loyalty which animated the gentlemen to the north of the Forth. The possession of these districts, with or without a victory, would give him the command of a wealthy and fertile part of the kingdom, and would enable him, by regular pay, to place his army on a more permanent footing, to penetrate as far as the capital, perhaps from thence to the Border, where he deemed it possible to communicate with the yet unsubdued forces of King Charles.

Such was the plan of operations by which the truest glory was to be acquired, and the most important success insured for the royal cause. Accordingly it did not escape the ambitious and daring spirit of him whose services had already acquired him the title of the Great Marquis. But other motives actuated many of his followers, and perhaps were not without their secret and unacknowledged influence upon his own feelings.

The Western Chiefs in Montrose's army, almost to a man, regarded the Marquis of Argyle as the most direct and proper object of hostilities. Almost all of them had felt his power; almost all, in withdrawing their fencible men from their own glens, left their families and property exposed to his vengeance; all, without exception, were desirous of diminishing his sovereignty; and most of them lay so near his territories, that they might reasonably hope to be gratified by a share of his spoil. To these Chiefs the possession of Inverary and its castle was an event infinitely more important and desirable than the capture of Edinburgh. The latter event could only afford their clansmen a little transitory pay or plunder; the former insured to the Chiefs themselves indemnity for the past, and security for the future. Besides these personal reasons, the leaders, who favoured this opinion, plausibly urged, that though, at his first descent into the Lowlands, Montrose might be superior to the enemy, yet every day's march he made from the hills must diminish his own forces, and expose him to the accumulated superiority of any army which the Covenanters could collect from the Lowland levies and garrisons. On the other hand, by crushing Argyle effectually, he would not only permit his present western friends to bring out that proportion of their forces which they must otherwise leave at home for protection of their families; but farther, he would draw to his standard several tribes already friendly to his cause, but who were prevented from joining him by fear of M'Callum More.

These arguments, as we have already hinted, found something responsive in Montrose's own bosom, not quite consonant with the general heroism of his character. The houses of Argyle and Montrose had been, in former times, repeatedly opposed to each other in war and in politics, and the superior advantages acquired by the former, had made them the subject of envy and dislike to the neighbouring family, who, conscious of equal desert, had not been so richly rewarded. This was not all. The existing heads of these rival families had stood in the most marked opposition to each other since the commencement of the present troubles.

Montrose, conscious of the superiority of his talents, and of having rendered great service to the Covenanters at the beginning of the war, had expected from that party the supereminence of council and command, which they judged it safer to intrust to the more limited faculties, and more extensive power, of his rival Argyle. The having awarded this preference, was an injury which Montrose never forgave the Covenanters; and he was still less likely to extend his pardon to Argyle, to whom he had been postponed. He was therefore stimulated by every feeling of hatred which could animate a fiery temper in a fierce age, to seek for revenge upon the enemy of his house and person; and it is probable that these private motives operated not a little upon his mind, when he found the principal part of his followers determined rather to undertake an expedition against the territories of Argyle, than to take the far more decisive step of descending at once into the Lowlands.

Yet whatever temptation Montrose found to carry into effect his attack upon Argyleshire, he could not easily bring himself to renounce the splendid achievement of a descent upon the Lowlands. He held more than one council with the principal Chiefs, combating, perhaps, his own secret inclination as well as theirs. He laid before them the extreme difficulty of marching even a Highland army from the eastward into Argyleshire, through passes scarcely practicable for shepherds and deer-stalkers, and over mountains with which even the clans lying nearest to them did not pretend to be thoroughly acquainted. These difficulties were greatly enhanced by the season of the year, which was now advancing towards December, when the mountain-passes, in themselves so difficult, might be expected to be rendered utterly impassable by snow-storms. These objections neither satisfied nor silenced the Chiefs, who insisted upon their ancient mode of making war, by driving the cattle, which, according to the Gaelic phrase, "fed upon the grass of their enemy." The council was dismissed late at night, and without coming to any decision, excepting that the Chiefs, who supported the opinion that Argyle should be invaded, promised to seek out among their followers those who might be most capable of undertaking the office of guides upon the expedition.

Montrose had retired to the cabin which served him for a tent, and stretched himself upon a bed of dry fern, the only place of repose which it afforded. But he courted sleep in vain, for the visions of ambition excluded those of Morpheus. In one moment he imagined himself displaying the royal banner from the reconquered Castle of Edinburgh, detaching assistance to a monarch whose crown depended upon his success, and receiving in requital all the advantages and preferments which could be heaped upon him whom a king delighteth to honour. At another time this dream, splendid as it was, faded before the vision of gratified vengeance, and personal triumph over a personal enemy. To surprise Argyle in his stronghold of Inverary—to crush in him at once the rival of his own house and the chief support of the Presbyterians—to shew the Covenanters the difference between the preferred Argyle and the postponed Montrose, was a picture too flattering to feudal vengeance to be easily relinquished.

While he lay thus busied with contradictory thoughts and feelings, the soldier who stood sentinel upon his quarters announced to the Marquis that two persons desired to speak with his Excellency.

"Their names?" answered Montrose, "and the cause of their urgency at such a late hour?"

On these points, the sentinel, who was one of Colkitto's Irishmen, could afford his General little information; so that Montrose, who at such a period durst refuse access to no one, lest he might have been neglecting some important intelligence, gave directions, as a necessary precaution, to put the guard under arms, and then prepared to receive his untimely visiters. His groom of the chambers had scarce lighted a pair of torches, and Montrose himself had scarce risen from his couch, when two men entered, one wearing a Lowland dress, of shamoy leather worn almost to tatters; the other a tall upright old Highlander, of a complexion which might be termed iron-grey, wasted and worn by frost and tempest.

"What may be your commands with me, my friends?" said the Marquis, his hand almost unconsciously seeking the but of one of his pistols; for the period, as well as the time of night, warranted suspicions which the good mien of his visiters was not by any means calculated to remove.

"I pray leave to congratulate you," said the Lowlander, "my most noble General, and right honourable lord, upon the great battles which you have achieved since I had the fortune to be detached from you. It was a pretty affair that tuilzie at Tippermuir; nevertheless, if I might be permitted to counsel——"

"Before doing so," said the Marquis, "will you be pleased to let me know who is so kind as to favour me with his opinion?"

"Truly, my lord," replied the man, "I should have hoped that was unnecessary, seeing it is not so long since I took on in your service, under promise of a commission as Major, with half a dollar of daily pay and half a dollar of arrears; and I am to trust your lordship has not forgotten my pay as well as my person?"

"My good friend, Major Dalgetty," said Montrose, who by this time perfectly recollected his man, "you must consider what important things have happened to put my friend's faces out of my memory; besides this imperfect light; but all conditions shall be kept.—And what news from Argyleshire, my good Major? We have long given you up for lost, and I was now preparing to take the most signal vengeance upon the old fox who infringed the law of arms in your person."

"Truly, my noble lord," said Dalgetty, "I have no desire that my return should put any stop to so proper and becoming an intention; verily it is in no shape in the Earl of Argyle's favour or mercy that I now stand before you, and I shall be no intercessor for him. But my escape is, under Heaven, and the excellent dexterity which, as an old and accomplished cavalier, I displayed in effecting the same,—I say, under these, it is owing to the assistance of this old Highlander, whom I venture to recommend to your lordship's special favour, as the instrument of saving your lordship's to command, Dugald Dalgetty of Drumthwacket."

"A thankworthy service," said the Marquis, gravely, "which shall certainly be requited in the manner it deserves."

"Kneel down, Ranald," said Major Dalgetty, (as we must now call him,) "kneel down, and kiss his Excellency's hand."

The prescribed form of acknowledgment not being according to the custom of Ranald's country, he contented himself with folding his arms on his bosom, and making a low inclination of his head.

"This poor man, my lord," said Major Dalgetty, continuing his speech with a dignified air of protection towards Ranald M'Eagh, "has strained all his slender means to defend my person from mine enemies, although having no better weapons of a missile sort than bows and arrows, whilk your lordship will hardly believe."

"You will see a great many such weapons in my camp," said Montrose, "and we find them serviceable."[1]

"Serviceable, my lord!" said Dalgetty; "I trust your lordship will permit me to be surprised—bows and arrows!—I trust you will forgive my recommending the substitution of muskets, the first convenient opportunity. But besides defending me, this honest Highlander also was at the pains of curing me, in respect that I had got a touch of the wars in my retreat, which merits my best requital in this special introduction of him to your lordship's notice and protection."

"What is your name, my friend?" said Montrose, turning to the Highlander.

"It may not be spoken," answered the mountaineer.

"That is to say," interpreted Major Dalgetty, "he desires to have his name concealed, in respect he hath in former days taken a castle, slain certain children, and done other things, whilk, as your good lordship knows, are often practised in war time, but excite no benevolence towards the perpetrator in the friends of those who sustain injury. I have known, in my military experience, many brave cavaliers put to death by the boors, simply for having used military licence upon the country."

"I understand," said Montrose: "This person is at feud with some of our followers. Let him retire to the court of guard, and we will think of the best mode of protecting him."

[1] In fact, for the admirers of archery it may be stated, not only that many of the Highlanders in Montrose's army used these antique missiles, but even in England the bow and quiver, once the glory of the bold yeomen of that land, were occasionally used during the great civil wars.

"You hear, Ranald," said Major Dalgetty, with an air of superiority, "his Excellency wishes to hold privy council with me, you must go to the court of guard.—He does not know where that is, poor fellow!—he is a young soldier for so old a man; I will put him under the charge of a sentinel, and return to your lordship incontinent." He did so, and returned accordingly.

Montrose's first inquiry respected the embassy to Inverary; and he listened with attention to Dalgetty's reply, notwithstanding the prolixity of the Major's narrative. It required an effort from the Marquis to maintain his attention; but no one better knew, that where information is to be derived from the report of such agents as Dalgetty, it can only be obtained by suffering them to tell their story in their own way. Accordingly the Marquis's patience was at length rewarded. Among other spoils which the Captain thought himself at liberty to take, was a packet of Argyle's private papers. These he consigned to the hands of his general; a humour of accounting, however, which went no farther, for I do not understand that he made any mention of the purse of gold which he had appropriated at the same time that he made seizure of the papers aforesaid. Snatching a torch from the wall, Montrose was in an instant deeply engaged in the perusal of these documents, in which it is probable he found something to animate his personal resentment against his rival Argyle.

"Does he not fear me?" said he; "then he shall feel me. Will he fire my castle of Murdoch?—Inverary shall raise the first smoke—O for a guide through the skirts of Strath-Fillan!"

Whatever might be Dalgetty's personal conceit, he understood his business sufficiently to guess at Montrose's meaning. He instantly interrupted his own prolix narration of the skirmish which had taken place, and the wound he had received in his retreat, and began to speak to the point which he saw interested his General.

"If," said he, "your Excellency wishes to make an infall into Argyleshire, this poor man, Ranald, of whom I told you, together with his children and companions, know every pass into that land, both leading from the east and from the north."

"Indeed!" said Montrose; "what reason have you to believe their knowledge so extensive?"

"So please your Excellency," answered Dalgetty, "during the weeks that I remained with them for cure of my wound, they were repeatedly obligated to shift their quarters, in respect of Argyle's repeated attempts to repossess himself of the person of an officer who was honoured with your Excellency's confidence; so that I had occasion to admire the singular dexterity and knowledge of the face of the country with which they alternately achieved their retreat and their advance; and when, at length, I was able to repair to your excellency's standard, this honest simple creature, Ranald MacEagh, guided me by paths which my steed Gustavus (which your lordship may remember) trod with perfect safety, so that I said to myself, that where guides, spies, or intelligencers were required in a Highland campaign in that western country, more expert persons than he and his attendants could not possibly be desired."

"And can you answer for this man's fidelity?" said Montrose; "what is his name and condition?"

"He is an outlaw and robber by profession, something also of a homicide or murderer," answered Dalgetty; "and by name, called Ranald MacEagh; whilk signifies, Ranald, the Son of the Mist."

"I should remember something of that name," said Montrose, pausing: "Did not these Children of the Mist perpetrate some act of cruelty upon the M'Aulays?"

Major Dalgetty mentioned the circumstance of the murder of the Forester, and Montrose's active memory at once recalled all the circumstances of the feud.

"It is most unlucky," said Montrose, "this inexpiable quarrel between these men and the M'Aulays. Allan has borne himself bravely in these wars, and possesses, by the wild mystery of his behaviour and language, so much influence over the minds of his countrymen, that the consequences of disobliging him might be serious. At the same time, these men being so capable of rendering useful service, and being, as you say, Major Dalgetty, perfectly trust-worthy——"

"I will pledge my pay and arrears, my horse and arms, my head and neck, upon their fidelity," said the Major; "and your Excellency knows, that a soldado could say no more for his own father."

"True," said Montrose; "but as this is a matter of particular moment, I would willingly know the grounds of so positive an assurance."

"Concisely then, my lord," said the Major, "not only did they disdain to profit by a handsome reward which Argyle did me the honour to place upon this poor head of mine, and not only did they abstain from pillaging my personal property, whilk was to an amount that would have tempted regular soldiers in any service of Europe; and not only did they restore me my horse, whilk your Excellency knows to be of value, but I could not prevail on them to accept one stiver, doit, or maravedi for the trouble and expenses of my sick bed. They actually refused my coined money when freely offered,—a tale seldom to be told in a Christian land."

"I admit," said Montrose, after a moment's reflection, "that their conduct towards you is good evidence of their fidelity; but how to secure against the breaking out of this feud?" He paused, and then suddenly added, "I had forgot I have supped, while you, Major, have been travelling by moonlight."

He called to his attendants to fetch a stoup of wine and some refreshments. Major Dalgetty, who had the appetite of a convalescent returned from Highland quarters, needed not any pressing to partake of what was set before him, but proceeded to despatch his food with such alacrity, that the Marquis, filling a cup of wine, and drinking to his health, could not help remarking, that coarse as the provisions of his camp were, he was afraid Major Dalgetty had fared much worse during his excursion into Argyleshire.

"Your Excellency may take your corporal oath upon that," said the worthy Major, speaking with his mouth full; "for Argyle's bread and water are yet stale and mouldy in my recollection, and though they did their best, yet the viands that the Children of the Mist procured for me, poor helpless creatures as they were, were so unrefreshful to my body, that when enclosed in my armour, whilk I was fain to leave behind me for expedition's sake,

I rattled therein like the shrivelled kernel in a nut that hath been kept on to a second Hallowe'en."

"You must take the due means to repair these losses, Major Dalgetty."

"In troth," answered the soldier, "I shall hardly be able to compass that, unless my arrears are to be exchanged for present pay; for I protest to your Excellency, that the three stone weight which I have lost were simply raised upon the regular accountings of the States of Holland."

"In that case," said the Marquis, "you are only reduced to good marching order. As for the pay, let us once have victory—victory, Major, and your wishes, and all our wishes, shall be amply fulfilled. Meantime, help yourself to another cup of wine."

"To your Excellency's health," said the Major, filling a cup to the brim, to shew the zeal with which he drank the toast, "and victory over all our enemies, and particularly over Argyle! I hope to twitch another handful from his beard myself.—I have had one pluck at it already."

"Very true," answered Montrose; "but to return to these men of the Mist. You understand, Dalgetty, that their presence here, and the purpose for which we employ them, is a secret between you and me?"

Delighted, as Montrose had anticipated, with this mark of his General's confidence, the Major laid his hand upon his nose, and nodded intelligence.

"How many may there be of Ranald's followers?" continued the Marquis.

"They are reduced, so far as I know, to some eight or ten men," answered Major Dalgetty, "and a few women and children."

"Where are they now?" demanded Montrose.

"In a valley, at three miles' distance," answered the soldier, "awaiting your Excellency's command; I judged it not fit to bring them to your leaguer without your Excellency's orders."

"You judged very well," said Montrose; "it would be proper that they remain where they are, or seek some distant place of refuge. I will send them money, though it is a scarce article with me at present."

"It is quite unnecessary," said Major Dalgetty: "your Excellency has only to hint that the M'Aulays are going in that direction, and my friends of the Mist will instantly make volteface, and go to the right about."

"That were scarce courteous," said the Marquis. "Better send them a few dollars to purchase them some cattle for the support of the women and children."

"They know how to come by their cattle at a far cheaper rate," said the Major; "but let it be as your Excellency wills."

"Let Ranald MacEagh," said Montrose, "select one or two of his followers, men whom he can trust, and who are capable of keeping their own secret and ours: these, with their chief for scout-master general, shall serve for our guides. Let them be at my tent to-morrow at daybreak, and see, if possible, that they neither guess my purpose, nor hold any communication with each other in private.—This old man, has he any children?"

"They have been killed or hanged," answered the Major, "to the number of a round dozen, as I believe—but he hath left one grandchild, a smart and hopeful youth, whom I have noted to be never without a pebble in his plaid-nook, to fling at whatsoever might come in his way; being a symbol, that, like David, who was accustomed to sling smooth stones taken from the brook, he may afterwards prove an adventurous warrior."

"That boy, Major Dalgetty," said the Marquis, "I will have to attend upon my own person. I presume he will have sense enough to keep his name secret?"

"Your Excellency need not fear that," answered Dalgetty; "these Highland imps, from the moment they chip the shell——"

"Well," interrupted Montrose, "that boy shall be pledge for the fidelity of his parent, and if he prove faithful, the child's preferment shall be his reward.—And now, Major Dalgetty, I will license your departure for the night; to-morrow you will introduce this MacEagh, under any name or character he may please to assume. I presume his profession has rendered him sufficiently expert in all sort of disguises; or we may admit John of Moidart into our schemes, who has sense, practicability, and intelligence, and will probably allow this man for a time to be disguised as one of his followers. For you, Major, my groom of the chambers will be your quarter-master for this evening."

Major Dalgetty took his leave with a joyful heart, greatly elated with the reception he had met with, and much pleased with the personal manners of his new General, which, as he explained at great length to Ranald MacEagh, reminded him in many respects of the demeanour of the immortal Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, and Bulwark of the Protestant Faith.

CHAPTER XVII.

> The march begins in military state,
> And nations on his eyes suspended wait;
> Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
> And winter barricades the realms of frost,
> He comes,—nor want, nor cold, his course delay.
> *Vanity of Human Wishes.*

By break of day Montrose received in his cabin old MacEagh, and questioned him long and particularly as to the means of approaching the country of Argyle. He made a note of his answers, which he compared with those of two of his followers, whom he introduced as the most prudent and experienced. He found them to correspond in all respects; but, still unsatisfied where precaution was so necessary, the Marquis compared the information he had received with that he was able to collect from the Chiefs who lay most near to the destined scene of invasion, and being in all respects satisfied of its accuracy, he resolved to proceed in full reliance upon it.

In one point Montrose changed his mind. Having judged it unfit to take the boy Kenneth into his own service, lest, in case of his birth being discovered, it should be resented as an offence by the numerous clans who entertained a feudal enmity to this devoted family, he requested the Major to take him in attendance upon himself; and as he accompanied this request with a handsome *douceur*, under pretence of clothing and equipping the lad, this change was agreeable to all parties.

It was about breakfast-time, when Major Dalgetty, being dismissed by Montrose, went in quest of his old acquaintances, Lord Menteith and the M'Aulays, to whom he longed to communicate his own adventures, as well as to learn from them the particulars of the campaign. It may be imagined he was received with great glee by men to whom the late uniformity of their military life had rendered any change of society an interesting novelty. Allan M'Aulay alone seemed to recoil from his former acquaintance, although, when challenged by his brother, he could render no other reason than a reluctance to be familiar with one who had been so lately in the company of Argyle, and other enemies. Major Dalgetty was a little alarmed by this sort of instinctive consciousness which Allan seemed to entertain respecting the society he had been lately keeping; he was soon satisfied, however, that the perceptions of the seer in this particular were not infallible.

As Ranald MacEagh was to be placed under Major Dalgetty's protection and superintendence, it was necessary he should present him to those persons with whom he was most likely to associate. The dress of the old man had, in the meantime, been changed from the tartan of his clan to a sort of clothing peculiar to the men of the distant Isles, resembling a waistcoat with sleeves, and a petticoat, all made in one piece. This dress was laced from top to bottom in front, and bore some resemblance to that called Polonaise, still worn by children in Scotland of the lower rank. The tartan hose and bonnet completed the dress which old men of the last century remembered well to have seen worn by the distant Islesmen who came to the Earl of Mar's standard in the year 1715.

Major Dalgetty, keeping his eye on Allan as he spoke, introduced Ranald MacEagh under the fictitious name of Ranald MacGillihuron in Benbecula, who had escaped with him out of Argyle's prison. He recommended him as a person skilful in the arts of the harper and the senachie, and by no means contemptible in the quality of a second-sighted person, or seer. While making this exposition, Major Dalgetty stammered and hesitated in a way so unlike the usual glib forwardness of his manner, that he could not have failed to have given suspicion to Allan M'Aulay, had not that person's whole attention been engaged in steadily perusing the features of the person thus introduced to him. This steady gaze so much embarrassed Ranald MacEagh, that his hand was beginning to sink down towards his dagger, in expectation of a hostile assault, when Allan, suddenly crossing the floor of the hut, extended his hand to him in the way of friendly greeting. They sat down side by side, and conversed in a low mysterious tone of voice. Menteith and Angus M'Aulay were not surprised at this, for there prevailed among the Highlanders who pretended to the second-sight a sort of freemasonry, which generally induced them, upon meeting, to hold communication with each other on the nature and extent of their visionary experiences.

"Does the sight come gloomy upon your spirits?" said Allan to his new acquaintance.

"As dark as the shadow upon the moon," replied Ranald, "when she is darkened in her midcourse in heaven, and prophets foretell of evil times."

"Come hither," said Allan, "come more this way, I would converse with you apart; for men say that in your distant islands the sight is poured forth with more clearness and power than upon us, who dwell near the Sassenach."

While they were plunged into their mystic conference, the two English cavaliers entered the cabin in the highest possible spirits, and announced to Angus M'Aulay that orders had been issued that all should hold themselves in readiness for an immediate march to the westward. Having delivered themselves of their news with much glee, they paid their compliments to their old acquaintance Major Dalgetty, whom they instantly recognized, and inquired after the health of his charger, Gustavus.

"I humbly thank you, gentlemen," answered the soldier, "Gustavus is well, though, like his master, somewhat barer on the ribs than when you offered to relieve me of him at Darnlinvarach; and let me assure you, that before you have made one or two of those marches which you seem to contemplate with so much satisfaction in prospect, you will leave, my good knights, some of your English beef, and probably an English horse or two, behind you."

Both exclaimed that they cared very little what they found or what they left, provided the scene changed from dogging up and down Angus and Aberdeenshire, in pursuit of an enemy who would neither fight nor run away.

"If such be the case," said Angus M'Aulay, "I must give orders to my followers, and make provision too for the safe conveyance of Annot Lyle; for an advance into M'Callum More's country will be a farther and fouler road than these pinks of Cumbrian knighthood are aware of." So saying, he left the cabin.

"Annot Lyle!" repeated Dalgetty, "is she following the campaign?"

"Surely," replied Sir Giles Musgrave, his eye glancing slightly from Lord Menteith to Allan M'Aulay; "we could neither march nor fight, advance nor retreat, without the influence of the Princess of Harps."

"The princess of Broadswords and Targets, I say," answered his companion; "for the Lady of Montrose herself could not be more courteously waited upon; she has four Highland maidens, and as many bare-legged gillies to wait upon her orders."

"And what would you have, gentlemen?" said Allan, turning suddenly from the Highlander with whom he was in conversation; "would you yourselves have left an innocent female, the companion of your infancy, to die by violence, or perish by famine? There is not, by this time, a roof upon the habitation of my fathers — our crops have been destroyed, and our cattle have been driven — and you, gentlemen, have to bless God, that, coming from a milder and more civilized country, you expose only your own lives in this remorseless war, without apprehension that your enemies will visit with their vengeance the defenceless pledges you may have left behind you."

The Englishmen cordially agreed that they had the superiority in this respect; and the company, now dispersing, went each to his several charge or occupation.

Allan lingered a moment behind, still questioning the reluctant Ranald MacEagh upon a point in his supposed visions, by which he was greatly perplexed. "Repeatedly," he said, "have I had the sight of a Gael, who seemed to plunge his weapon into the body of Menteith, — of that young noble-

man in the scarlet laced cloak, who has just now left the bothy. But by no effort, though I have gazed till my eyes were almost fixed in their sockets, can I discover the face of this Highlander, or even conjecture who he may be, although his person and air seem familiar to me."[1]

"Have you reversed your own plaid," said Ranald, "according to the rule of the experienced Seers in such case?"

"I have," answered Allan, speaking low, and shuddering as if with internal agony.

"And in what guise did the phantom then appear to you?" said Ranald.

"With his plaid also reversed," answered Allan, in the same low and convulsed tone.

"Then be assured," said Ranald, "that your own hand, and none other, will do the deed of which you have witnessed the shadow."

"So has my anxious soul a hundred times surmised," replied Allan. "But it is impossible! Were I to read the record in the eternal book of fate, I would declare it impossible—we are bound by the ties of blood, and by a hundred ties more intimate—we have stood side by side in battle, and our swords have reeked with the blood of the same enemies—it is IMPOSSIBLE I should harm him!"

"That you WILL do so," answered Ranald, "is certain, though the cause be hid in the darkness of futurity. You say," he continued, suppressing his own emotions with difficulty, "that side by side you have pursued your prey like bloodhounds—have you never seen bloodhounds turn their fangs against each other, and fight over the body of a throttled deer?"

"It is false!" said M'Aulay, starting up, "these are not the forebodings of fate, but the temptation of some evil spirit from the bottomless pit!" So saying, he strode out of the cabin.

"Thou hast it," said the Son of the Mist, looking after him with an air of exultation; "the barbed arrow is in thy side! Spirits of the slaughtered, rejoice! soon shall your murderers' swords be dyed in each other's blood."

On the succeeding morning all was prepared, and Montrose advanced by rapid marches up the river Tay, and poured his desultory forces into the romantic vale around the lake of the same name, which lies at the head of that river. The inhabitants were Campbells, not indeed the vassals of Argyle, but of the allied and kindred house of Glenorchy, which now bears the name of Breadalbane. Being taken by surprise, they were totally unprepared for resistance, and were compelled to be passive witnesses of the ravages which took place among their flocks and herds. Advancing in this manner to the vale of Loch Dochart, and laying waste the country around him, Montrose reached the most difficult point of his enterprise.

To a modern army, even with the assistance of the good military road which now leads up by Teinedrum to the head of Loch Awe, the passage of these extensive wilds would seem a task of some difficulty. But at this period, and for long afterwards, there was no road or path whatsoever; and to add to the difficulty, the mountains were already covered with snow. It was a sublime scene to look up to them, piled in great masses, one upon another, the front rank of dazzling whiteness, while those which arose behind them caught a rosy tint from the setting of a clear wintry sun. Ben Cruachan, superior in magnitude, and seeming the very citadel of the Genius of the region, rose high above the others, shewing his glimmering and scathed peak to the distance of many miles.

The followers of Montrose were men not to be daunted by the sublime yet terrible prospect before them. Many of them were of that ancient race of Highlanders, who not only willingly made their couch in the snow, but considered it as effeminate luxury to use a snowball for a pillow. Plunder and revenge lay beyond the frozen mountains which they beheld, and they did not permit themselves to be daunted by the difficulty of traversing them. Montrose did not allow their spirits time to subside. He ordered the pipes to play in the van the ancient pibroch entitled, "*Hoggil nam bo*," &c. (that is, We come through snow-drift to drive the prey;) the shrilling sounds of which had often struck the vales

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[1] A species of apparition, similar to what the Germans call a Double-Ganger, was believed in by the Celtic tribes, and is still considered as an emblem of misfortune or death. Mr Kirke, (see Note G to Rob Roy,) the minister of Aberfoil, who will no doubt be able to tell us more of the matter should he ever come back from Fairy-land, gives us the following:—

"Some men of that exalted sight, either by art or nature, have told me they have seen at these meetings a double man, or the shape of some man in two places, that is, a superterranean and a subterranean inhabitant perfectly resembling one another in all points, whom he, notwithstanding, could easily distinguish one from another by some secret tokens and operations, and so go speak to the man his neighbour and familiar, passing by the apparition or resemblance of him. They avouch that every element and different state of being have animals resembling those of another element, as there be fishes at sea resembling Monks of late order in all their hoods and dresses, so as the Roman invention of good and bad dæmons and guardian angels particularly assigned, is called by them ane ignorant mistake, springing only from this originall. They call this reflex man a Co-Walker, every way like the man, as a twin-brother and companion haunting him as his shadow, as is that seen and known among men resembling the originall, both before and after the originall is dead, and was also often seen of old to enter a hous, by which the people knew that the person of that liknes was to visit them within a few days. This copy, echo, or living picture, goes at last to his own herd. It accompanied that person so long and frequently for ends best known to its selve, whether to guard him from the secret assaults of some of its own folks, or only as an sportfull ape to counterfeit all his actions."—KIRKE'S *Secret Commonwealth*, p. 3.

The two following apparitions, resembling the vision of Allan M'Aulay in the text, occur in Theophilus Insulanus, (Rev. Mr Fraser's Treatise on the Second Sight, Relations x. and xvii.)

"Barbara Macpherson, relict of the deceased Mr Alexander MacLeod, late minister of St Kilda, informed me the natives of that island had particular kind of second sight, which is always a forerunner of their approaching end. Some months before they sicken, they are haunted with an apparition, resembling themselves in all respects as to their person, features, or clothing. This image, seemingly animated, walks with them in the field in broad daylight; and if they are employed in delving, harrowing, seed-sowing, or any other occupation, they are at the same time mimicked by this ghostly visitant. My informer added farther, that having visited a sick person of the inhabitants, she had the curiosity to inquire of him, if at any time he had seen any resemblance of himself as above described; he answered in the affirmative, and told her, that to make farther trial, as he was going out of his house of a morning, he put on straw-rope garters instead of those he formerly used, and having gone to the fields, his other self appeared in such garters. The conclusion was, the sick man died of that ailment, and she no longer questioned the truth of those remarkable presages."

"Margaret MacLeod, an honest woman advanced in years, informed me, that when she was a young woman in the family of Grishornish, a dairy-maid, who daily used to herd the calves in a park close to the house, observed, at different times, a woman resembling herself in shape and attire, walking solitarily at no great distance from her, and being surprised at the apparition, to make further trial, she put the back part of her upper garment foremost, and anon the phantom was dressed in the same manner, which made her uneasy, believing it portended some fatal consequence to herself. In a short time thereafter she was seized with a fever, which brought her to her end, and before her sickness and on her death-bed, declared the second sight to several."

of the Lennox with terror.[1] The troops advanced with the nimble alacrity of mountaineers, and were soon involved in the dangerous pass, through which Ranald acted as their guide, going before them with a select party, to track out the way.

The power of man at no time appears more contemptible than when it is placed in contrast with scenes of natural terror and dignity. The victorious army of Montrose, whose exploits had struck terror into all Scotland, when ascending up this terrific pass, seemed a contemptible handful of stragglers, in the act of being devoured by the jaws of the mountain, which appeared ready to close upon them. Even Montrose half repented the boldness of his attempt, as he looked down from the summit of the first eminence which he attained, upon the scattered condition of his small army. The difficulty of getting forward was so great, that considerable gaps began to occur in the line of march, and the distance between the van, centre, and rear, was each moment increased in a degree equally incommodious and dangerous. It was with great apprehension that Montrose looked upon every point of advantage which the hill afforded, in dread it might be found occupied by an enemy prepared for defence; and he often afterwards was heard to express his conviction, that had the passes of Strath-Fillan been defended by two hundred resolute men, not only would his progress have been effectually stopped, but his army must have been in danger of being totally cut off. Security, however, the bane of many a strong country, and many a fortress, betrayed, on this occasion, the district of Argyle to his enemies. The invaders had only to contend with the natural difficulties of the path, and with the snow, which, fortunately, had not fallen in any great quantity. The army no sooner reached the summit of the ridge of hills dividing Argyleshire from the district of Breadalbane, than they rushed down upon the devoted vales beneath them with a fury sufficiently expressive of the motives which had dictated a movement so difficult and hazardous.

Montrose divided his army into three bodies, in order to produce a wider and more extensive terror, one of which was commanded by the Captain of Clan Ranald, one intrusted to the leading of Colkitto, and the third remained under his own direction. He was thus enabled to penetrate the country of Argyle at three different points. Resistance there was none. The flight of the shepherds from the hills had first announced in the peopled districts this formidable irruption, and wherever the clansmen were summoned out, they were killed, disarmed, and dispersed, by an enemy who had anticipated their motions. Major Dalgetty, who had been sent forward against Inverary with the few horse of the army that were fit for service, managed his matters so well, that he had very nearly surprised Argyle, as he expressed it, *inter pocula;* and it was only a rapid flight by water which saved that chief from death or captivity. But the punishment which Argyle himself escaped fell heavily upon his country and clan, and the ravages committed by Montrose on that devoted land, although too consistent with the genius of the country and times have been repeatedly and justly quoted as a blot on his actions and character.

Argyle in the meantime had fled to Edinburgh, to lay his complaints before the Convention of Estates. To meet the exigence of the moment, a considerable army was raised under General Baillie, a Presbyterian officer of skill and fidelity, with whom was joined in command the celebrated Sir John Urrie, a soldier of fortune like Dalgetty, who had already changed sides twice during the Civil War, and was destined to turn his coat a third time before it was ended. Argyle also, burning with indignation, proceeded to levy his own numerous forces, in order to avenge himself of his feudal enemy. He established his head-quarters at Dunbarton, where he was soon joined by a considerable force, consisting chiefly of his own clansmen and dependents. Being there joined by Baillie and Urrie, with a very considerable army of regular forces, he prepared to march into Argyleshire, and chastise the invader of his paternal territories.

But Montrose, while these two formidable armies were forming a junction, had been recalled from that ravaged country by the approach of a third, collected in the north under the Earl of Seaforth, who, after some hesitation, having embraced the side of the Covenanters, had now, with the assistance of the veteran garrison of Inverness, formed a considerable army, with which he threatened Montrose from Inverness-shire. Enclosed in a wasted and unfriendly country, and menaced on each side by advancing enemies of superior force, it might have been supposed that Montrose's destruction was certain. But these were precisely the circumstances under which the active and enterprising genius of the Great Marquis was calculated to excite the wonder and admiration of his friends, the astonishment and terror of his enemies. As if by magic, he collected his scattered forces from the wasteful occupation in which they had been engaged; and scarce were they again united, ere Argyle and his associate generals were informed, that the royalists, having suddenly disappeared from Argyleshire, had retreated northwards among the dusky and impenetrable mountains of Lochaber.

The sagacity of the generals opposed to Montrose, immediately conjectured, that it was the purpose of their active antagonist to fight with, and, if possible, to destroy Seaforth, ere they could come to his assistance. This occasioned a corresponding change in their operations. Leaving this chieftain to make the best defence he could, Urrie and Baillie again separated their forces from those of Argyle; and, having chiefly horse and Lowland troops under their command, they kept the southern side of the Grampian ridge, moving along eastward into the county of Angus, resolving from thence to proceed into Aberdeenshire, in order to intercept Montrose, if he should attempt to escape in that direction.

Argyle, with his own levies and other troops, undertook to follow Montrose's march; so that, in case he should come to action either with Seaforth, or with Baillie and Urrie, he might be placed between two fires by this third army, which, at a secure distance, was to hang upon his rear.

For this purpose, Argyle once more moved towards Inverary, having an opportunity, at every step, to deplore the severities which the hostile clans had exercised on his dependents and country Whatever noble qualities the Highlanders possessed,

[1] It is the family march of the M'Farlanes, a warlike and predatory clan, who inhabited the western banks of Loch-Lomond. See Note BB, to Waverley.

and they had many, clemency in treating a hostile country was not of the number; but even the ravages of hostile troops combined to swell the number of Argyle's followers. It is still a Highland proverb, He whose house is burnt must become a soldier; and hundreds of the inhabitants of these unfortunate valleys had now no means of maintenance, save by exercising upon others the severities they had themselves sustained, and no future prospect of happiness, excepting in the gratification of revenge. His bands were, therefore, augmented by the very circumstances which had desolated his country, and Argyle soon found himself at the head of three thousand determined men, distinguished for activity and courage, and commanded by gentlemen of his own name, who yielded to none in those qualities. Under himself, he conferred the principal command upon Sir Duncan Campbell of Ardenvohr, and another Sir Duncan Campbell of Auchenbreck,[1] an experienced and veteran soldier, whom he had recalled from the wars of Ireland for this purpose. The cold spirit of Argyle himself, however, clogged the military councils of his more intrepid assistants; and it was resolved, notwithstanding their increased force, to observe the same plan of operations, and to follow Montrose cautiously, in whatever direction he should march, avoiding an engagement until an opportunity should occur of falling upon his rear, while he should be engaged with another enemy in front.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Piobracht au Donuil-dhu,
Piobrachet au Donuil,
Piobrachet agus S'breittach
Feacht an Innerlochy.

The war-tune of Donald the Black,
The war-tune of Black Donald,
The pipes and the banner
Are up in the rendezvous of Inverlochy.

The military road connecting the chain of forts, as it is called, and running in the general line of the present Caledonian canal, has now completely opened the great glen, or chasm, extending almost across the whole island, once doubtless filled by the sea, and still affording basins for that long line of lakes, by means of which modern art has united the German and Atlantic Oceans. The paths or tracks by which the natives traversed this extensive valley, were, in 1645-6, in the same situation as when they awaked the strain of an Irish engineer officer, who had been employed in converting them into practicable military roads, and whose eulogium begins, and, for aught I know, ends, as follows:

"Had you seen but these roads before they were made,
You would have held up your hands and bless'd General Wade."

But, bad as the ordinary paths were, Montrose avoided them, and led his army, like a herd of wild deer, from mountain to mountain, and from forest to forest, where his enemies could learn nothing of his motions, while he acquired the most perfect knowledge respecting theirs from the friendly clans of Cameron and M'Donnell, whose mountainous districts he now traversed. Strict orders had been given that Argyle's advance should be watched, and that all intelligence respecting his motions should be communicated instantly to the General himself.

It was a moonlight night, and Montrose, worn out by the fatigues of the day, was laid down to sleep in a miserable shieling. He had only slumbered two hours, when some one touched his shoulder. He looked up, and, by the stately form and deep voice, easily recognized the Chief of the Camerons.

"I have news for you," said that leader, "which is worth while to arise and listen to."

"M'Ilduy[2] can bring no other," said Montrose, addressing the Chief by his patronymic title—"are they good or bad?"

"As you may take them," said the Chieftain.

"Are they certain?" demanded Montrose.

"Yes," answered M'Ilduy, "or another messenger should have brought them. Know that, tired with the task imposed upon me of accompanying that unhappy Dalgetty and his handful of horse, who detained me for hours on the march at the pace of a crippled badger, I made a stretch of four miles with six of my people in the direction of Inverlochy, and there met with Ian of Glenroy, who had been out for intelligence. Argyle is moving upon Inverlochy with three thousand chosen men, commanded by the flower of the sons of Diarmid.—These are my news—they are certain—it is for you to construe their purport."

"Their purport must be good," answered Montrose, readily and cheerfully; "the voice of Mac-Ilduy is ever pleasant in the ears of Montrose, and most pleasant when it speaks of some brave enterprize at hand—What are our musters?"

He then called for light, and easily ascertained that a great part of his followers having, as usual, dispersed to secure their booty, he had not with him above twelve or fourteen hundred men.

"Not much above a third," said Montrose, pausing, "of Argyle's force, and Highlanders opposed to Highlanders.—With the blessing of God upon the royal cause, I would not hesitate were the odds but one to two."

"Then do not hesitate," said Cameron; "for when your trumpets shall sound to attack M'Callum More, not a man of these glens will remain deaf to the summons. Glengarry—Keppoch—I myself—would destroy, with fire and sword, the wretch who should remain behind under any pretence whatsoever. To-morrow, or the next day, shall be a day of battle to all who bear the name of M'Donnell or Cameron, whatever be the event."

"It is gallantly said, my noble friend," said Montrose, grasping his hand, "and I were worse than a coward did I not do justice to such followers, by entertaining the most indubitable hopes of success. We will turn back on this M'Callum More, who follows us like a raven to devour the relics of our army, should we meet braver men who may be able to break its strength! Let the Chiefs and leaders be called together as quickly as possible; and you, who have brought us the first news of this joyful event,—for such it shall be,—you, M'Ilduy, shall bring it to a joyful issue, by guiding us the best and nearest road against our enemy."

[1] This last character is historical.

[2] Mhich-Connel Dhu,—the descendant of Black Donald.

"That will I willingly do," said M'Ilduy; "if I have shewn you paths by which to retreat through these dusky wilds, with far more readiness will I teach you how to advance against your foe."

A general bustle now prevailed, and the leaders were everywhere startled from the rude couches on which they had sought temporary repose.

"I never thought," said Major Dalgetty, when summoned up from a handful of rugged heather roots, "to have parted from a bed as hard as a stable broom with such bad will; but, indubitably, having but one man of military experience in his army, his Excellency the Marquis may be vindicated in putting him upon hard duty."

So saying, he repaired to the council, where, notwithstanding his pedantry, Montrose seemed always to listen to him with considerable attention; partly because the Major really possessed military knowledge and experience, and often made suggestions which were found of advantage, and partly because it relieved the General from the necessity of deferring entirely to the opinion of the Highland Chiefs, and gave him additional ground for disputing it when it was not agreeable to his own. On the present occasion, Dalgetty joyfully acquiesced in the proposal of marching back and confronting Argyle, which he compared to the valiant resolution of the great Gustavus, who moved against the Duke of Bavaria, and enriched his troops by the plunder of that fertile country, although menaced from the northward by the large army which Wallenstein had assembled in Bohemia.

The Chiefs of Glengarry, Keppoch, and Lochiel, whose clans, equal in courage and military fame to any in the Highlands, lay within the neighbourhood of the scene of action, despatched the fiery cross through their vassals, to summon every one who could bear arms to meet the King's lieutenant, and to join the standards of their respective Chiefs as they marched towards Inverlochy. As the order was emphatically given, it was speedily and willingly obeyed. Their natural love of war, their zeal for the royal cause,—for they viewed the King in the light of a chief whom his clansmen had deserted,—as well as their implicit obedience to their own patriarch, drew in to Montrose's army not only all in the neighbourhood who were able to bear arms, but some who, in age at least, might have been esteemed past the use of them. During the next day's march, which, being directed straight through the mountains of Lochaber, was unsuspected by the enemy, his forces were augmented by handfuls of men issuing from each glen, and ranging themselves under the banners of their respective Chiefs. This was a circumstance highly inspiriting to the rest of the army, who, by the time they approached the enemy, found their strength increased considerably more than one-fourth, as had been prophesied by the valiant leader of the Camerons.

While Montrose executed this counter-march, Argyle had, at the head of his gallant army, advanced up the southern side of Loch-Eil, and reached the river Lochy, which combines that lake with Loch-Lochy. The ancient Castle of Inverlochy, once, as it is said, a royal fortress, and still, although dismantled, a place of some strength and consideration, offered convenient head-quarters, and there was ample room for Argyle's army to encamp around him in the valley, where the Lochy joins Loch-Eil. Several barges had attended, loaded with provisions, so that they were in every respect as well accommodated as such an army wished or expected to be. Argyle, in council with Auchenbreck and Ardenvohr, expressed his full confidence that Montrose was now on the brink of destruction; that his troops must gradually diminish as he moved eastward through such uncouth paths; that if he went westward, he must encounter Urrie and Baillie; if northward, fall into the hands of Seaforth; or should he choose any halting-place, he would expose himself to be attacked by three armies at once.

"I cannot rejoice in the prospect, my lord," said Auchenbreck, "that James Grahame will be crushed with little assistance of ours. He has left a heavy account in Argyleshire against him, and I long to reckon with him drop of blood for drop of blood. I love not the payment of such debts by third hands."

"You are too scrupulous," said Argyle; "what signifies it by whose hands the blood of the Grahames is spilt? It is time that of the sons of Diarmid should cease to flow.—What say you, Ardenvohr?"

"I say, my lord," replied Sir Duncan, "that I think Auchenbreck will be gratified, and will himself have a personal opportunity of settling accounts with Montrose for his depradations. Reports have reached our outposts that the Camerons are assembling their full strength on the skirts of Ben-Nevis; this must be to join the advance of Montrose, and not to cover his retreat."

"It must be some scheme of harassing and depredation," said Argyle, "devised by the inveterate malignity of M'Ilduy, which he terms loyalty. They can intend no more than an attack on our outposts, or some annoyance to to-morrow's march."

"I have sent out scouts," said Sir Duncan, "in every direction, to procure intelligence; and we must soon hear whether they really do assemble any force, upon what point, or with what purpose."

It was late ere any tidings were received; but when the moon had arisen, a considerable bustle in the camp, and a noise immediately after heard in the castle, announced the arrival of important intelligence. Of the scouts first dispersed by Ardenvohr, some had returned without being able to collect any thing, save uncertain rumours concerning movements in the country of the Camerons. It seemed as if the skirts of Ben-Nevis, were sending forth those unaccountable and portentous sounds with which they sometimes announce the near approach of a storm. Others, whose zeal carried them farther upon their mission, were entrapped and slain, or made prisoners, by the inhabitants of the fastnesses into which they endeavoured to penetrate. At length, on the rapid advance of Montrose's army, his advanced guard and the outposts of Argyle became aware of each other's presence, and after exchanging a few musket-shots and arrows, fell back to their respective main bodies, to convey intelligence and receive orders.

Sir Duncan Campbell, and Auchenbreck, instantly threw themselves on horseback, in order to visit the state of the outposts; and Argyle maintained his character of commander-in-chief with reputation, by making a respectable arrangement of his forces in the plain, as it was evident that they might now expect a night alarm, or an attack in the morning at farthest. Montrose had kept his forces so cautiously within the defiles of the mountain, that no effort which Auchenbreck or

Ardenvohr thought it prudent to attempt, could ascertain his probable strength. They were aware, however, that, at the utmost computation, it must be inferior to their own, and they returned to Argyle to inform him of the amount of their observations; but that nobleman refused to believe that Montrose could be in presence himself. He said, "It was a madness, of which even James Grahame, in his height of presumptuous frenzy, was incapable; and he doubted not that their march was only impeded by their ancient enemies, Glenco, Keppoch, and Glengarry; and perhaps M'Vourigh, with his M'Phersons, might have assembled a force, which he knew must be greatly inferior in numbers to his own, and whom, therefore, he doubted not to disperse by force, or by terms of capitulation."

The spirits of Argyle's followers was high, breathing vengeance for the disasters which their country had so lately undergone; and the night passed in anxious hopes that the morning might dawn upon their vengeance. The outposts of either army kept a careful watch, and the soldiers of Argyle slept in the order of battle which they were next day to occupy.

A pale dawn had scarce begun to tinge the tops of these immense mountains, when the leaders of both armies prepared for the business of the day. It was the second of February, 1645-6. The clansmen of Argyle were arranged in two lines, not far from the angle between the river and the lake, and made an appearance equally resolute and formidable. Auchenbreck would willingly have commenced the battle by an attack on the outposts of the enemy, but Argyle, with more cautious policy, preferred receiving to making the onset. Signals were soon heard, that they would not long wait for it in vain. The Campbells could distinguish, in the gorge of the mountains, the war-tunes of various clans as they advanced to the onset. That of the Camerons, which bears the ominous words, addressed to the wolves and ravens, "Come to me, and I will give you flesh," was loudly re-echoed from their native glens. In the language of the Highland bards, the war voice of Glengarry was not silent; and the gathering tunes of other tribes could be plainly distinguished, as they successively came up to the extremity of the passes from which they were to descend into the plain.

"You see," said Argyle to his kinsmen, "it is as I said, we have only to deal with our neighbours; James Grahame has not ventured to shew us his banner."

At this moment there resounded from the gorge of the pass a lively flourish of trumpets, in that note with which it was the ancient Scottish fashion to salute the royal standard.

"You may hear, my lord, from yonder signal," said Sir Duncan Campbell, "that he who pretends to be the King's Lieutenant, must be in person among these men."

"And has probably horse with him," said Auchenbreck, "which I could not have anticipated. But shall we look pale for that, my lord, when we have foes to fight, and wrongs to revenge?"

Argyle was silent, and looked upon his arm, which hung in a sash, owing to a fall which he had sustained in a preceding march.

"It is true," interrupted Ardenvohr, eagerly, "my Lord of Argyle, you are disabled from using either sword or pistol; you must retire on board the galleys — your life is precious to us as a head — your hand cannot be useful to us as a soldier."

"No," said Argyle, pride contending with irresolution, "it shall never be said that I fled before Montrose; if I cannot fight, I will at least die in the midst of my children."

Several other principal Chiefs of the Campbells, with one voice, conjured and obtested their Chieftain to leave them for that day to the leading of Ardenvohr and Auchenbreck, and to behold the conflict from a distance and in safety.—We dare not stigmatize Argyle with poltroonery; for, though his life was marked by no action of bravery, yet he behaved with so much composure and dignity in the final and closing scene, that his conduct upon the present and similar occasions, should be rather imputed to indecision than to want of courage. But when the small still voice within a man's own breast, which tells him that his life is of consequence to himself, is seconded by that of numbers around him, who assure him that it is of equal advantage to the public, history affords many examples of men more habitually daring than Argyle, who have consulted self-preservation when the temptations to it were so powerfully increased.

"See him on board, if you will, Sir Duncan," said Auchenbreck to his kinsman; "It must be my duty to prevent this spirit from spreading farther among us."

So saying, he threw himself among the ranks, entreating, commanding, and conjuring the soldiers, to remember their ancient fame and their present superiority; the wrongs they had to revenge, if successful, and the fate they had to dread, if vanquished; and imparting to every bosom a portion of the fire which glowed in his own. Slowly, meanwhile, and apparently with reluctance, Argyle suffered himself to be forced by his officious kinsmen to the verge of the lake, and was transported on board of a galley, from the deck of which he surveyed with more safety than credit the scene which ensued.

Sir Duncan Campbell of Ardenvohr, notwithstanding the urgency of the occasion, stood with his eyes riveted on the boat which bore his Chieftain from the field of battle. There were feelings in his bosom which could not be expressed; for the character of a Chief was that of a father, and the heart of a clansman durst not dwell upon his failings with critical severity as upon those of other men. Argyle, too, harsh and severe to others, was generous and liberal among his kinsmen, and the noble heart of Ardenvohr was wrung with bitter anguish when he reflected to what interpretation his present conduct might subject him.

"It is better it should be so," said he to himself, devouring his own emotion; "but —— of his line of a hundred sires, I know not one who would have retired while the banner of Diarmid waved in the wind, in the face of its most inveterate foes!"

A loud shout now compelled him to turn, and to hasten with all despatch to his post, which was on the right flank of Argyle's little army.

The retreat of Argyle had not passed unobserved by his watchful enemy, who, occupying the superior ground, could mark every circumstance which passed below. The movement of three or four

horsemen to the rear shewed that those who retreated were men of rank.

"They are going," said Dalgetty, "to put their horses out of danger, like prudent cavaliers. Yonder goes Sir Duncan Campbell, riding a brown bay gelding, which I had marked for my own second charger."

"You are wrong, Major," said Montrose, with a bitter smile, "they are saving their precious Chief. — Give the signal for assault instantly — send the word through the ranks. — Gentlemen, noble Chiefs, Glengarry, Keppoch, M'Vourigh, upon them instantly! — Ride to M'Ilduy, Major Dalgetty, and tell them to charge as he loves Lochaber — return and bring our handful of horse to my standard. They shall be placed with the Irish as a reserve."

CHAPTER XIX.

As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Inisfail met Lochlin.
OSSIAN.

THE trumpets and bagpipes, those clamorous harbingers of blood and death, at once united in the signal for onset, which was replied to by the cry of more than two thousand warriors, and the echoes of the mountain glens behind them. Divided into three bodies, or columns, the Highland followers of Montrose poured from the defiles which had hitherto concealed them from their enemies, and rushed with the utmost determination upon the Campbells, who waited their charge with the greatest firmness. Behind these charging columns marched in line the Irish, under Colkitto, intended to form the reserve. With them was the royal standard, and Montrose himself; and on the flanks were about fifty horse, under Dalgetty, which by wonderful exertions had been kept in some sort fit for service.

The right column of Royalists was led by Glengarry, the left by Lochiel, and the centre by the Earl of Menteith, who preferred fighting on foot in a Highland dress to remaining with the cavalry.

The Highlanders poured on with the proverbial fury of their country, firing their guns, and discharging their arrows, at a little distance from the enemy, who received the assault with the most determined gallantry. Better provided with musketry than their enemies, stationary also, and therefore taking the more decisive aim, the fire of Argyle's followers was more destructive than that which they sustained. The royal clans, perceiving this, rushed to close quarters, and succeeded on two points in throwing their enemies into disorder. With regular troops this must have achieved a victory; but here Highlanders were opposed to Highlanders, and the nature of the weapons, as well as the agility of those who wielded them, was equal on both sides.

Their strife was accordingly desperate; and the clash of the swords and axes, as they encountered each other, or rung upon the targets, was mingled with the short, wild, animating shrieks with which Highlanders accompany the battle, the dance, or indeed violent exertion of any kind. Many of the foes opposed were personally acquainted, and sought to match themselves with each other from motives of hatred, or a more generous emulation of valour. Neither party would retreat an inch, while the place of those who fell (and they fell fast on both sides) was eagerly supplied by others, who thronged to the front of danger. A steam, like that which arises from a seething cauldron, rose into the thin, cold, frosty air, and hovered above the combatants.

So stood the fight on the right and the centre, with no immediate consequence, except mutual wounds and death.

On the right of the Campbells, the Knight of Ardenvohr obtained some advantage, through his military skill and by strength of numbers. He had moved forward obliquely the extreme flank of his line at the instant the Royalists were about to close, so that they sustained a fire at once on front and in flank, and, despite the utmost efforts of their leader, were thrown into some confusion. At this instant, Sir Duncan Campbell gave the word to charge, and thus unexpectedly made the attack at the very moment he seemed about to receive it. Such a change of circumstances is always discouraging, and often fatal. But the disorder was remedied by the advance of the Irish reserve, whose heavy and sustained fire compelled the Knight of Ardenvohr to forego his advantage, and content himself with repulsing the enemy. The Marquis of Montrose, in the meanwhile, availing himself of some scattered birch trees, as well as of the smoke produced by the close fire of the Irish musketry, which concealed the operation, called upon Dalgetty to follow him with the horse, and wheeling round so as to gain the right flank and even the rear of the enemy, he commanded his six trumpets to sound the charge. The clang of the cavalry trumpets, and the noise of the galloping of the horse, produced an effect upon Argyle's right wing which no other sounds could have impressed them with. The mountaineers of that period had a superstitious dread of the war-horse, like that entertained by the Peruvians, and had many strange ideas respecting the manner in which that animal was trained to combat. When therefore they found their ranks unexpectedly broken, and that the objects of their greatest terror were suddenly in the midst of them, the panic, in spite of Sir Duncan's attempts to stop it, became universal. Indeed, the figure of Major Dalgetty alone, sheathed in impenetrable armour, and making his horse caracole and bound, so as to give weight to every blow which he struck, would have been a novelty in itself sufficient to terrify those who had never seen any thing more nearly resembling such a cavalier, than a *shelty* waddling under a Highlander far bigger than itself. The repulsed Royalists returned to the charge; the Irish, keeping their ranks, maintained a fire equally close and destructive. There was no sustaining the fight longer. Argyle's followers began to break and fly, most towards the lake, the remainder in different directions. The defeat of the right wing, of itself decisive, was rendered irreparable by the death of Auchenbreck, who fell while endeavouring to restore order.

The Knight of Ardenvohr, with two or three hundred men, all gentlemen of descent and distinguished gallantry,—for the Campbells are supposed to have had more gentlemen in their ranks than any of the Highland clans, — endeavoured, with unavailing heroism, to cover the tumultuary

retreat of the common file. Their resolution only proved fatal to themselves, as they were charged again and again by fresh adversaries, and forced to separate from each other, until at length their aim seemed only to be to purchase an honourable death by resisting to the very last.

"Good quarter, Sir Duncan," called out Major Dalgetty, when he discovered his late host, with one or two others, defending himself against several Highlanders; and, to enforce his offer, he rode up to him with his sword uplifted. Sir Duncan's reply was the discharge of a reserved pistol, which took effect not on the person of the rider, but on that of his gallant horse, which, shot through the heart, fell dead under him. Ranald MacEagh, who was one of those who had been pressing Sir Duncan hard, took the opportunity to cut him down with his broadsword, as he turned from him in the act of firing the pistol.

Allan M'Aulay came up at this moment. They were, excepting Ranald, followers of his brother who were engaged on that part of the field. "Villains!" he said, "which of you has dared to do this, when it was my positive order that the Knight of Ardenvohr should be taken alive?"

Half-a-dozen of busy hands, which were emulously employed in plundering the fallen knight, whose arms and accoutrements were of a magnificence befitting his quality, instantly forebore the occupation, and half the number of voices exculpated themselves, by laying the blame on the Skyeman, as they called Ranald MacEagh.

"Dog of an Islander!" said Allan, forgetting, in his wrath, their prophetic brotherhood, "follow the chase, and harm him no farther, unless you mean to die by my hand." They were at this moment left almost alone; for Allan's threats had forced his own clan from the spot, and all around had pressed onwards towards the lake, carrying before them noise, terror, and confusion, and leaving behind only the dead and dying. The moment was tempting to MacEagh's vengeful spirit.—"That I should die by your hand, red as it is with the blood of my kindred," said he, answering the threat of Allan in a tone as menacing as his own, "is not more likely than that you should fall by mine." With that, he struck at M'Aulay with such unexpected readiness, that he had scarce time to intercept the blow with his target.

"Villain!" said Allan, in astonishment, "what means this?"

"I am Ranald of the Mist!" answered the Islesman, repeating the blow; and with that word, they engaged in close and furious conflict. It seemed to be decreed, that in Allan M'Aulay had arisen the avenger of his mother's wrongs upon this wild tribe, as was proved by the issue of the present, as well as of former combats. After exchanging a few blows, Ranald MacEagh was prostrated by a deep wound on the skull; and M'Aulay, setting his foot on him, was about to pass the broadsword through his body, when the point of the weapon was struck up by a third party, who suddenly interposed. This was no other than Major Dalgetty, who, stunned by the fall, and encumbered by the dead body of his horse, had now recovered his legs and his understanding. "Hold up your sword," said he to M'Aulay, "and prejudice this person no farther, in respect that he is here in my safe-conduct, and in his Excellency's service; and in regard that no honourable cavalier is at liberty, by the law martial, to avenge his own private injuries, *flagrante bello, multo majus flagrante prœlio.*"

"Fool!" said Allan, "stand aside, and dare not to come between the tiger and his prey!"

But, far from quitting his point, Dalgetty stept across the fallen body of MacEagh, and gave Allan to understand, that if he called himself a tiger, he was likely, at present, to find a lion in his path. There required no more than the gesture and tone of defiance to turn the whole rage of the military Seer against the person who was opposing the course of his vengeance, and blows were instantly exchanged without farther ceremony.

The strife betwixt Allan and MacEagh had been unnoticed by the stragglers around, for the person of the latter was known to few of Montrose's followers; but the scuffle betwixt Dalgetty and him, both so well known, attracted instant attention; and fortunately, among others, that of Montrose himself, who had come for the purpose of gathering together his small body of horse, and following the pursuit down Loch-Eil. Aware of the fatal consequences of dissention in his little army, he pushed his horse up to the spot, and seeing MacEagh on the ground, and Dalgetty in the attitude of protecting him against M'Aulay, his quick apprehension instantly caught the cause of quarrel, and as instantly devised means to stop it. "For shame," he said, "gentlemen cavaliers, brawling together in so glorious a field of victory! Are you mad? Or are you intoxicated with the glory which you have both this day gained?"

"It is not my fault, so please your Excellency," said Dalgetty. "I have been known a *bonus socius*, a *bon camarado*, in all the services of Europe; but he that touches a man under my safeguard——"

"And he," said Allan, speaking at the same time, "who dares to bar the course of my just vengeance——"

"For shame, gentlemen!" again repeated Montrose; "I have other business for you both,—business of deeper importance than any private quarrel, which you may easily find a more fitting time to settle. For you, Major Dalgetty, kneel down."

"Kneel!" said Dalgetty; "I have not learned to obey that word of command, saving when it is given from the pulpit. In the Swedish discipline, the front rank do indeed kneel, but only when the regiment is drawn up six file deep."

"Nevertheless," repeated Montrose,—"kneel down in the name of King Charles and of his representative."

When Dalgetty reluctantly obeyed, Montrose struck him lightly on the neck with the flat of his sword, saying,—"In reward of the gallant service of this day, and in the name and authority of our Sovereign, King Charles, I dub thee knight; be brave, loyal, and fortunate. And now, Sir Dugald Dalgetty, to your duty. Collect what horsemen you can, and pursue such of the enemy as are flying down the side of the lake. Do not disperse your force, nor venture too far; but take heed to prevent their rallying, which very little exertion may do. Mount, then, Sir Dugald, and do your duty."

"But what shall I mount?" said the new-made chevalier. "Poor Gustavus sleeps in the bed of honour, like his immortal namesake! and I am made a knight, a rider,[1] as the High Dutch have it, just when I have not a horse left to ride upon."

"That shall not be said," answered Montrose, dismounting; "I make you a present of my own, which has been thought a good one; only, I pray you, resume the duty you discharge so well."

With many acknowledgments, Sir Dugald mounted the steed so liberally bestowed upon him; and only beseeching his Excellency to remember that MacEagh was under his safe-conduct, immediately began to execute the orders assigned to him, with great zeal and alacrity.

"And you, Allan M'Aulay," said Montrose, addressing the Highlander, who, leaning his sword-point on the ground, had regarded the ceremony of his antagonist's knighthood with a sneer of sullen scorn,—"you, who are superior to the ordinary men led by the paltry motives of plunder, and pay, and personal distinction,—you, whose deep knowledge renders you so valuable a counsellor,—is it *you* whom I find striving with a man like Dalgetty, for the privilege of trampling the remains of life out of so contemptible an enemy as lies there? Come, my friend, I have other work for you. This victory, skilfully improved, shall win Seaforth to our party. It is not disloyalty, but despair of the good cause, that has induced him to take arms against us. These arms, in this moment of better augury, he may be brought to unite with ours. I shall send my gallant friend, Colonel Hay, to him, from this very field of battle; but he must be united in commission with a Highland gentleman of rank, befitting that of Seaforth, and of talents and of influence such as may make an impression upon him. You are not only in every respect the fittest for this most important mission, but, having no immediate command, your presence may be more easily spared than that of a Chief whose following is in the field. You know every pass and glen in the Highlands, as well as the manners and customs of every tribe. Go therefore to Hay, on the right wing; he has instructions, and expects you. You will find him with Glenmorrison's men; be his guide, his interpreter, and his colleague."

Allan M'Aulay bent on the Marquis a dark and penetrating glance, as if to ascertain whether this sudden mission was not conferred for some latent and unexplained purpose. But Montrose, skilful in searching the motives of others, was an equal adept in concealing his own. He considered it as of the last consequence, in this moment of enthusiasm and exalted passion, to remove Allan from the camp for a few days, that he might provide, as his honour required, for the safety of those who had acted as his guides, when he trusted the Seer's quarrel with Dalgetty might be easily made up. Allan, at parting, only recommended to the Marquis the care of Sir Duncan Campbell, whom Montrose instantly directed to be conveyed to a place of safety. He took the same precaution for MacEagh, committing the latter, however, to a party of the Irish, with directions that he should be taken care of, but that no Highlander, of any clan should have access to him.

The Marquis then mounted a led horse, which was held by one of his attendants, and rode on to view the scene of his victory, which was more decisive than even his ardent hopes had anticipated. Of Argyle's gallant army of three thousand men, fully one-half fell in the battle, or in the flight. They had been chiefly driven back upon that part of the plain where the river forms an angle with the lake, so that there was no free opening either for retreat or escape. Several hundreds were forced into the lake and drowned. Of the survivors, about one-half escaped by swimming the river, or by an early flight along the left bank of the lake. The remainder threw themselves into the old Castle of Inverlochy; but being without either provisions or hopes of relief, they were obliged to surrender, on condition of being suffered to return to their homes in peace. Arms, ammunition, standards, and baggage, all became the prey of the conquerors.

This was the greatest disaster that ever befell the race of Diarmid, as the Campbells were called in the Highlands; it being generally remarked that they were as fortunate in the issue of their undertakings, as they were sagacious in planning, and courageous in executing them. Of the number slain, nearly five hundred were dunniwassels, or gentlemen claiming descent from known and respected houses. And, in the opinion of many of the clan, even this heavy loss was exceeded by the disgrace arising from the inglorious conduct of their Chief, whose galley weighed anchor when the day was lost, and sailed down the lake with all the speed to which sails and oars could impel her.

CHAPTER XX.

> Faint the din of battle bray'd,
> Distant down the hollow wind;
> War and terror fled before,
> Wounds and death remain'd behind.
>
> PENROSE.

MONTROSE'S splendid success over his powerful rival was not attained without some loss, though not amounting to the tenth of what he inflicted. The obstinate valour of the Campbells cost the lives of many brave men of the opposite party; and more were wounded, the chief of whom was the brave young Earl of Menteith, who had commanded the centre. He was but slightly touched, however, and made rather a graceful than a terrible appearance when he presented to his general the standard of Argyle, which he had taken from the standard-bearer with his own hand, and slain him in single combat. Montrose dearly loved his noble kinsman, in whom there was conspicuous a flash of the generous, romantic, disinterested chivalry of the old heroic times, entirely different from the sordid, calculating, and selfish character, which the practice of entertaining mercenary troops had introduced into most parts of Europe, and of which degeneracy Scotland, which furnished soldiers of fortune for the service of almost every nation, had been contaminated with a more than usual share. Montrose, whose native spirit was congenial, although experience had taught

[1] In German, as in Latin, the original meaning of the word Ritter, corresponding to Eques, is merely a horseman.

him how to avail himself of the motives of others, used to Menteith neither the language of praise nor of promise, but clasped him to his bosom as he exclaimed, "My gallant kinsman!" And by this burst of heartfelt applause was Menteith thrilled with a warmer glow of delight, than if his praises had been recorded in a report of the action sent directly to the throne of his sovereign.

"Nothing," he said, "my lord, now seems to remain in which I can render any assistance; permit me to look after a duty of humanity — the Knight of Ardenvohr, as I am told, is our prisoner, and severely wounded."

"And well he deserves to be so," said Sir Dugald Dalgetty, who came up to them at that moment, with a prodigious addition of acquired importance, "since he shot my good horse at the time that I was offering him honourable quarter, which, I must needs say, was done more like an ignorant Highland cateran, who has not sense enough to erect a sconce for the protection of his old hurley-house of a castle, than like a soldier of worth and quality."

"Are we to condole with you then," said Lord Menteith, "upon the loss of the famed Gustavus?"

"Even so, my lord," answered the soldier, with a deep sigh, "*Diem clausit supremum*, as we said at the Mareschal College of Aberdeen. Better so than be smothered like a cadger's pony in some flow-moss, or snow-wreath, which was like to be his fate if this winter campaign lasted longer. But it has pleased his Excellency" (making an inclination to Montrose) "to supply his place by the gift of a noble steed, whom I have taken the freedom to name '*Loyalty's Reward*,' in memory of this celebrated occasion."

"I hope," said the Marquis, "you'll find Loyalty's Reward, since you call him so, practised in all the duties of the field, — but I must just hint to you, that at this time, in Scotland, loyalty is more frequently rewarded with a halter than with a horse."

"Ahem! your Excellency is pleased to be facetious. Loyalty's Reward is as perfect as Gustavus in all his exercises, and of a far finer figure. Marry! his social qualities are less cultivated, in respect he has kept till now inferior company."

"Not meaning his Excellency the General, I hope," said Lord Menteith. "For shame, Sir Dugald!"

"My lord," answered the knight gravely, "I am incapable to mean any thing so utterly misbecoming. What I asseverate is, that his Excellency, having the same intercourse with his horse during his exercise, that he hath with his soldiers when training them, may form and break either to every feat of war which he chooses to practise, and accordingly that this noble charger is admirably managed. But as it is the intercourse of private life that formeth the social character, so I do not apprehend that of the single soldier to be much polished by the conversation of the corporal or the sergeant, or that of Loyalty's Reward to have been much dulcified, or ameliorated, by the society of his Excellency's grooms, who bestow more oaths, and kicks, and thumps, than kindness or caresses, upon the animals intrusted to their charge: whereby many a generous quadruped, rendered as it were misanthropic, manifests during the rest of his life a greater desire to kick and bite his master, than to love and to honour him."

"Spoken like an oracle," said Montrose. "Were there an academy for the education of horses to be annexed to the Mareschal College of Aberdeen, Sir Dugald Dalgetty alone should fill the chair."

"Because, being an ass," said Menteith, aside to the General, "there would be some distant relation between the professor and the students."

"And now, with your Excellency's permission," said the new-made Knight, "I am going to pay my last visit to the remains of my old companion in arms."

"Not with the purpose of going through the ceremonial of interment?" said the Marquis, who did not know how far Sir Dugald's enthusiasm might lead him; "consider, our brave fellows themselves will have but a hasty burial."

"Your Excellency will pardon me," said Dalgetty; "my purpose is less romantic. I go to divide poor Gustavus's legacy with the fowls of heaven, leaving the flesh to them, and reserving to myself his hide; which, in token of affectionate remembrance, I purpose to form into a cassock and trousers, after the Tartar fashion, to be worn under my armour, in respect my nether garments are at present shamefully the worse of the wear. — Alas! poor Gustavus, why didst thou not live at least one hour more, to have borne the honoured weight of knighthood upon thy loins!"

He was now turning away, when the Marquis called after him, — "As you are not likely to be anticipated in this act of kindness, Sir Dugald, to your old friend and companion, I trust," said the Marquis, "you will first assist me, and our principal friends, to discuss some of Argyle's good cheer, of which we have found abundance in the castle."

"Most willingly, please your Excellency," said Sir Dugald; "as meat and mass never hinder work. Nor, indeed, am I afraid that the wolves or eagles will begin an onslaught on Gustavus to-night, in regard there is so much better cheer lying all around. But," added he, "as I am to meet two honourable knights of England, with others of the knightly degree in your lordship's army, I pray it may be explained to them, that now, and in future, I claim precedence over them all, in respect of my rank as a banneret, dubbed in a field of stricken battle."

"The devil confound him!" said Montrose, speaking aside; "he has contrived to set the kiln on fire as fast as I put it out.—This is a point, Sir Dugald," said he, gravely addressing him, "which I shall reserve for his Majesty's express consideration; in my camp, all must be upon equality, like the Knights of the Round Table; and take their places as soldiers should, upon the principle of, — first come, first served."

"Then I shall take care," said Menteith apart to the Marquis, "that Don Dugald is not first in place to-day. — Sir Dugald," added he, raising his voice, "as you say your wardrobe is out of repair, had you not better go to the enemy's baggage yonder, over which there is a guard placed? I saw them take out an excellent buff suit, embroidered in front in silk and silver."

"*Voto a Dios!* as the Spaniard says," exclaimed the Major, "and some beggarly gilly may get it while I stand prating here!"

The prospect of booty having at once driven

out of his head both Gustavus and the provant, he set spurs to Loyalty's Reward, and rode off through the field of battle.

"There goes the hound," said Menteith, "breaking the face, and trampling on the body, of many a better man than himself; and as eager on his sordid spoil as a vulture that stoops upon carrion. Yet this man the world calls a soldier — and you, my lord, select him as worthy of the honours of chivalry, if such they can at this day be termed. You have made the collar of knighthood the decoration of a mere bloodhound."

"What could I do?" said Montrose. "I had no half-picked bones to give him, and bribed in some manner he must be, — I cannot follow the chase alone. Besides, the dog has good qualities."

"If nature has given him such," said Menteith, "habit has converted them into feelings of intense selfishness. He may be punctilious concerning his reputation, and brave in the execution of his duty, but it is only because without these qualities he cannot rise in the service;—nay, his very benevolence is selfish; he may defend his companion while he can keep his feet, but the instant he is down, Sir Dugald will be as ready to ease him of his purse, as he is to convert the skin of Gustavus into a buff jerkin."

"And yet, if all this were true, cousin," answered Montrose, "there is something convenient in commanding a soldier, upon whose motives and springs of action you can calculate to a mathematical certainty. A fine spirit like yours, my cousin, alive to a thousand sensations to which this man's is as impervious as his corslet, — it is for such that thy friend must feel, while he gives his advice." Then, suddenly changing his tone, he asked Menteith when he had seen Annot Lyle.

The young Earl coloured deeply, and answered, "Not since last evening, — excepting," he added, with hesitation, "for one moment, about half an hour before the battle began."

"My dear Menteith," said Montrose, very kindly, "were you one of the gay cavaliers of Whitehall, who are, in their way, as great self-seekers as our friend Dalgetty, should I need to plague you with inquiring into such an amourette as this? it would be an intrigue only to be laughed at. But this is the land of enchantment, where nets strong as steel are wrought out of ladies' tresses, and you are exactly the destined knight to be so fettered. This poor girl is exquisitely beautiful, and has talents formed to captivate your romantic temper. You cannot think of injuring her — you *cannot* think of marrying her?"

"My lord," replied Menteith, "you have repeatedly urged this jest, for so I trust it is meant, somewhat beyond bounds. Annot Lyle is of unknown birth, — a captive, — the daughter, probably, of some obscure outlaw; a dependent on the hospitality of the M'Aulays."

"Do not be angry, Menteith," said the Marquis, interrupting him; "you love the classics, though not educated at Mareschal College; and you may remember how many gallant hearts captive beauty has subdued: —

> Movit Ajacem, Telamone natum,
> Forma captivæ dominum Tecmessæ.

In a word, I am seriously anxious about this — I should not have time, perhaps," he added very gravely, "to trouble you with my lectures on the subject, were your feelings, and those of Annot, alone interested; but you have a dangerous rival in Allan M'Aulay; and there is no knowing to what extent he may carry his resentment. It is my duty to tell you that the King's service may be much prejudiced by dissentions betwixt you."

"My lord," said Menteith, "I know what you mean is kind and friendly; I hope you will be satisfied when I assure you, that Allan M'Aulay and I have discussed this circumstance; and that I have explained to him, that as it is utterly remote from my character to entertain dishonourable views concerning this unprotected female; so, on the other hand, the obscurity of her birth prevents my thinking of her upon other terms. I will not disguise from your lordship, what I have not disguised from M'Aulay, — that if Annot Lyle were born a lady, she should share my name and rank; as matters stand, it is impossible. This explanation, I trust, will satisfy your lordship, as it has satisfied a less reasonable person."

Montrose shrugged his shoulders. "And, like true champions in romance," he said, "you have agreed, that you are both to worship the same mistress, as idolaters do the same image, and that neither shall extend his pretensions farther?"

"I did not go so far, my lord," answered Menteith, — "I only said in the present circumstances, — and there is no prospect of their being changed, — I could, in duty to myself and family, stand in no relation to Annot Lyle, but as that of friend or brother — But your lordship must excuse me; I have," said he, looking at his arm, round which he had tied his handkerchief, "a slight hurt to attend to."

"A wound?" said Montrose, anxiously; "let me see it. — Alas!" he said, "I should have heard nothing of this, had I not ventured to tent and sound another more secret and more rankling one. Menteith, I am sorry for you — I too have known — But what avails it to awake sorrows which have long slumbered!"

So saying, he shook hands with his noble kinsman, and walked into the castle.

Annot Lyle, as was not unusual for females in the Highlands, was possessed of a slight degree of medical and even surgical skill. It may readily be believed, that the profession of surgery, or medicine, as a separate art, was unknown; and the few rude rules which they observed were intrusted to women, or to the aged, whom constant casualties afforded too much opportunity of acquiring experience. The care and attention, accordingly, of Annot Lyle, her attendants, and others acting under her direction, had made her services extremely useful during this wild campaign. And most readily had these services been rendered to friend and foe, wherever they could be most useful. She was now in an apartment of the castle, anxiously superintending the preparation of vulnerary herbs, to be applied to the wounded; receiving reports from different females respecting those under their separate charge, and distributing what means she had for their relief, when Allan M'Aulay suddenly entered the apartment. She started, for she had heard that he had left the camp upon a distant mission; and, however accustomed she was to the gloom of his countenance, it seemed at present to have even a darker shade than usual. He stood before her

perfectly silent, and she felt the necessity of being the first to speak.

"I thought," she said, with some effort, "you had already set out."

"My companion awaits me," said Allan; "I go instantly."

Yet still he stood before her, and held her by the arm, with a pressure which, though insufficient to give her pain, made her sensible of his great personal strength, his hand closing on her like the gripe of a manacle.

"Shall I take the harp?" she said, in a timid voice; "is — is the shadow falling upon you?"

Instead of replying, he led her to the window of the apartment, which commanded a view of the field of the slain, with all its horrors. It was thick spread with dead and wounded, and the spoilers were busy tearing the clothes from the victims of war and feudal ambition, with as much indifference as if they had not been of the same species, and themselves exposed, perhaps to-morrow, to the same fate.

"Does the sight please you?" said M'Aulay.

"It is hideous!" said Annot, covering her eyes with her hands; "how can you bid me look upon it?"

"You must be inured to it," said he, "if you remain with this destined host — you will soon have to search such a field for my brother's corpse — for Menteith's — for mine — but that will be a more indifferent task — you do not love me!"

"This is the first time you have taxed me with unkindness," said Annot, weeping. "You are my brother — my preserver — my protector — and can I then *but* love you? — But your hour of darkness is approaching, let me fetch my harp ——"

"Remain," said Allan, still holding her fast; "be my visions from heaven or hell, or from the middle sphere of disembodied spirits — or be they, as the Saxons hold, but the delusions of an overheated fancy, they do not now influence me; I speak the language of the natural, of the visible world. — You love not me, Annot — you love Menteith — by him you are beloved again, and Allan is no more to you than one of the corpses which encumber yonder heath."

It cannot be supposed that this strange speech conveyed any new information to her who was thus addressed. No woman ever lived who could not, in the same circumstances, have discerned long since the state of her lover's mind. But by thus suddenly tearing off the veil, thin as it was, Allan prepared her to expect consequences violent in proportion to the enthusiasm of his character. She made an effort to repel the charge he had stated.

"You forget," she said, "your own worth and nobleness when you insult so very helpless a being, and one whom fate has thrown so totally into your power. You know who and what I am, and how impossible it is that Menteith or you can use language of affection to me, beyond that of friendship. You know from what unhappy race I have too probably derived my existence."

"I will not believe it," said Allan, impetuously; "never flowed crystal drop from a polluted spring."

"Yet the very doubt," pleaded Annot, "should make you forbear to use this language to me."

"I know," said M'Aulay, "it places a bar between us — but I know also that it divides you not so inseparably from Menteith. — Hear me, my beloved Annot! — leave this scene of terrors and danger — go with me to Kintail — I will place you in the house of the noble lady of Seaforth — or you shall be removed in safety to Icolmkill, where some women yet devote themselves to the worship of God, after the custom of our ancestors."

"You consider not what you ask of me," replied Annot; "to undertake such a journey under your sole guardianship, were to shew me less scrupulous than maiden ought. I will remain here, Allan — here under the protection of the noble Montrose; and when his motions next approach the Lowlands, I will contrive some proper means to relieve you of one, who has, she knows not how, become an object of dislike to you."

Allan stood as if uncertain whether to give way to sympathy with her distress, or to anger at her resistance.

"Annot," he said, "you know too well how little your words apply to my feelings towards you — but you avail yourself of your power, and you rejoice in my departure, as removing a spy upon your intercourse with Menteith. But beware both of you," he added, in a stern tone; "for when was it ever heard that an injury was offered to Allan M'Aulay, for which he exacted not tenfold vengeance?"

So saying, he pressed her arm forcibly, pulled the bonnet over his brows, and strode out of the apartment.

CHAPTER XXI.

—— After you're gone,
I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
What stirr'd it so. — Alas! I found it love.
Yet far from lust, for could I but have lived
In presence of you, I had had my end.

PHILASTER.

ANNOT LYLE had now to contemplate the terrible gulf which Allan M'Aulay's declaration of love and jealousy had made to open around her. It seemed as if she was tottering on the very brink of destruction, and was at once deprived of every refuge, and of all human assistance. She had long been conscious that she loved Menteith dearer than a brother; indeed, how could it be otherwise, considering their early intimacy, — the personal merit of the young nobleman, — his assiduous attentions, — and his infinite superiority in gentleness of disposition, and grace of manners, over the race of rude warriors with whom she lived? But her affection was of that quiet, timid, meditative character, which sought rather a reflected share in the happiness of the beloved object, than formed more presumptuous or daring hopes. A little Gaelic song, in which she expressed her feelings, has been translated by the ingenious and unhappy Andrew M'Donald; and we willingly transcribe the lines:—

Wert thou, like me, in life's low vale,
With thee how blest, that lot I'd share;
With thee I'd fly wherever gale
Could waft, or bounding galley bear.
But parted by severe decree,
Far different must our fortunes prove;
May thine be joy — enough for me
To weep and pray for him I love.

The pangs this foolish heart must feel,
When hope shall be for ever flown,
No sullen murmur shall reveal,
No selfish murmurs ever own.

Nor will I through life's weary years,
Like a pale drooping mourner move,
While I can think my secret tears
May wound the heart of him I love.

The furious declaration of Allan had destroyed the romantic plan which she had formed, of nursing in secret her pensive tenderness, without seeking any other requital. Long before this, she had dreaded Allan, as much as gratitude, and a sense that he softened towards her a temper so haughty and so violent, could permit her to do; but now she regarded him with unalloyed terror, which a perfect knowledge of his disposition, and of his preceding history, too well authorized her to entertain. Whatever was in other respects the nobleness of his disposition, he had never been known to resist the wilfulness of passion,—he walked in the house, and in the country of his fathers, like a tamed lion, whom no one dared to contradict, lest they should awaken his natural vehemence of passion. So many years had elapsed since he had experienced contradiction, or even expostulation, that probably nothing but the strong good sense, which on all points, his mysticism excepted, formed the ground of his character, prevented his proving an annoyance and terror to the whole neighbourhood. But Annot had no time to dwell upon her fears, being interrupted by the entrance of Sir Dugald Dalgetty.

It may well be supposed, that the scenes in which this person had passed his former life, had not much qualified him to shine in female society. He himself felt a sort of consciousness that the language of the barrack, guard-room, and parade, was not proper to entertain ladies. The only peaceful part of his life had been spent at Mareschal College, Aberdeen; and he had forgot the little he had learned there, except the arts of darning his own hose, and despatching his commons with unusual celerity, both which had since been kept in good exercise by the necessity of frequent practice. Still it was from an imperfect recollection of what he had acquired during this pacific period, that he drew his sources of conversation when in company with women; in other words, his language became pedantic when it ceased to be military.

"Mistress Annot Lyle," said he, upon the present occasion, "I am just now like the half-pike, or spontoon of Achilles, one end of which could wound, and the other cure — a property belonging neither to Spanish pike, brown-bill, partizan, halberd, Lochaber-axe, or indeed any other modern staff-weapon whatever."

This compliment he repeated twice; but as Annot scarce heard him the first time, and did not comprehend him the second, he was obliged to explain.

"I mean," he said, "Mistress Annot Lyle, that having been the means of an honourable knight receiving a severe wound in this day's conflict,— he having pistolled, somewhat against the law of arms, my horse, which was named after the immortal King of Sweden,— I am desirous of procuring him such solacement as you, madam, can supply, you being like the heathen god Esculapius," (meaning possibly Apollo,) "skilful not only in song and in music, but in the more noble art of chirurgery—*opiferque per orbem dicor.*"

"If you would have the goodness to explain," said Annot, too sick at heart to be amused by Sir Dugald's airs of pedantic gallantry.

"That, madam," replied the Knight, "may not be so easy, as I am out of the habit of construing— but we shall try. *Dicor*, supply *ego* — I am called. — *Opifer*? *opifer*? — I remember *signifer* and *furcifer* — but I believe *opifer* stands in this place for M. D., that is, Doctor of Physic."

"This is a busy day with us all," said Annot; "will you say at once what you want with me?"

"Merely," replied Sir Dugald, "that you will visit my brother knight, and let your maiden bring some medicaments for his wound, which threatens to be what the learned call a *damnum fatale*."

Annot Lyle never lingered in the cause of humanity. She informed herself hastily of the nature of the injury, and interesting herself for the dignified old Chief whom she had seen at Darnlinvarach, and whose presence had so much struck her, she hastened to lose the sense of her own sorrow for a time, in the attempt to be useful to another.

Sir Dugald with great form ushered Annot Lyle to the chamber of her patient, in which, to her surprise, she found Lord Menteith. She could not help blushing deeply at the meeting, but, to hide her confusion, proceeded instantly to examine the wound of the Knight of Ardenvohr, and easily satisfied herself that it was beyond her skill to cure it. As for Sir Dugald, he returned to a large outhouse, on the floor of which, among other wounded men, was deposited the person of Ranald of the Mist.

"Mine old friend," said the Knight, "as I told you before, I would willingly do any thing to pleasure you, in return for the wound you have received while under my safe-conduct. I have, therefore, according to your earnest request, sent Mrs Annot Lyle to attend upon the wound of the Knight of Ardenvohr, though wherein her doing so should benefit you, I cannot imagine. — I think you once spoke of some blood relationship between them; but a soldado, in command and charge like me, has other things to trouble his head with than Highland genealogies."

And indeed to do the worthy Major justice, he never inquired after, listened to, or recollected, the business of other people, unless it either related to the art military, or was somehow or other connected with his own interest, in either of which cases his memory was very tenacious.

"And now, my good friend of the Mist," said he, "can you tell me what has become of your hopeful grandson, as I have not seen him since he assisted me to disarm after the action, a negligence which deserveth the strapado?"

"He is not far from hence," said the wounded outlaw — "lift not your hand upon him, for he is man enough to pay a yard of leathern scourge with a foot of tempered steel."

"A most improper vaunt," said Sir Dugald; "but I owe you some favours, Ranald, and therefore shall let it pass."

"And if you think you owe me any thing," said the outlaw, "it is in your power to requite me by granting me a boon."

"Friend Ranald," answered Dalgetty, "I have read of these boons in silly story-books, whereby simple knights were drawn into engagements to their great prejudice; wherefore, Ranald, the more prudent knights of this day never promise any thing until they know that they may keep their word anent the premises, without any displeasure or incommodement to themselves. It may be, you

would have me engage the female chirurgeon to visit your wound; though you ought to consider, Ranald, that the uncleanness of the place where you are deposited may somewhat soil the gaiety of her garments, concerning the preservation of which, you may have observed, women are apt to be inordinately solicitous. I lost the favour of the lady of the Grand Pensionary of Amsterdam, by touching with the sole of my boot the train of her black velvet gown, which I mistook for a foot-cloth, it being half the room distant from her person."

"It is not to bring Annot Lyle hither," answered MacEagh, "but to transport me into the room where she is in attendance upon the Knight of Ardenvohr. Somewhat I have to say of the last consequence to them both."

"It is something out of the order of due precedence," said Dalgetty, "to carry a wounded outlaw into the presence of a knight; knighthood having been of yore, and being, in some respects, still, the highest military grade, independent always of commissioned officers, who rank according to their patents; nevertheless, as your boon, as you call it, is so slight, I shall not deny compliance with the same." So saying, he ordered three files of men to transport MacEagh on their shoulders to Sir Duncan Campbell's apartment, and he himself hastened before to announce the cause of his being brought thither. But such was the activity of the soldiers employed, that they followed him close at the heels, and, entering with their ghastly burden, laid MacEagh on the floor of the apartment. His features, naturally wild, were now distorted by pain; his hands and scanty garments stained with his own blood, and those of others, which no kind hand had wiped away, although the wound in his side had been secured by a bandage.

"Are you," he said, raising his head painfully towards the couch where lay stretched his late antagonist, "he whom men call the Knight of Ardenvohr?"

"The same," answered Sir Duncan, — "what would you with one whose hours are now numbered?"

"My hours are reduced to minutes," said the outlaw; "the more grace, if I bestow them in the service of one, whose hand has ever been against me, as mine has been raised higher against him."

"Thine higher against me!—Crushed worm!" said the Knight, looking down on his miserable adversary.

"Yes," answered the outlaw, in a firm voice, "my arm hath been highest. In the deadly contest betwixt us, the wounds I have dealt have been deepest, though thine have neither been idle nor unfelt. — I am Ranald MacEagh — I am Ranald of the Mist — the night that I gave thy castle to the winds in one huge blaze of fire, is now matched with the day in which you have fallen under the sword of my fathers. — Remember the injuries thou hast done our tribe — never were such inflicted, save by *one*, beside thee. He, they say, is fated and secure against our vengeance — a short time will shew."

"My Lord Menteith," said Sir Duncan, raising himself out of his bed, this is a proclaimed villain, at once the enemy of King and Parliament, of God and man — one of the outlawed banditti of the Mist; alike the enemy of your house, of the M'Aulays, and of mine. I trust you will not suffer moments, which are perhaps my last, to be imbittered by his barbarous triumph."

"He shall have the treatment he merits," said Menteith; "let him be instantly removed."

Sir Dugald here interposed, and spoke of Ranald's services as a guide, and his own pledge for his safety; but the high harsh tones of the outlaw drowned his voice.

"No," said he, "be rack and gibbet the word! let me wither between heaven and earth, and gorge the hawks and eagles of Ben-Nevis; and so shall this haughty Knight, and this triumphant Thane, never learn the secret I alone can impart; a secret which would make Ardenvohr's heart leap with joy, were he in the death agony, and which the Earl of Menteith would purchase at the price of his broad earldom. — Come hither, Annot Lyle," he said, raising himself with unexpected strength; "fear not the sight of him to whom thou hast clung in infancy. Tell these proud men, who disdain thee as the issue of mine ancient race, that thou art no blood of ours, — no daughter of the race of the Mist, but born in halls as lordly, and cradled on couch as soft, as ever soothed infancy in their proudest palaces."

"In the name of God," said Menteith, trembling with emotion, "if you know aught of the birth of this lady, do thy conscience the justice to disburden it of the secret before departing from this world!"

"And bless my enemies with my dying breath?" said MacEagh, looking at him malignantly.—"Such are the maxims your priests preach — but when, or towards whom, do you practise them? Let me know first the worth of my secret ere I part with it — What would you give, Knight of Ardenvohr, to know that your superstitious fasts have been vain, and that there still remains a descendant of your house? — I pause for an answer — without it, I speak not one word more."

"I could," said Sir Duncan, his voice struggling between the emotions of doubt, hatred, and anxiety — "I could — but that I know thy race are like the Great Enemy, liars and murderers from the beginning — but could it be true thou tellest me, I could almost forgive thee the injuries thou hast done me."

"Hear it!" said Ranald; "he hath wagered deeply for a son of Diarmid — And you, gentle Thane — the report of the camp says, that you would purchase with life and lands the tidings that Annot Lyle was no daughter of proscription, but of a race noble in your estimation as your own — Well — It is for no love I tell you — The time has been that I would have exchanged this secret against liberty; I am now bartering it for what is dearer than liberty or life. — Annot Lyle is the youngest, the sole surviving child of the Knight of Ardenvohr, who alone was saved when all in his halls besides was given to blood and ashes."

"Can this man speak truth?" said Annot Lyle, scarce knowing what she said; "or is this some strange delusion?"

"Maiden," replied Ranald, "hadst thou dwelt longer with us, thou wouldst have better learnt to know how to distinguish the accents of truth. To that Saxon lord, and to the Knight of Ardenvohr, I will yield such proofs of what I have spoken, that incredulity shall stand convinced. Meantime, withdraw — I loved thine infancy, I hate not thy youth — no eye hates the rose in its blossom, though it

groweth upon a thorn, and for thee only do I something regret what is soon to follow. But he that would avenge him of his foe must not reck though the guiltless be engaged in the ruin."

"He advises well, Annot," said Lord Menteith; "in God's name retire! if—if there be aught in this, your meeting with Sir Duncan must be more prepared for both your sakes."

"I will not part from my father, if I have found one!" said Annot—"I will not part from him under circumstances so terrible."

"And a father you shall ever find in me," murmured Sir Duncan.

"Then," said Menteith, "I will have MacEagh removed into an adjacent apartment, and will collect the evidence of his tale myself. Sir Dugald Dalgetty will give me his attendance and assistance."

"With pleasure, my lord," answered Sir Dugald. —"I will be your confessor, or assessor—either or both. No one can be so fit, for I had heard the whole story a month ago at Inverary castle—but onslaughts like that of Ardenvohr confuse each other in my memory, which is besides occupied with matters of more importance."

Upon hearing this frank declaration, which was made as they left the apartment with the wounded man, Lord Menteith darted upon Dalgetty a look of extreme anger and disdain, to which the self-conceit of the worthy commander rendered him totally insensible.

CHAPTER XXII.

I am as free as nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.
Conquest of Granada.

The Earl of Menteith, as he had undertaken, so he proceeded to investigate more closely the story told by Ranald of the Mist, which was corroborated by the examination of his two followers, who had assisted in the capacity of guides. These declarations he carefully compared with such circumstances conerning the destruction of his castle and family as Sir Duncan Campbell was able to supply; and it may be supposed he had forgotten nothing relating to an event of such terrific importance. It was of the last consequence to prove that this was no invention of the outlaw's, for the purpose of passing an impostor as the child and heiress of Ardenvohr.

Perhaps Menteith, so much interested in believing the tale, was not altogether the fittest person to be intrusted with the investigation of its truth; but the examinations of the Children of the Mist were simple, accurate, and in all respects consistent with each other. A personal mark was referred to, which was known to have been borne by the infant child of Sir Duncan, and which appeared upon the left shoulder of Annot Lyle. It was also well remembered, that when the miserable relics of the other children had been collected, those of the infant had nowhere been found. Other circumstances of evidence, which it is unnecessary to quote, brought the fullest conviction not only to Menteith, but to the unprejudiced mind of Montrose, that in Annot Lyle, a humble dependant, distinguished only by beauty and talent, they were in future to respect the heiress of Ardenvohr.

While Menteith hastened to communicate the result of these inquiries to the persons most interested, the outlaw demanded to speak with his grandchild, whom he usually called his son. "He would be found," he said, "in the outer apartment, in which he himself had been originally deposited."

Accordingly, the young savage, after a close search, was found lurking in a corner, coiled up among some rotten straw, and brought to his grandsire.

"Kenneth," said the old outlaw, "hear the last words of the sire of thy father. A saxon soldier, and Allan of the Red-hand, left this camp within these few hours, to travel to the country of Caberfae. Pursue them as the bloodhound pursues the hurt deer—swim the lake—climb the mountain—thread the forest—tarry not until you join them;" and then the countenance of the lad darkened as his grandfather spoke, and he laid his hand upon a knife which stuck in the thong of leather that confined his scanty plaid. "No!" said the old man; "it is not by thy hand he must fall. They will ask the news from the camp—say to them that Annot Lyle of the Harp is discovered to be the daughter of Duncan of Ardenvohr; that the Thane of Menteith is to wed her before the priest; and that you are sent to bid guests to the bridal. Tarry not their answer, but vanish like the lightning when the black cloud swallows it.—And now depart, beloved son of my best beloved! I shall never more see thy face, nor hear the light sound of thy footstep—yet tarry an instant and hear my last charge. Remember the fate of our race, and quit not the ancient manners of the Children of the Mist. We are now a straggling handful, driven from every vale by the sword of every clan, who rule in the possessions where their forefathers hewed the wood, and drew the water for ours. But in the thicket of the wilderness, and in the mist of the mountain, Kenneth, son of Eracht, keep thou unsoiled the freedom which I leave thee as a birthright. Barter it not, neither for the rich garment, nor for the stone roof, nor for the covered board, nor for the couch of down—on the rock or in the valley, in abundance or in famine—in the leafy summer, and in the days of the iron winter—Son of the Mist! be free as thy forefathers. Own no lord—receive no law—take no hire—give no stipend—build no hut—enclose no pasture—sow no grain; let the deer of the mountain be thy flocks and herds—if these fail thee, prey upon the goods of our oppressors—of the Saxons, and of such Gael as are Saxons in their souls, valuing herds and flocks more than honour and freedom. Well for us that they do so—it affords the broader scope for our revenge. Remember those who have done kindness to our race, and pay their services with thy blood, should the hour require it. If a MacIan shall come to thee with the head of the king's son in his hand, shelter him, though the avenging army of the father were behind him; for in Glencoe and Ardnamurchan, we have dwelt in peace in the years that have gone by. The sons of Diarmid—the race of Darnlinvarach—the riders of Menteith—my curse on thy head, Child of the Mist, if thou spare one of those names, when the time shall offer for cutting them off! and it will come anon, for their own swords shall devour each other, and those who are scattered shall fly to the Mist, and perish by its Children. Once more,

begone — shake the dust from thy feet against the habitations of men, whether banded together for peace or for war. Farewell, beloved! and mayst thou die like thy forefathers, ere infirmity, disease, or age, shall break thy spirit — Begone! — begone! — live free — requite kindness — avenge the injuries of thy race!"

The young savage stooped, and kissed the brow of his dying parent; but accustomed from infancy to suppress every exterior sign of emotion, he parted without tear or adieu, and was soon far beyond the limits of Montrose's camp.

Sir Dugald Dalgetty, who was present during the latter part of this scene, was very little edified by the conduct of MacEagh upon the occasion. "I cannot think, my friend Ranald," said he, "that you are in the best possible road for a dying man. Storms, onslaughts, massacres, the burning of suburbs, are indeed a soldier's daily work, and are justified by the necessity of the case, seeing that they are done in the course of duty; for burning of suburbs, in particular, it may be said that they are traitors and cut-throats to all fortified towns. Hence it is plain, that a soldier is a profession peculiarly favoured by Heaven, seeing that we may hope for salvation, although we daily commit actions of so great violence. But then, Ranald, in all services of Europe, it is the custom of the dying soldier not to vaunt him of such doings, or to recommend them to his fellows; but, on the contrary, to express contrition for the same, and to repeat, or have repeated to him, some comfortable prayer; which, if you please, I will intercede with his Excellency's chaplain to prefer on your account. It is otherwise no point of my duty to put you in mind of those things; only it may be for the ease of your conscience to depart more like a Christian, and less like a Turk, than you seem to be in a fair way of doing."

The only answer of the dying man (for as such Ranald MacEagh might now be considered) was a request to be raised to such a position that he might obtain a view from the window of the castle. The deep frost mist, which had long settled upon the top of the mountains, was now rolling down each rugged glen and gully, where the craggy ridges shewed their black and irregular outline, like desert islands rising above the ocean of vapour. "Spirit of the Mist!" said Ranald MacEagh, "called by our race our father, and our preserver — receive into thy tabernacle of clouds, when this pang is over, him whom in life thou hast so often sheltered." So saying, he sunk back into the arms of those who upheld him, spoke no farther word, but turned his face to the wall for a short space.

"I believe," said Dalgetty, "my friend Ranald will be found in his heart to be little better than a heathen." And he renewed his proposal to procure him the assistance of Dr Wisheart, Montrose's military chaplain; "a man," said Sir Dugald, "very clever in his exercise, and who will do execution on your sins in less time than I could smoke a pipe of tobacco."

"Saxon," said the dying man, "speak to me no more of thy priest — I die contented. Hadst thou ever an enemy against whom weapons were of no avail — whom the ball missed, and against whom the arrow shivered, and whose bare skin was as impenetrable to sword and dirk as thy steel garment? — Heardst thou ever of such a foe?"

"Very frequently, when I served in Germany," replied Sir Dugald. "There was such a fellow at Ingolstadt; he was proof both against lead and steel. The soldiers killed him with the buts of their muskets."

"This impassible foe," said Ranald, without regarding the Major's interruption, "who has the blood dearest to me upon his hands — to this man I have now bequeathed agony of mind, jealousy, despair, and sudden death, — or a life more miserable than death itself. Such shall be the lot of Allan of the Red-hand, when he learns that Annot weds Menteith; and I ask no more than the certainty that it is so, to sweeten my own bloody end by his hand."

"If that be the case," said the Major, "there's no more to be said; but I shall take care as few people see you as possible, for I cannot think your mode of departure can be at all creditable or exemplary to a Christian army." So saying, he left the apartment, and the Son of the Mist soon after breathed his last.

Menteith, in the meanwhile, leaving the new-found relations to their mutual feelings of mingled emotion, was eagerly discussing with Montrose the consequences of this discovery. "I should now see," said the Marquis, "even had I not before observed it, that your interest in this discovery, my dear Menteith, has no small reference to your own happiness. You love this new-found lady, — your affection is returned. In point of birth, no exceptions can be made; in every other respect, her advantages are equal to those which you yourself possess — think, however, a moment. Sir Duncan is a fanatic — Presbyterian at least — in arms against the King; he is only with us in the quality of a prisoner, and we are, I fear, but at the commencement of a long civil war. Is this a time, think you, Menteith, for you to make proposals for his heiress? Or what chance is there that he will now listen to it?"

Passion, an ingenious, as well as an eloquent advocate, supplied the young nobleman with a thousand answers to these objections. He reminded Montrose that the Knight of Ardenvohr was neither a bigot in politics nor religion. He urged his own known and proved zeal for the royal cause, and hinted that its influence might be extended and strengthened by his wedding the heiress of Ardenvohr. He pleaded the dangerous state of Sir Duncan's wound, the risk which must be run by suffering the young lady to be carried into the country of the Campbells, where, in case of her father's death, or continued indisposition, she must necessarily be placed under the guardianship of Argyle, an event fatal to his (Menteith's) hopes, unless he could stoop to purchase his favour by abandoning the King's party.

Montrose allowed the force of these arguments, and owned, although the matter was attended with difficulty, yet it seemed consistent with the King's service that it should be concluded as speedily as possible.

"I could wish," said he, "that it were all settled in one way or another, and that this fair Briseis were removed from our camp before the return of our Highland Achilles, Allan M'Aulay. — I fear some fatal feud in that quarter, Menteith — and I believe it would be best that Sir Duncan be dismissed on his parole, and that you accompany him

and his daughter as his escort. The journey can be made chiefly by water, so will not greatly incommode his wound—and your own, my friend, will be an honourable excuse for an absence for some time from my camp."

"Never!" said Menteith. "Were I to forfeit the very hope that has so lately dawned upon me, never will I leave your Excellency's camp while the royal standard is displayed. I should deserve that this trifling scratch should gangrene and consume my sword-arm, were I capable of holding it as an excuse for absence at this crisis of the King's affairs."

"On this, then, you are determined?" said Montrose.

"As fixed as Ben-Nevis," said the young nobleman.

"You must, then," said Montrose, "lose no time in seeking an explanation with the Knight of Ardenvohr. If this prove favourable, I will talk myself with the elder M'Aulay, and we will devise means to employ his brother at a distance from the army until he shall be reconciled to his present disappointment. Would to God some vision would descend upon his imagination fair enough to obliterate all traces of Annot Lyle! That perhaps you think impossible, Menteith?—Well, each to his service; you to that of Cupid, and I to that of Mars."

They parted, and in pursuance of the scheme arranged, Menteith, early on the ensuing morning, sought a private interview with the wounded Knight of Ardenvohr, and communicated to him his suit for the hand of his daughter. Of their mutual attachment Sir Duncan was aware, but he was not prepared for so early a declaration on the part of Menteith. He said, at first, that he had already, perhaps, indulged too much in feelings of personal happiness, at a time when his clan had sustained so great a loss and humiliation, and that he was unwilling, therefore, farther to consider the advancement of his own house at a period so calamitous. On the more urgent suit of the noble lover, he requested a few hours to deliberate and consult with his daughter, upon a question so highly important.

The result of this interview and deliberation was favourable to Menteith. Sir Duncan Campbell became fully sensible that the happiness of his new-found daughter depended upon a union with her lover; and unless such were now formed, he saw that Argyle would throw a thousand obstacles in the way of a match in every respect acceptable to himself. Menteith's private character was so excellent, and such was the rank and consideration due to his fortune and family, that they outbalanced, in Sir Duncan's opinion, the difference in their political opinions. Nor could he have resolved, perhaps, had his own opinion of the match been less favourable, to decline an opportunity of indulging the new-found child of his hopes. There was, besides, a feeling of pride which dictated his determination. To produce the Heiress of Ardenvohr to the world as one who had been educated a poor dependent and musician in the family of Darnlinvarach, had something in it that was humiliating. To introduce her as the betrothed bride, or wedded wife, of the Earl of Menteith, upon an attachment formed during her obscurity, was a warrant to the world that she had at all times been worthy of the rank to which she was elevated.

It was under the influence of these considerations that Sir Duncan Campbell announced to the lovers his consent that they should be married in the chapel of the Castle, by Montrose's chaplain, and as privately as possible. But when Montrose should break up from Inverlochy, for which orders were expected in the course of a very few days, it was agreed that the young Countess should depart with her father to his castle, and remain there until the circumstances of the nation permitted Menteith to retire with honour from his present military employment. His resolution being once taken, Sir Duncan Campbell would not permit the maidenly scruples of his daughter to delay its execution; and it was therefore resolved that the bridal should take place the next evening, being the second after the battle.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> My maid—my blue-eyed maid, he bore away,
> Due to the toils of many a bloody day.
>
> *Iliad.*

It was necessary, for many reasons, that Angus M'Aulay, so long the kind protector of Annot Lyle, should be made acquainted with the change in the fortunes of his late protegée; and Montrose, as he had undertaken, communicated to him these remarkable events. With the careless and cheerful indifference of his character, he expressed much more joy than wonder at Annot's good fortune; had no doubt whatever she would merit it, and as she had always been bred in loyal principles, would convey the whole estate of her grim fanatical father to some honest fellow who loved the king. "I should have no objection that my brother Allan should try his chance," added he, "notwithstanding that Sir Duncan Campbell was the only man who ever charged Darnlinvarach with inhospitality. Annot Lyle could always charm Allan out of the sullens, and who knows whether matrimony might not make him more a man of this world?"

Montrose hastened to interrupt the progress of his castle-building, by informing him that the lady was already wooed and won, and, with her father's approbation, was almost immediately to be wedded to his kinsman, the Earl of Menteith; and that in testimony of the high respect due to M'Aulay, so long the lady's protector, he was now to request his presence at the ceremony. M'Aulay looked very grave at this intimation, and drew up his person with the air of one who thought that he had been neglected.

"He conceived," he said, "that his uniform kind treatment of the young lady, while so many years under his roof, required something more upon such an occasion than a bare compliment of ceremony. He might," he thought, "without arrogance, have expected to have been consulted. He wished his kinsman of Menteith well, no man could wish him better; but he must say he thought he had been hasty in this matter. Allan's sentiments towards the young lady had been pretty well understood, and he, for one, could not see why the superior pretensions which he had upon her gratitude should have been set aside, without at least undergoing some previous discussion."

Montrose, seeing too well where all this pointed,

entreated M'Aulay to be reasonable, and to consider what probability there was that the Knight of Ardenvohr could be brought to confer the hand of his sole heiress upon Allan, whose undeniable excellent qualities were mingled with others, by which they were overclouded in a manner that made all tremble who approached him.

"My lord," said Angus M'Aulay, "my brother Allan has, as God made us all, faults as well as merits; but he is the best and bravest man of your army, be the other who he may, and therefore ill deserved that his happiness should have been so little consulted by your Excellency—by his own near kinsman—and by a young person who owes all to him and to his family."

Montrose in vain endeavoured to place the subject in a different view; this was the point in which Angus was determined to regard it, and he was a man of that calibre of understanding, who is incapable of being convinced when he has once adopted a prejudice. Montrose now assumed a higher tone, and called upon Angus to take care how he nourished any sentiments which might be prejudicial to his Majesty's service. He pointed out to him, that he was peculiarly desirous that Allan's efforts should not be interrupted in the course of his present mission; "a mission," he said, "highly honourable for himself, and likely to prove most advantageous to the King's cause. He expected his brother would hold no communication with him upon other subjects, nor stir up any cause of dissention, which might divert his mind from a matter of such importance."

Angus answered somewhat sulkily, that "he was no make-bate, or stirrer up of quarrels; he would rather be a peace-maker. His brother knew as well as most men how to resent his own quarrels—as for Allan's mode of receiving information, it was generally believed he had other sources than those of ordinary couriers. He should not be surprised if they saw him sooner than they expected."

A promise that he would not interfere, was the farthest to which Montrose could bring this man, thoroughly good-tempered as he was on all occasions, save when his pride, interest, or prejudices, were interfered with. And at this point the Marquis was fain to leave the matter for the present.

A more willing guest at the bridal ceremony, certainly a more willing attendant at the marriage feast, was to be expected in Sir Dugald Dalgetty, whom Montrose resolved to invite, as having been a confident to the circumstances which preceded it. But even Sir Dugald hesitated, looked on the elbows of his doublet, and the knees of his leather breeches, and mumbled out a sort of reluctant acquiescence in the invitation, provided he should find it possible, after consulting with the noble bridegroom. Montrose was somewhat surprised, but scorning to testify displeasure, he left Sir Dugald to pursue his own course.

This carried him instantly to the chamber of the bridegroom, who, amidst the scanty wardrobe which his camp-equipage afforded, was seeking for such articles as might appear to the best advantage upon the approaching occasion. Sir Dugald entered, and paid his compliments, with a very grave face, upon his approaching happiness, which, he said, "he was very sorry he was prevented from witnessing."

"In plain truth," said he, "I should but disgrace the ceremony, seeing that I lack a bridal garment. Rents, and open seams, and tatters at elbows in the apparel of the assistants, might presage a similar solution of continuity in your matrimonial happiness—and to say truth, my lord, you yourself must partly have the blame of this disappointment, in respect you sent me upon a fool's errand to get a buff-coat out of the booty taken by the Camerons, whereas you might as well have sent me to fetch a pound of fresh butter out of a black dog's throat. I had no answer, my lord, but brandished dirks and broadswords, and a sort of growling and jabbering in what they call their language. For my part, I believe these Highlanders to be no better than absolute pagans, and have been much scandalized by the manner in which my acquaintance, Ranald MacEagh, was pleased to beat his final march, a little while since."

In Menteith's state of mind, disposed to be pleased with every thing, and every body, the grave complaint of Sir Dugald furnished additional amusement. He requested his acceptance of a very handsome buff-dress which was lying on the floor. "I had intended it," he said, "for my own bridal garment as being the least formidable of my warlike equipments, and I have here no peaceful dress."

Sir Dugald made the necessary apologies—would not by any means deprive—and so forth, until it happily occurred to him that it was much more according to military rule that the Earl should be married in his back and breast-pieces, which dress he had seen the bridegroom wear at the union of Prince Leo of Wittlesbach with the youngest daughter of old George Frederick of Saxony, under the auspices of the gallant Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, and so forth. The good-natured young Earl laughed, and acquiesced; and thus having secured at least one merry face at his bridal, he put on a light and ornamented cuirass, concealed partly by a velvet coat, and partly by a broad blue silk scarf, which he wore over his shoulder, agreeably to his rank, and the fashion of the times.

Every thing was now arranged; and it had been settled, that, according to the custom of the country, the bride and bridegroom should not again meet until they were before the altar. The hour had already struck that summoned the bridegroom thither, and he only waited in a small anteroom adjacent to the chapel, for the Marquis, who condescended to act as bride's-man upon the occasion. Business relating to the army having suddenly required the Marquis's instant attention, Menteith waited his return, it may be supposed, in some impatience; and when he heard the door of the apartment open, he said, laughing, "You are late upon parade."

"You will find I am too early," said Allan MacAulay, who burst into the apartment. "Draw, Menteith, and defend yourself like a man, or die like a dog!"

"You are mad, Allan!" answered Menteith, astonished alike at his sudden appearance, and at the unutterable fury of his demeanour. His cheeks were livid—his eyes started from their sockets—his lips were covered with foam, and his gestures were those of a demoniac.

"You lie, traitor!" was his frantic reply—"you lie in that, as you lie in all you have said to me. Your life is a lie!"

"Did I not speak my thoughts when I call'ed you mad," said Menteith, indignantly, "your own life

were a brief one. In what do you charge me with deceiving you?"

"You told me," answered M'Aulay, "that you would not marry Annot Lyle!—False traitor!—she now waits you at the altar."

"It is you who speak false," retorted Menteith. "I told you the obscurity of her birth was the only bar to our union—that is now removed; and whom do you think yourself, that I should yield up my pretensions in your favour?"

"Draw then," said M'Aulay; "we understand each other."

"Not now," said Menteith, "and not here. Allan, you know me well—wait till to-morrow, and you shall have fighting enough."

"This hour—this instant—or never," answered M'Aulay. "Your triumph shall not go farther than the hour which is stricken. Menteith, I entreat you by our relationship—by our joint conflicts and labours—draw your sword, and defend your life!" As he spoke, he seized the Earl's hand, and wrung it with such frantic earnestness, that his grasp forced the blood to start under the nails. Menteith threw him off with violence, exclaiming, "Begone, madman!"

"Then, be the vision accomplished!" said Allan; and, drawing his dirk, struck with his whole gigantic force at the Earl's bosom. The temper of the corslet threw the point of the weapon upwards, but a deep wound took place between the neck and shoulder; and the force of the blow prostrated the bridegroom on the floor. Montrose entered at one side of the anteroom. The bridal company, alarmed at the noise, were in equal apprehension and surprise; but ere Montrose could almost see what had happened, Allan M'Aulay had rushed past him, and descended the castle stairs like lightning. "Guards, shut the gate!" exclaimed Montrose—"Seize him—kill him, if he resists!—he shall die, if he were my brother!"

But Allan prostrated, with a second blow of his dagger, a sentinel who was upon duty—traversed the camp like a mountain-deer, though pursued by all who caught the alarm—threw himself into the river, and, swimming to the opposite side, was soon lost among the woods. In the course of the same evening, his brother Angus and his followers left Montrose's camp, and, taking the road homeward, never again rejoined him.

Of Allan himself it is said, that, in a wonderfully short space after the deed was committed, he burst into a room in the Castle of Inverary, where Argyle was sitting in council, and flung on the table his bloody dirk.

"Is it the blood of James Grahame?" said Argyle, a ghastly expression of hope mixing with the terror which the sudden apparition naturally excited.

"It is the blood of his minion," answered MacAulay—"It is the blood which I was predestined to shed, though I would rather have spilt my own."

Having thus spoken, he turned and left the castle, and from that moment nothing certain is known of his fate. As the boy Kenneth, with three of the Children of the Mist, were seen soon afterwards to cross Lochfine, it is supposed they dogged his course, and that he perished by their hand in some obscure wilderness. Another opinion maintains, that Allan M'Aulay went abroad and died a monk of the Carthusian order. But nothing beyond bare presumption could ever be brought in support of either opinion.

His vengeance was much less complete than he probably fancied; for Menteith, though so severely wounded as to remain long in a dangerous state, was, by having adopted Major Dalgetty's fortunate recommendation of a cuirass as a bridal garment, happily secured from the worst consequences of the blow. But his services were lost to Montrose; and it was thought best, that he should be conveyed with his intended countess, now truly a mourning bride, and should accompany his wounded father-in-law to the castle of Sir Duncan at Ardenvohr. Dalgetty followed them to the water's edge, reminding Menteith of the necessity of erecting a sconce on Drumsnab to cover his lady's newly acquired inheritance.

They performed their voyage in safety, and Menteith was in a few weeks so well in health, as to be united to Annot in the castle of her father.

The Highlanders were somewhat puzzled to reconcile Menteith's recovery with the visions of the second sight, and the more experienced Seers were displeased with him for not having died. But others thought the credit of the vision sufficiently fulfilled, by the wound inflicted by the hand, and with the weapon, foretold; and all were of opinion, that the incident of the ring, with the death's head, related to the death of the bride's father, who did not survive her marriage many months. The incredulous held, that all this was idle dreaming, and that Allan's supposed vision was but a consequence of the private suggestions of his own passion, which, having long seen in Menteith a rival more beloved than himself, struggled with his better nature, and impressed upon him, as it were involuntarily, the idea of killing his competitor.

Menteith did not recover sufficiently to join Montrose during his brief and glorious career; and when that heroic general disbanded his army and retired from Scotland, Menteith resolved to adopt the life of privacy, which he led till the Restoration. After that happy event, he occupied a situation in the land befitting his rank, lived long, happy alike in public regard and in domestic affection, and died at a good old age.

Our *dramatis personæ* have been so limited, that, excepting Montrose, whose exploits and fate are the theme of history, we have only to mention Sir Dugald Dalgetty. This gentleman continued, with the most rigorous punctuality, to discharge his duty, and to receive his pay, until he was made prisoner, among others, upon the field of Philiphaugh. He was condemned to share the fate of his fellow-officers upon that occasion, who were doomed to death rather by denunciations from the pulpit, than the sentence either of civil or military tribunal; their blood being considered as a sort of sin-offering to take away the guilt of the land, and the fate imposed upon the Canaanites, under a special dispensation, being impiously and cruelly applied to them.

Several Lowland officers, in the service of the Covenanters, interceded for Dalgetty on this occasion, representing him as a person whose skill would be useful in their army, and who would be readily induced to change his service. But on this point they found Sir Dugald unexpectedly obstinate. He had engaged with the King for a certain term,

and, till that was expired, his principles would not permit any shadow of changing. The Covenanters, again, understood no such nice distinction, and he was in the utmost danger of falling a martyr, not to this or that political principle, but merely to his own strict ideas of a military enlistment. Fortunately, his friends discovered, by computation, that there remained but a fortnight to elapse of the engagement he had formed, and to which, though certain it was never to be renewed, no power on earth could make him false. With some difficulty they procured a reprieve for this short space, after which they found him perfectly willing to come under any engagements they chose to dictate. He entered the service of the Estates accordingly, and wrought himself forward to be Major in Gilbert Ker's corps, commonly called the Kirk's Own Regiment of Horse. Of his farther history we know nothing, until we find him in possession of his paternal estate of Drumthwacket, which he acquired, not by the sword, but by a pacific intermarriage with Hannah Strachan, a matron somewhat stricken in years, the widow of the Aberdeenshire Covenanter.

Sir Dugald is supposed to have survived the Revolution, as traditions of no very distant date represent him as cruizing about in that country, very old, very deaf, and very full of interminable stories about the immortal Gustavus Adolphus, the Lion of the North, and the bulwark of the Protestant Faith.

READER! THE TALES OF MY LANDLORD are now finally closed, and it was my purpose to have addressed thee in the vein of Jedediah Cleishbotham; but, like Horam the Son of Asmar, and all other imaginary story-tellers, Jedediah has melted into thin air.

Mr Cleishbotham bore the same resemblance to Ariel, as he at whose voice he rose doth to the sage Prospero; and yet, so fond are we of the fictions of our own fancy, that I part with him, and all his imaginary localities, with idle reluctance. I am aware this is a feeling in which the reader will little sympathize; but he cannot be more sensible than I am, that sufficient varieties have now been exhibited of the Scottish character, to exhaust one individual's powers of observation, and that to persist would be useless and tedious. I have the vanity to suppose, that the popularity of these Novels has shewn my countrymen, and their peculiarities, in lights which were new to the Southern reader; and that many, hitherto indifferent upon the subject, have been induced to read Scottish history, from the allusions to it in these works of fiction.

I retire from the field, conscious that there remains behind not only a large harvest, but labourers capable of gathering it in. More than one writer has of late displayed talents of this description; and if the present author, himself a phantom, may be permitted to distinguish a brother, or perhaps a sister shadow, he would mention, in particular, the author of the very lively work entitled "Marriage."

Note.—In the original publication, "The Legend of Montrose" formed the Conclusion of the Tales of my Landlord Third Series, but is inserted in this place to suit the arrangement of this Edition of the Waverley Novels.

THE

HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

With all his Illustrations and Notes.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it!—BURNS.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLVIII.

The Heart of Mid-Lothian.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel 's amang you takin notes,
An' faith he 'll prent it!—BURNS.

INTRODUCTION—(1829.)

THE author has stated, in the preface to the Chronicles of the Canongate, 1827, that he received from an anonymous correspondent an account of the incident upon which the following story is founded. He is now at liberty to say, that the information was conveyed to him by a late amiable and ingenious lady, whose wit and power of remarking and judging of character still survive in the memory of her friends. Her maiden name was Miss Helen Lawson, of Girthhead, and she was wife of Thomas Goldie, Esq. of Craigmuie, Commissary of Dumfries.

Her communication was in these words:

"I had taken for summer lodgings a cottage near the old Abbey of Lincluden. It had formerly been inhabited by a lady who had pleasure in embellishing cottages, which she found perhaps homely and even poor enough; mine, therefore, possessed many marks of taste and elegance unusual in this species of habitation in Scotland, where a cottage is literally what its name declares.

"From my cottage door I had a partial view of the old Abbey before mentioned; some of the highest arches were seen over, and some through, the trees scattered along a lane which led down to the ruin, and the strange fantastic shapes of almost all those old ashes accorded wonderfully well with the building they at once shaded and ornamented.

"The Abbey itself from my door was almost on a level with the cottage; but on coming to the end of the lane, it was discovered to be situated on a high perpendicular bank, at the foot of which run the clear waters of the Cluden, where they hasten to join the sweeping Nith,

'Whose distant roaring swells and fa's.'

As my kitchen and parlour were not very far distant, I one day went in to purchase some chickens from a person I heard offering them for sale. It was a little, rather stout-looking woman, who seemed to be between seventy and eighty years of age; she was almost covered with a tartan plaid, and her cap had over it a black silk hood, tied under the chin, a piece of dress still much in use among elderly women of that rank of life in Scotland; her eyes were dark, and remarkably lively and intelligent; I entered into conversation with her, and began by asking how she maintained herself, &c.

"She said that in winter she footed stockings, that is, knit feet to country-people's stockings, which bears about the same relation to stocking-knitting that cobbling does to shoe-making, and is of course both less profitable and less dignified; she likewise taught a few children to read, and in summer she whiles reared a few chickens.

"I said I could venture to guess from her face she had never been married. She laughed heartily at this, and said, 'I maun hae the queerest face that ever was seen, that ye could guess that. Now, do tell me, madam, how ye cam to think sae?' I told her it was from her cheerful disengaged countenance. She said, 'Mem, have ye na far mair reason to be happy than me, wi' a gude husband and a fine family o' bairns, and plenty o' every thing? for me, I'm the puirest o' a' puir bodies, and can hardly contrive to keep mysell alive in a' the wee bits o' ways I hae tell't ye. After some more conversation, during which I was more and more pleased with the old woman's sensible conversation, and the *naïveté* of her remarks, she rose to go away, when I asked her name. Her countenance suddenly clouded, and she said gravely, rather colouring, 'My name is

Helen Walker; but your husband kens weel about me.'

"In the evening I related how much I had been pleased, and inquired what was extraordinary in the history of the poor woman. Mr —— said, there were perhaps few more remarkable people than Helen Walker. She had been left an orphan, with the charge of a sister considerably younger than herself, and who was educated and maintained by her exertions. Attached to her by so many ties, therefore, it will not be easy to conceive her feelings, when she found that this only sister must be tried by the laws of her country for child-murder, and upon being called as principal witness against her. The counsel for the prisoner told Helen, that if she could declare that her sister had made any preparations, however slight, or had given her any intimation on the subject, that such a statement would save her sister's life, as she was the principal witness against her. Helen said, 'It is impossible for me to swear to a falsehood; and, whatever may be the consequence, I will give my oath according to my conscience.'

"The trial came on, and the sister was found guilty and condemned; but, in Scotland, six weeks must elapse between the sentence and the execution, and Helen Walker availed herself of it. The very day of her sister's condemnation, she got a petition drawn, stating the peculiar circumstances of the case, and that very night set out on foot to London.

"Without introduction or recommendation, with her simple (perhaps ill-expressed) petition, drawn up by some inferior clerk of the court, she presented herself, in her tartan plaid and country attire, to the late Duke of Argyle, who immediately procured the pardon she petitioned for, and Helen returned with it on foot, just in time to save her sister.

"I was so strongly interested by this narrative, that I determined immediately to prosecute my acquaintance with Helen Walker; but as I was to leave the country next day, I was obliged to defer it till my return in spring, when the first walk I took was to Helen Walker's cottage.

"She had died a short time before. My regret was extreme, and I endeavoured to obtain some account of Helen from an old woman who inhabited the other end of her cottage. I inquired if Helen ever spoke of her past history, her journey to London, &c. 'Na,' the old woman said, 'Helen was a wily body, and whene'er ony o' the neebors asked any thing about it, she aye turned the conversation.'

"In short, every answer I received only tended to increase my regret, and raise my opinion of Helen Walker, who could unite so much prudence with so much heroic virtue."

This narrative was enclosed in the following letter to the author, without date or signature:—

"Sir,—The occurrence just related happened to me twenty-six years ago. Helen Walker lies buried in the churchyard of Irongray, about six miles from Dumfries. I once proposed that a small monument should have been erected to commemorate so remarkable a character, but I now prefer leaving it to you to perpetuate her memory in a more durable manner."

The reader is now able to judge how far the author has improved upon, or fallen short of, the pleasing and interesting sketch of high principle and steady affection displayed by Helen Walker, the prototype of the fictitious Jeanie Deans. Mrs Goldie was unfortunately dead before the author had given his name to these volumes, so he lost all opportunity of thanking that lady for her highly valuable communication. But her daughter, Miss Goldie, obliged him with the following additional information.

"Mrs Goldie endeavoured to collect further particulars of Helen Walker, particularly concerning her journey to London, but found this nearly impossible; as the natural dignity of her character, and a high sense of family respectability, made her so indissolubly connect her sister's disgrace with her own exertions, that none of her neighbours durst ever question her upon the subject. One old woman, a distant relation of Helen's, and who is still living, says she worked an harvest with her, but that she never ventured to ask her about her sister's trial, or her journey to London; 'Helen,' she added, 'was a lofty body, and used a high style o' language.' The same old woman says, that every year Helen received a cheese from her sister, who lived at Whitehaven, and that she always sent a liberal portion of it to herself, or to her father's family. This fact, though trivial in itself, strongly marks the affection subsisting between the two sisters, and the complete conviction on the mind of the criminal, that her sister had acted solely from high principle, not from any want of feeling, which another small but characteristic trait will further illustrate. A gentleman, a relation of Mrs Goldie's, who happened to be travelling in the North of England, on coming to a small inn, was shewn into the parlour by a female servant, who, after cautiously shutting the door, said, 'Sir, I'm Nelly Walker's sister.' Thus practically shewing that she considered her sister as better known by her high conduct, than even herself by a different kind of celebrity.

"Mrs Goldie was extremely anxious to have a tombstone and an inscription upon it, erected in Irongray churchyard; and if Sir Walter Scott will condescend to write the last, a little subscription could be easily raised in the immediate neighbourhood, and Mrs Goldie's wish be thus fulfilled."

It is scarcely necessary to add, that the request of Miss Goldie will be most willingly complied with, and without the necessity of any tax on the public. Nor is there much occasion to repeat how much the author conceives himself obliged to his unknown correspondent, who thus supplied him with a theme affording such a pleasing view of the moral dignity of virtue, though unaided by birth, beauty, or talent. If the picture has suffered in the execution, it is from the failure of the author's powers to present in detail the same simple and striking portrait, exhibited in Mrs Goldie's letter.

ABBOTSFORD,
April 1, 1830.

POSTSCRIPT.

ALTHOUGH it would be impossible to add much to Mrs Goldie's picturesque and most interesting account of Helen Walker, the prototype of the imaginary Jeanie Deans, the Editor may be pardoned for introducing two or three anecdotes respecting that excellent person, which he has collected from a volume entitled, "Sketches from Nature, by John M'Diarmid," a gentleman who conducts an able provincial paper in the town of Dumfries.

Helen was the daughter of a small farmer in a place called Dalwhairn, in the parish of Irongray; where, after the death of her father, she continued, with the unassuming piety of a Scottish peasant, to support her mother by her own unremitted labour and privations; a case so common, that even yet, I am proud to say, few of my countrywomen would shrink from the duty.

Helen Walker was held among her equals *pensy*, that is, proud or conceited; but the facts brought to prove this accusation seem only to evince a strength of character superior to those around her. Thus it was remarked, that when it thundered, she went with her work and her Bible to the front of the cottage, alleging that the Almighty could smite in the city as well as in the field.

Mr M'Diarmid mentions more particularly the misfortune of her sister, which he supposes to have taken place previous to 1736. Helen Walker, declining every proposal of saving her relation's life at the expense of truth, borrowed a sum of money sufficient for her journey, walked the whole distance to London barefoot, and made her way to John Duke of Argyle. She was heard to say, that, by the Almighty's strength, she had been enabled to meet the Duke at the most critical moment, which, if lost, would have caused the inevitable forfeiture of her sister's life.

Isabella, or Tibby Walker, saved from the fate which impended over her, was married by the person who had wronged her, (named Waugh,) and lived happily for great part of a century, uniformly acknowledging the extraordinary affection to which she owed her preservation.

Helen Walker died about the end of the year 1791, and her remains are interred in the churchyard of her native parish of Irongray, in a romantic cemetery on the banks of the Cairn. That a character so distinguished for her undaunted love of virtue, lived and died in poverty, if not want, serves only to shew us how insignificant, in the sight of Heaven, are our principal objects of ambition upon earth.

TO THE BEST OF PATRONS,

A PLEASED AND INDULGENT READER,

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM

WISHES HEALTH, AND INCREASE, AND CONTENTMENT.

Courteous Reader,

If ingratitude comprehendeth every vice, surely so foul a stain worst of all beseemeth him whose life has been devoted to instructing youth in virtue and in humane letters. Therefore have I chosen, in this prolegomenon, to unload my burden of thanks at thy feet, for the favour with which thou hast kindly entertained the Tales of my Landlord. Certes, if thou hast chuckled over their facetious and festivous descriptions, or hadst thy mind filled with pleasure at the strange and pleasant turns of fortune which they record, verily, I have also simpered when I beheld a second story with attics, that has arisen on the basis of my small domicile at Gandercleugh, the walls having been aforehand pronounced by Deacon Barrow to be capable of enduring such an elevation. Nor has it been without delectation, that I have endued a new coat, (snuff-brown, and with metal buttons,) having all nether garments corresponding thereto. We do therefore lie, in respect of each other, under a reciprocation of benefits, whereof those received by me being the most solid, (in respect that a new house and a new coat are better than a new tale and an old song,) it is meet that my gratitude should be expressed with the louder voice and more preponderating vehemence. And how should it be so expressed?— Certainly not in words only, but in act and deed. It is with this sole purpose, and disclaiming all intention of purchasing that pendicle or poffle of land called the Carlinescroft, lying adjacent to my garden, and measuring seven acres, three roods, and four perches, that I have committed to the eyes of those who thought well of the former tomes, these four additional volumes of the Tales of my Landlord. Not the less, if Peter Prayfort be minded to sell the said poffle, it is at his own choice to say so; and, peradventure, he may meet with a purchaser: unless (gentle reader) the pleasing pourtraictures of Peter Pattieson, now given unto thee in particular, and unto the public in general, shall have lost their favour in thine eyes, whereof I am no way distrustful. And so much confidence do I repose in thy continued favour, that, should thy lawful occasions call thee to the town of Gandercleugh, a place frequented by most at one time or other in their lives, I will enrich thine eyes with a sight of those precious manuscripts whence thou hast derived so much delectation, thy nose with a snuff from my mull, and thy palate with a dram from my bottle of strong waters, called, by the learned of Gandercleugh, the Dominie's Dribble o' Drink.

It is there, O highly esteemed and beloved reader, thou wilt be able to bear testimony, through the medium of thine own senses, against the children of vanity, who have sought to identify thy friend and servant with I know not what inditer of vain fables; who hath cumbered the world with his devices, but shrunken from the responsibility thereof. Truly, this hath been well termed a generation hard of faith; since what can a man do to assert his property in a printed tome, saving to put his name in the title-page thereof, with his description, or designation, as the lawyers term it, and place of abode? Of a surety I would have such sceptics consider how they themselves would brook to have their works ascribed to others, their names and professions imputed as forgeries, and their very existence brought into question; even although, peradventure, it may be it is of little consequence to any but themselves, not only whether they are living or dead, but even whether they ever lived or no. Yet have my maligners carried their uncharitable censures still farther.

These cavillers have not only doubted mine identity, although thus plainly proved, but they have impeached my veracity and the authenticity of my historical narratives! Verily, I can only say in answer, that I have been cautelous in quoting mine authorities. It is true, indeed, that if I had hearkened with only one ear, I might have rehearsed my tale with more acceptation from those who love to hear but half the truth. It is, it may hap, not altogether to the discredit of our kindly nation of Scotland, that we are apt to take an interest, warm, yea partial, in the deeds and sentiments of our forefathers. He whom his adversaries describe as a perjured Prelatist, is desirous that his predecessors should be held moderate in their power, and just in their execution of its privileges, when, truly, the unimpassioned peruser of the annals of those times shall deem them sanguinary, violent, and tyrannical. Again, the representatives of the suffering Nonconformists desire that their ancestors, the Cameronians, shall be represented not simply as honest enthusiasts, oppressed for conscience-sake, but persons of fine breeding, and valiant heroes. Truly

the historian cannot gratify these predilections. He must needs describe the cavaliers as proud and nigh-spirited, cruel, remorseless, and vindictive; the suffering party as honourably tenacious of their opinions under persecution; their own tempers being, however, sullen, fierce, and rude; their opinions absurd and extravagant; and their whole course of conduct that of persons whom hellebore would better have suited than prosecutions unto death for high-treason. Natheless, while such and so preposterous were the opinions on either side, there were, it cannot be doubted, men of virtue and worth on both, to entitle either party to claim merit from its martyrs. It has been demanded of me, Jedediah Cleishbotham, by what right I am entitled to constitute myself an impartial judge of their discrepancies of opinions, seeing (as it is stated) that I must necessarily have descended from one or other of the contending parties, and be, of course, wedded for better or for worse, according to the reasonable practice of Scotland, to its dogmata, or opinions, and bound, as it were, by the tie matrimonial, or, to speak without metaphor, *ex jure sanguinis*, to maintain them in preference to all others.

But, nothing denying the rationality of the rule, which calls on all now living to rule their political and religious opinions by those of their great-grandfathers, and inevitable as seems the one or the other horn of the dilemma betwixt which my adversaries conceive they have pinned me to the wall, I yet spy some means of refuge, and claim a privilege to write and speak of both parties with impartiality. For, O ye powers of logic! when the Prelatists and Presbyterians of old times went together by the ears in this unlucky country, my ancestor (venerated be his memory!) was one of the people called Quakers, and suffered severe handling from either side, even to the extenuation of his purse and the incarceration of his person.

Craving thy pardon, gentle Reader, for these few words concerning me and mine, I rest, as above expressed, thy sure and obligated friend.[1]

J. C.

GANDERCLEUGH,
this 1st of April, 1818.

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[1] It is an old proverb, that "many a true word is spoken in jest." The existence of Walter Scott, third son of Sir William Scott of Harden, is instructed, as it is called, by a charter under the great seal, Domino Willielmo Scott de Harden Militi, et Waltero Scott suo filio legitimo tertio genito, terrarum de Roberton.[2] The munificent old gentleman left all his four sons considerable estates, and settled those of Eilrig and Raeburn, together with valuable possessions around Lessudden, upon Walter, his third son, who is ancestor of the Scotts of Raeburn, and of the Author of Waverley. He appears to have become a convert to the doctrine of the Quakers, or Friends, and a great assertor of their peculiar tenets. This was probably at the time when George Fox, the celebrated apostle of the sect, made an expedition into the south of Scotland about 1657, on which occasion he boasts, that "as he first set his horse's feet upon Scottish ground, he felt the seed of grace to sparkle about him like innumerable sparks of fire." Upon the same occasion, probably, Sir Gideon Scott of Highchester, second son of Sir William, immediate elder brother of Walter, and ancestor of the author's friend and kinsman, the present representative of the family of Harden, also embraced the tenets of Quakerism. This last convert, Gideon, entered into a controversy with the Rev. James Kirkton, author of the Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland, which is noticed by my ingenious friend Mr Charles Kirkpatricke Sharpe, in his valuable and curious edition of that work, 4to. 1817. Sir William Scott, eldest of the brothers, remained, amid the defection of his two younger brethren, an orthodox member of the Presbyterian Church, and used such means for reclaiming Walter of Raeburn from his heresy, as savoured far more of persecution than persuasion. In this he was assisted by MacDougal of Makerston, brother to Isabella MacDougal, the wife of the said Walter, and who, like her husband, had conformed to the Quaker tenets.

The interest possessed by Sir William Scott and Makerston was powerful enough to procure the two following acts of the Privy Council of Scotland, directed against Walter of Raeburn as an heretic and convert to Quakerism, appointing him to be imprisoned first in Edinburgh jail, and then in that of Jedburgh; and his children to be taken by force from the society and direction of their parents, and educated at a distance from them, besides the assignment of a sum for their maintenance, sufficient in those times to be burdensome to a moderate Scottish estate.

"Apud Edin. vigesimo Junii 1665.

"The Lords of his Magesty's Privy Council having receaved information that Scott of Raeburn, and Isobel Mackdougall, his wife, being infected with the error of Quakerism, doe endeavour to breid and traine up William, Walter, and Isobel Scotts, their children, in the same profession, doe therefore give order and command to Sir William Scott of Harden, the said Raeburn's brother, to seperat and take away the saids children from the custody and society of the saids parents, and to cause educat and bring them up in his owne house, or any other convenient place, and ordaines letters to be direct at the said Sir William's instance against Raeburn, for a maintenance to the saids children, and that the said Sir Wm. give ane account of his diligence with all conveniency."

[2] See Douglas's Baronage, page 215.

"Edinburgh, 5th July, 1666.

"Anent a petition presented be Sir Wm. Scott of Harden, for himself and in name and behalf of the three children of Walter Scott of Raeburn, his brother, showing that the Lords of Councill, by ane act of the 22d day of Junii, 1665, did grant power and warrand to the petitioner, to separat and take away Raeburn's children, from his family and education, and to breed them in some convenient place, where they might be free from all infection in their younger years, from the principalls of Quakerism, and, for maintenance of the saids children, did ordain letters to be direct against Raeburn; and, seeing the Petitioner, in obedience to the said order, did take away the saids children, being two sonnes and a daughter, and after some paines taken upon them in his owne family, hes sent them to the city of Glasgow, to be bread at schooles, and there to be principled with the knowledge of the true religion, and that it is necessary the Councill determine what shall be the maintenance for which Raeburn's three children may be charged, as likewise that Raeburn himself, being now in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, where he dayley converses with all the Quakers who are prisoners there, and others who daily resort to them, whereby he is hardened in his pernitious opinions and principles, without all hope of recovery, unlesse he be separat from such pernitious company, humbly therefore, desyring that the Councell might determine upon the soume of money to be payed be Raeburn, for the education of his children, to the petitioner, who will be countable therefor; and that, in order to his conversion, the place of his imprisonment may be changed. The Lords of his Maj. Privy Councell having at length heard and considered the foresaid petition, doe modifie the soume of two thousand pounds Scots, to be payed yearly at the terme of Whitsunday be the said Walter Scott of Raeburn, furth of his estate to the petitioner, for the entertainment and education of the said children, beginning the first termes payment therof at Whitsunday last for the half year preceding, and so furth yearly, at the said terme of Whitsunday in tym comeing till furder orders; and ordaines the said Walter Scott of Raeburn to be transported from the tolbooth of Edinburgh to the prison of Jedburgh, where his friends and others may have occasion to convert him. And to the effect he may be secured from the practice of other Quakers, the said Lords doe hereby discharge the magistrates of Jedburgh to suffer any persons suspect of these principles to have access to him; and in case any contraveen, that they secure ther persons till they be therfore puneist; and ordaines letters to be direct heirupon in form, as effeirs."

Both the sons, thus harshly separated from their father, proved good scholars. The eldest, William, who carried on the line of Raeburn, was, like his father, a deep Orientalist; the younger, Walter, became a good classical scholar, a great friend and correspondent of the celebrated Dr Pitcairn, and a Jacobite so distinguished for zeal, that he made a vow never to shave his beard till the restoration of the exiled family. This last Walter Scott was the author's great-grandfather.

There is yet another link betwixt the author and the simple-minded and excellent Society of Friends, though a proselyte of much more importance than Walter Scott of Raeburn. The celebrated John Swinton of Swinton, sixth baron in descent of that ancient and once powerful family, was, with Sir William Lockhart of Lee, the person whom Cromwell chiefly trusted in

the management of the Scottish affairs during his usurpation. After the Restoration, Swinton was devoted as a victim to the new order of things, and was brought down in the same vessel which conveyed the Marquis of Argyle to Edinburgh, where that nobleman was tried and executed. Swinton was destined to the same fate. He had assumed the habit, and entered into the Society of the Quakers, and appeared as one of their number before the Parliament of Scotland. He renounced all legal defence, though several pleas were open to him, and answered, in conformity to the principles of his sect, that at the time these crimes were imputed to him, he was in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity; but that God Almighty having since called him to the light, he saw and acknowledged these errors, and did not refuse to pay the forfeit of them, even though, in the judgment of the Parliament, it should extend to life itself.

Respect to fallen greatness, and to the patience and calm resignation with which a man once in high power expressed himself under such a change of fortune, found Swinton friends; family connections, and some interested considerations of Middleton the Commissioner, joined to procure his safety, and he was dismissed, but after a long imprisonment, and much dilapidation of his estates. It is said, that Swinton's admonitions, while confined in the Castle of Edinburgh, had a considerable share in converting to the tenets of the Friends Colonel David Barclay, then lying there in garrison. This was the father of Robert Barclay, author of the celebrated Apology for the Quakers. It may be observed among the inconsistencies of human nature, that Kirkton, Wodrow, and other Presbyterian authors, who have detailed the sufferings of their own sect for non-conformity with the established church, censure the government of the time for not exerting the civil power against the peaceful enthusiasts we have treated of, and some express particular chagrin at the escape of Swinton. Whatever might be his motives for assuming the tenets of the Friends, the old man retained them faithfully till the close of his life.

Jean Swinton, grand-daughter of Sir John Swinton, son of Judge Swinton, as the Quaker was usually termed, was mother of Anne Rutherford, the author's mother.

And thus, as in the play of the Anti-Jacobin, the ghost of the author's grandmother having arisen to speak the Epilogue, it is full time to conclude, lest the reader should remonstrate that his desire to know the Author of Waverley never included a wish to be acquainted with his whole ancestry.

The Heart of Mid-Lothian.

CHAPTER I.

Being Introductory.

So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourn, glides
The Derby dilly, carrying six insides.

FRERE.

THE times have changed in nothing more (we follow as we were wont the manuscript of Peter Pattieson) than in the rapid conveyance of intelligence and communication betwixt one part of Scotland and another. It is not above twenty or thirty years, according to the evidence of many credible witnesses now alive, since a little miserable horse-cart, performing with difficulty a journey of thirty miles *per diem*, carried our mails from the capital of Scotland to its extremity. Nor was Scotland much more deficient in these accommodations, than our rich sister had been about eighty years before. Fielding, in his Tom Jones, and Farquhar, in a little farce called the Stage-Coach, have ridiculed the slowness of these vehicles of public accommodation. According to the latter authority, the highest bribe could only induce the coachman to promise to anticipate by half an hour the usual time of his arrival at the Bull and Mouth.

But in both countries these ancient, slow, and sure modes of conveyance, are now alike unknown; mail-coach races against mail-coach, and high-flyer against high-flyer, through the most remote districts of Britain. And in our village alone, three post-coaches, and four coaches with men armed, and in scarlet cassocks, thunder through the streets each day, and rival in brilliancy and noise the invention of the celebrated tyrant:—

Demens, qui nimbos et non imitabile fulmen,
Ære et cornipedum pulsu, simularat, equorum.

Now and then, to complete the resemblance, and to correct the presumption of the venturous charioteers, it does happen that the career of these dashing rivals of Salmoneus meets with as undesirable and violent a termination as that of their prototype. It is on such occasions that the Insides and Outsides, to use the appropriate vehicular phrases, have reason to rue the exchange of the slow and safe motion of the ancient Fly-coaches, which, compared with the chariots of Mr Palmer, so ill deserve the name. The ancient vehicle used to settle quietly down, like a ship scuttled and left to sink by the gradual influx of the waters, while the modern is smashed to pieces with the velocity of the same vessel hurled against breakers, or rather with the fury of a bomb bursting at the conclusion of its career through the air. The late ingenious Mr Pennant, whose huumor it was to set his face in stern opposition to these speedy conveyances, had collected, I have heard, a formidable list of such casualties, which, joined to the imposition of innkeepers, whose charges the passengers had no time to dispute, the sauciness of the coachman, and the uncontrolled and despotic authority of the tyrant called the guard, held forth a picture of horror, to which murder, theft, fraud, and peculation, lent all their dark colouring. But that which gratifies the impatience of the human disposition will be practised in the teeth of danger, and in defiance of admonition; and, in despite of the Cambrian antiquary, mail-coaches not only roll their thunders round the base of Penman-Maur and Cader-Edris, but

Frighted Skiddaw hears afar
The rattling of the unscythed car.

And perhaps the echoes of Ben Nevis may soon be awakened by the bugle, not of a warlike chieftain, but of the guard of a mail-coach.

It was a fine summer day, and our little school had obtained a half holyday, by the intercession of a good-humoured visiter.[1] I expected by the coach a new number of an interesting periodical publication, and walked forward on the highway to meet it, with the impatience which Cowper has described as actuating the resident in the country when longing for intelligence from the mart of news:

——"The grand debate,
The popular harangue,—the tart reply,—
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh,—I long to know them all;—
I burn to set the imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance again."

It was with such feelings that I eyed the approach of the new coach, lately established on our road, and known by the name of the Somerset, which, to say truth, possesses some interest for me, even when it conveys no such important information. The distant tremulous sound of its wheels was heard just as I gained the summit of the gentle ascent, called the Goslin-brae, from which you command an extensive view down the valley of the river Gander. The public road, which comes up the side of that stream, and crosses it at a bridge about a quarter of a mile from the place where I was standing, runs partly through enclosures and plantations, and partly through open pasture land. It is a childish amusement perhaps,—but my life has been spent with children, and why should not my pleasures be like theirs?—childish as it is then, I

1 His honour Gilbert Goslinn of Gandercleugh; for I love to be precise in matters of importance.—J. C.

must own I have had great pleasure in watching the approach of the carriage, where the openings of the road permit it to be seen. The gay glancing of the equipage, its diminished and toy-like appearance at a distance, contrasted with the rapidity of its motion, its appearance and disappearance at intervals, and the progressively increasing sounds that announce its nearer approach, have all to the idle and listless spectator, who has nothing more important to attend to, something of awakening interest. The ridicule may attach to me, which is flung upon many an honest citizen, who watches from the window of his villa the passage of the stage-coach; but it is a very natural source of amusement notwithstanding, and many of those who join in the laugh are perhaps not unused to resort to it in secret.

On the present occasion, however, fate had decreed that I should not enjoy the consummation of the amusement by seeing the coach rattle past me as I sat on the turf, and hearing the hoarse grating voice of the guard as he skimmed forth for my grasp the expected packet, without the carriage checking its course for an instant. I had seen the vehicle thunder down the hill that leads to the bridge with more than its usual impetuosity, glittering all the while by flashes from a cloudy tabernacle of the dust which it had raised, and leaving a train behind it on the road resembling a wreath of summer mist. But it did not appear on the top of the nearer bank within the usual space of three minutes, which frequent observation had enabled me to ascertain was the medium time for crossing the bridge and mounting the ascent. When double that space had elapsed, I became alarmed, and walked hastily forward. As I came in sight of the bridge, the cause of delay was too manifest, for the Somerset had made a summerset in good earnest, and overturned so completely, that it was literally resting upon the ground, with the roof undermost, and the four wheels in the air. The "exertions of the guard and coachman," both of whom were gratefully commemorated in the newspapers, having succeeded in disentangling the horses by cutting the harness, were now proceeding to extricate the *insides* by a sort of summary and Cæsarean process of delivery, forcing the hinges from one of the doors which they could not open otherwise. In this manner were two disconsolate damsels set at liberty from the womb of the leathern conveniency. As they immediately began to settle their clothes, which were a little deranged, as may be presumed, I concluded they had received no injury, and did not venture to obtrude my services at their toilette, for which, I understand, I have since been reflected upon by the fair sufferers. The *outsides*, who must have been discharged from their elevated situation by a shock resembling the springing of a mine, escaped, nevertheless, with the usual allowance of scratches and bruises, excepting three, who, having been pitched into the river Gander, were dimly seen contending with the tide, like the relics of Æneas's shipwreck,—

Rari apparent nantes in gurgite vasto.

I applied my poor exertions where they seemed to be most needed, and with the assistance of one or two of the company who had escaped unhurt, easily succeeded in fishing out two of the unfortunate passengers, who were stout active young fellows; and, but for the preposterous length of their great-coats, and the equally fashionable latitude and longitude of their Wellington trousers, would have required little assistance from any one. The third was sickly and elderly, and might have perished but for the efforts used to preserve him.

When the two great-coated gentlemen had extricated themselves from the river, and shaken their ears like huge water-dogs, a violent altercation ensued betwixt them and the coachman and guard concerning the cause of their overthrow. In the course of the squabble, I observed that both my new acquaintances belonged to the law, and that their professional sharpness was likely to prove an overmatch for the surly and official tone of the guardians of the vehicle. The dispute ended in the guard assuring the passengers that they should have seats in a heavy coach which would pass that spot in less than half an hour, provided it were not full. Chance seemed to favour this arrangement, for when the expected vehicle arrived, there were only two places occupied in a carriage which professed to carry six. The two ladies who had been disinterred out of the fallen vehicle were readily admitted, but positive objections were stated by those previously in possession to the admittance of the two lawyers, whose wetted garments being much of the nature of well-soaked spunges, there was every reason to believe they would refund a considerable part of the water they had collected, to the inconvenience of their fellow-passengers. On the other hand, the lawyers rejected a seat on the roof, alleging that they had only taken that station for pleasure for one stage, but were entitled in all respects to free egress and regress from the interior, to which their contract positively referred. After some altercation, in which something was said upon the edict *Nautæ caupones stabularii*, the coach went off, leaving the learned gentlemen to abide by their action of damages.

They immediately applied to me to guide them to the next village and the best inn; and from the account I gave them of the Wallace-Head, declared they were much better pleased to stop there than to go forward upon the terms of that impudent scoundrel the guard of the Somerset. All that they now wanted was a lad to carry their travelling bags, who was easily procured from an adjoining cottage; and they prepared to walk forward, when they found there was another passenger in the same deserted situation with themselves. This was the elderly and sickly looking person, who had been precipitated into the river along with the two young lawyers. He, it seems, had been too modest to push his own plea against the coachman when he saw that of his betters rejected, and now remained behind with a look of timid anxiety, plainly intimating that he was deficient in those means of recommendation which are necessary passports to the hospitality of an inn.

I ventured to call the attention of the two dashing young blades, for such they seemed, to the desolate condition of their fellow-traveller. They took the hint with ready good-nature.

"O, true, Mr Dunover," said one of the youngsters, "you must not remain on the pavé here; you must go and have some dinner with us—Halkit and I must have a post-chaise to go on, at all events, and we will set you down wherever suits you best."

The poor man, for such his dress, as well as his diffidence, bespoke him, made the sort of acknow-

ledging bow by which says a Scotsman, "It's too much honour for the like of me;" and followed humbly behind his gay patrons, all three besprinkling the dusty road as they walked along with the moisture of their drenched garments, and exhibiting the singular and somewhat ridiculous appearance of three persons suffering from the opposite extreme of humidity, while the summer sun was at its height, and every thing else around them had the expression of heat and drought. The ridicule did not escape the young gentlemen themselves, and they had made what might be received as one or two tolerable jests on the subject before they had advanced far on their peregrination.

"We cannot complain, like Cowley," said one of them, "that Gideon's fleece remains dry, while all around is moist; this is the reverse of the miracle."

"We ought to be received with gratitude in this good town; we bring a supply of what they seem to need most," said Halkit.

"And distribute it with unparalleled generosity," replied his companion; "performing the part of three water-carts for the benefit of their dusty roads."

"We come before them, too," said Halkit, "in full professional force—counsel and agent—"

"And client," said the young advocate, looking behind him. And then added, lowering his voice "that looks as if he had kept such dangerous company too long."

It was, indeed, too true, that the humble follower of the gay young men had the threadbare appearance of a worn-out litigant, and I could not but smile at the conceit, though anxious to conceal my mirth from the object of it.

When we arrived at the Wallace Inn, the elder of the Edinburgh gentlemen, and whom I understood to be a barrister, insisted that I should remain and take part of their dinner; and their inquiries and demands speedily put my landlord and his whole family in motion to produce the best cheer which the larder and cellar afforded, and proceed to cook it to the best advantage, a science in which our entertainers seemed to be admirably skilled. In other respects they were lively young men, in the hey-day of youth and good spirits, playing the part which is common to the higher classes of the law at Edinburgh, and which nearly resembles that of the young Templars in the days of Steele and Addison. An air of giddy gaiety mingled with the good sense, taste, and information which their conversation exhibited; and it seemed to be their object to unite the character of men of fashion and lovers of the polite arts. A fine gentleman, bred up in the thorough idleness and inanity of pursuit, which I understand is absolutely necessary to the character in perfection, might in all probability have traced a tinge of professional pedantry which marked the barrister in spite of his efforts, and something of active bustle in his companion, and would certainly have detected more than a fashionable mixture of information and animated interest in the language of both. But to me, who had no pretensions to be so critical, my companions seemed to form a very happy mixture of good-breeding and liberal information, with a disposition to lively rattle, pun, and jest, amusing to a grave man, because it is what he himself can least easily command.

The thin pale-faced man, whom their good-nature had brought into their society, looked out of place as well as out of spirits; sate on the edge of his seat, and kept the chair at two feet distance from the table; thus incommoding himself considerably in conveying the victuals to his mouth, as if by way of penance for partaking of them in the company of his superiors. A short time after dinner, declining all entreaty to partake of the wine, which circulated freely round, he informed himself of the hour when the chaise had been ordered to attend; and saying he would be in readiness, modestly withdrew from the apartment.

"Jack," said the barrister to his companion, "I remember that poor fellow's face; you spoke more truly than you were aware of; he really is one of my clients, poor man."

"Poor man!" echoed Halkit—"I suppose you mean he is your one and only client?"

"That's not my fault, Jack," replied the other, whose name I discovered was Hardie. "You are to give me all your business, you know; and if you have none, the learned gentleman here knows nothing can come of nothing."

"You seem to have brought something to nothing though, in the case of that honest man. He looks as if he were just about to honour with his residence the HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN."

"You are mistaken—he is just delivered from it.—Our friend here looks for an explanation. Pray, Mr Pattieson, have you been in Edinburgh?"

I answered in the affirmative.

"Then you must have passed, occasionally at least, though probably not so faithfully as I am doomed to do, through a narrow intricate passage, leading out of the north-west corner of the Parliament Square, and passing by a high and antique building, with turrets and iron grates,

> Making good the saying odd,
> Near the church and far from God—"

Mr Halkit broke in upon his learned counsel, to contribute his moiety to the riddle—"Having at the door the sign of the Red Man——"

"And being on the whole," resumed the counsellor, interrupting his friend in his turn, "a sort of place where misfortune is happily confounded with guilt, where all who are in wish to get out——"

"And where none who have the good luck to be out, wish to get in," added his companion.

"I conceive you, gentlemen," replied I; "you mean the prison."

"The prison," added the young lawyer—"You have hit it—the very reverend Tolbooth itself; and let me tell you, you are obliged to us for describing it with so much modesty and brevity; for with whatever amplifications we might have chosen to decorate the subject, you lay entirely at our mercy, since the Fathers Conscript of our city have decreed, that the venerable edifice itself shall not remain in existence to confirm or to confute us."

"Then the Tolbooth of Edinburgh is called the Heart of Mid-Lothian?" said I.

"So termed and reputed, I assure you."

"I think," said I, with the bashful diffidence with which a man lets slip a pun in presence of his superiors, "the metropolitan county may, in that case, be said to have a sad heart."

"Right as my glove, Mr Pattieson," added Mr Hardie; "and a close heart, and a hard heart—Keep it up, Jack."

"And a wicked heart, and a poor heart," answered Halkit, doing his best.

"And yet it may be called in some sort a strong heart, and a high heart," rejoined the advocate. "You see I can put you both out of heart."

"I have played all my hearts," said the younger gentleman.

"Then we 'll have another lead," answered his companion.—"And as to the old and condemned Tolbooth, what pity the same honour cannot be done to it as has been done to many of its inmates. Why should not the Tolbooth have its 'Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words?' The old stones would be just as conscious of the honour as many a poor devil who has dangled like a tassel at the west end of it, while the hawkers were shouting a confession the culprit had never heard of."

"I am afraid," said I, "if I might presume to give my opinion, it would be a tale of unvaried sorrow and guilt."

"Not entirely, my friend," said Hardie; "a prison is a world within itself, and has its own business, griefs, and joys, peculiar to its circle. Its inmates are sometimes short-lived, but so are soldiers on service; they are poor relatively to the world without, but there are degrees of wealth and poverty among them, and so some are relatively rich also. They cannot stir abroad, but neither can the garrison of a besieged fort, or the crew of a ship at sea; and they are not under a dispensation quite so desperate as either, for they may have as much food as they have money to buy, and are not obliged to work, whether they have food or not."

"But what variety of incident," said I, (not without a secret view to my present task,) "could possibly be derived from such a work as you are pleased to talk of?"

"Infinite," replied the young advocate. "Whatever of guilt, crime, imposture, folly, unheard-of misfortunes, and unlooked-for change of fortune, can be found to chequer life, my Last Speech of the Tolbooth should illustrate with examples sufficient to gorge even the public's all-devouring appetite for the wonderful and horrible. The inventor of fictitious narratives has to rack his brains for means to diversify his tale, and after all can hardly hit upon characters or incidents which have not been used again and again, until they are familiar to the eye of the reader, so that the development, *enlèvement*, the desperate wound of which the hero never dies, the burning fever from which the heroine is sure to recover, become a mere matter of course. I join with my honest friend Crabbe, and have an unlucky propensity to hope, when hope is lost, and to rely upon the cork-jacket, which carries the heroes of romance safe through all the billows of affliction." He then declaimed the following passage, rather with too much than too little emphasis:—

"Much have I fear'd, but am no more afraid,
When some chaste beauty, by some wretch betray'd,
Is drawn away with such distracted speed,
That she anticipates a dreadful deed.
Not so do I—Let solid walls impound
The captive fair, and dig a moat around;
Let there be brazen locks and bars of steel,
And keepers cruel, such as never feel;
With not a single note the purse supply,
And when she begs, let men and maids deny;
Be windows there from which she dares not fall,
And help so distant, 'tis in vain to call;
Still means of freedom will some Power devise,
And from the baffled ruffian snatch his prize."

"The end of uncertainty," he concluded, "is the death of interest; and hence it happens that no one now reads novels."

"Hear him, ye gods!" returned his companion. "I assure you, Mr Pattieson, you will hardly visit this learned gentleman, but you are likely to find the new novel most in repute lying on his table,—snugly intrenched, however, beneath Stair's Institutes, or an open volume of Morrison's Decisions."

"Do I deny it?" said the hopeful jurisconsult, "or wherefore should I, since it is well known these Dalilahs seduce my wisers and my betters? May they not be found lurking amidst the multiplied memorials of our most distinguished counsel, and even peeping from under the cushion of a judge's arm-chair? Our seniors at the bar, within the bar, and even on the bench, read novels; and, if not belied, some of them have written novels into the bargain. I only say, that I read from habit and from indolence, not from real interest; that, like Ancient Pistol devouring his leek, I read and swear till I get to the end of the narrative. But not so in the real records of human vagaries—not so in the State Trials, or in the Books of Adjournal, where every now and then you read new pages of the human heart, and turns of fortune far beyond what the boldest novelist ever attempted to produce from the coinage of his brain."

"And for such narratives," I asked, "you suppose the History of the Prison of Edinburgh might afford appropriate materials?"

"In a degree unusually ample, my dear sir," said Hardie—"Fill your glass, however, in the meanwhile. Was it not for many years the place in which the Scottish parliament met? Was it not James's place of refuge, when the mob, inflamed by a seditious preacher, broke forth on him with the cries of 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon—bring forth the wicked Haman?' Since that time how many hearts have throbbed within these walls, as the tolling of the neighbouring bell announced to them how fast the sands of their life were ebbing; how many must have sunk at the sound—how many were supported by stubborn pride and dogged resolution—how many by the consolations of religion? Have there not been some, who, looking back on the motives of their crimes, were scarce able to understand how they should have had such temptation as to seduce them from virtue? and have there not, perhaps, been others, who, sensible of their innocence, were divided between indignation at the undeserved doom which they were to undergo, consciousness that they had not deserved it, and racking anxiety to discover some way in which they might yet vindicate themselves? Do you suppose any of these deep, powerful, and agitating feelings, can be recorded and perused without exciting a corresponding depth of deep, powerful, and agitating interest?—O! do but wait till I publish the *Causes Célèbres* of Caledonia, and you will find no want of a novel or a tragedy for some time to come. The true thing will triumph over the brightest inventions of the most ardent imagination. *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit.*"

"I have understood," said I, encouraged by the affability of my rattling entertainer, "that less of this interest must attach to Scottish jurisprudence than to that of any other country. The general morality of our people, their sober and prudent habits——"

"Secure them," said the barrister, "against any great increase of professional thieves and depredators, but not against wild and wayward starts of fancy and passion, producing crimes of an extraordinary description, which are precisely those to the detail of which we listen with thrilling interest. England has been much longer a highly civilized country; her subjects have been very strictly amenable to laws administered without fear or favour, a complete division of labour has taken place among her subjects, and the very thieves and robbers form a distinct class in society, subdivided among themselves according to the subject of their depredations, and the mode in which they carry them on, acting upon regular habits and principles, which can be calculated and anticipated at Bow Street, Hatton Garden, or the Old Bailey. Our sister kingdom is like a cultivated field,—the farmer expects that, in spite of all his care, a certain number of weeds will rise with the corn, and can tell you beforehand their names and appearance. But Scotland is like one of her own Highland glens, and the moralist who reads the records of her criminal jurisprudence, will find as many curious anomalous facts in the history of mind, as the botanist will detect rare specimens among her dingles and cliffs."

"And that 's all the good you have obtained from three perusals of the Commentaries on Scottish Criminal Jurisprudence?" said his companion. "I suppose the learned author very little thinks that the facts which his erudition and acuteness have accumulated for the illustration of legal doctrines, might be so arranged as to form a sort of appendix to the half-bound and slip-shod volumes of the circulating library."

"I 'll bet you a pint of claret," said the elder lawyer, "that he will not feel sore at the comparison. But as we say at the bar, 'I beg I may not be interrupted;' I have much more to say, upon my Scottish collection of *Causes Célèbres*. You will please recollect the scope and motive given for the contrivance and execution of many extraordinary and daring crimes, by the long civil dissentions of Scotland—by the hereditary jurisdictions, which, until 1748, rested the investigation of crimes in judges, ignorant, partial, or interested—by the habits of the gentry, shut up in their distant and solitary mansion-houses, nursing their revengeful passions just to keep their blood from stagnating—not to mention that amiable national qualification, called the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, which our lawyers join in alleging as a reason for the severity of some of our enactments. When I come to treat of matters so mysterious, deep, and dangerous, as these circumstances have given rise to, the blood of each reader shall be curdled, and his epidermis crisped into goose skin.—But, hist!—here comes the landlord, with tidings, I suppose, that the chaise is ready."

It was no such thing—the tidings bore, that no chaise could be had that evening, for Sir Peter Plyem had carried forward my landlord's two pairs of horses that morning to the ancient royal borough of Bubbleburgh, to look after his interest there. But as Bubbleburgh is only one of a set of five boroughs which club their shares for a member of parliament, Sir Peter's adversary had judiciously watched his departure, in order to commence a canvass in the no less royal borough of Bitem, which, as all the world knows, lies at the very termination of Sir Peter's avenue, and has been held in leading-strings by him and his ancestors for time immemorial. Now Sir Peter was thus placed in the situation of an ambitious monarch, who, after having commenced a daring inroad into his enemy's territories, is suddenly recalled by an invasion of his own hereditary dominions. He was obliged in consequence to return from the half-won borough of Bubbleburgh, to look after the half-lost borough of Bitem, and the two pairs of horses which had carried him that morning to Bubbleburgh, were now forcibly detained to transport him, his agent, his valet, his jester, and his hard-drinker, across the country to Bitem. The cause of this detention, which to me was of as little consequence as it may be to the reader, was important enough to my companions to reconcile them to the delay. Like eagles, they smelled the battle afar off, ordered a magnum of claret and beds at the Wallace, and entered at full career into the Bubbleburgh and Bitem politics, with all the probable "petitions and complaints" to which they were likely to give rise.

In the midst of an anxious, animated, and, to me, most unintelligible discussion, concerning provosts, bailies, deacons, sets of boroughs, leets, town-clerks, burgesses resident and non-resident, all of a sudden the lawyer recollected himself. "Poor Dunover, we must not forget him;" and the landlord was despatched in quest of the *pauvre honteux*, with an earnestly civil invitation to him for the rest of the evening. I could not help asking the young gentlemen if they knew the history of this poor man; and the counsellor applied himself to his pocket to recover the memorial or brief from which he had stated his cause.

"He has been a candidate for our *remedium miserabile*," said Mr Hardie, "commonly called a *cessio bonorum*. As there are divines who have doubted the eternity of future punishments, so the Scotch lawyers seem to have thought that the crime of poverty might be atoned for by something short of perpetual imprisonment. After a month's confinement, you must know, a prisoner for debt is entitled, on a sufficient statement to our Supreme Court, setting forth the amount of his funds, and the nature of his misfortunes, and surrendering all his effects to his creditors, to claim to be discharged from prison."

"I had heard," I replied, "of such a humane regulation."

"Yes," said Halkit, "and the beauty of it is, as the foreign fellow said, you may get the *cessio* when the *bonorums* are all spent—But what, are you puzzling in your pockets to seek your only memorial among old play-bills, letters requesting a meeting of the Faculty, rules of the Speculative Society, syllabus' of lectures—all the miscellaneous contents of a young advocate's pocket, which contains every thing but briefs and bank notes? Can you not state a case of *cessio* without your memorial? Why it is done every Saturday. The events follow each other as regularly as clock-work, and one form of condescendence might suit every one of them."

"This is very unlike the variety of distress which this gentleman stated to fall under the consideration of your judges," said I.

"True," replied Halkit; "but Hardie spoke of criminal jurisprudence, and this business is purely civil. I could plead a *cessio* myself without the

inspiring honours of a gown and three-tailed periwig — Listen. — My client was bred a journeyman weaver — made some little money — took a farm — (for conducting a farm, like driving a gig, comes by nature) — late severe times — induced to sign bills with a friend, for which he received no value — landlord sequestrates — creditors accept a composition — pursuer sets up a public-house — fails a second time — is incarcerated for a debt of ten pounds seven shillings and sixpence — his debts amount to blank — his losses to blank — his funds to blank — leaving a balance of blank in his favour. There is no opposition; your lordships will please grant commission to take his oath."

Hardie now renounced this ineffectual search, in which there was perhaps a little affectation, and told us the tale of poor Dunover's distresses, with a tone in which a degree of feeling, which he seemed ashamed of as unprofessional, mingled with his attempts at wit, and did him more honour. It was one of those tales which seem to argue a sort of ill-luck or fatality attached to the hero. A well-informed, industrious, and blameless, but poor and bashful man, had in vain essayed all the usual means by which others acquire independence, yet had never succeeded beyond the attainment of bare subsistence. During a brief gleam of hope, rather than of actual prosperity, he had added a wife and family to his cares, but the dawn was speedily overcast. Every thing retrograded with him towards the verge of the miry Slough of Despond, which yawns for insolvent debtors; and after catching at each twig, and experiencing the protracted agony of feeling them one by one elude his grasp, he actually sunk into the miry pit whence he had been extricated by the professional exertions of Hardie.

"And, I suppose, now you have dragged this poor devil ashore, you will leave him half naked on the beach to provide for himself?" said Halkit. "Hark ye," — and he whispered something in his ear, of which the penetrating and insinuating words, "Interest with my Lord," alone reached mine.

"It is *pessimi exempli*," said Hardie, laughing, "to provide for a ruined client; but I was thinking of what you mention, provided it can be managed — But hush! here he comes."

The recent relation of the poor man's misfortunes had given him, I was pleased to observe, a claim to the attention and respect of the young men, who treated him with great civility, and gradually engaged him in a conversation, which, much to my satisfaction, again turned upon the *Causes Célèbres* of Scotland. Imboldened by the kindness with which he was treated, Mr Dunover began to contribute his share to the amusement of the evening. Jails, like other places, have their ancient traditions, known only to the inhabitants, and handed down from one set of the melancholy lodgers to the next who occupy their cells. Some of these, which Dunover mentioned, were interesting, and served to illustrate the narratives of remarkable trials, which Hardie had at his finger ends, and which his companion was also well skilled in. This sort of conversation passed away the evening till the early hour when Mr Dunover chose to retire to rest, and I also retreated to take down memorandums of what I had learned, in order to add another narrative to those which it had been my chief amusement to collect, and to write out in detail. The two young men ordered a broiled bone, Madeira negus, and a pack of cards, and commenced a game at picquet.

Next morning the travellers left Gandercleugh. I afterwards learned from the papers that both have been since engaged in the great political cause of Bubbleburgh and Bitem, a summary case, and entitled to particular despatch; but which, it is thought, nevertheless, may outlast the duration of the parliament to which the contest refers. Mr Halkit, as the newspapers informed me, acts as agent or solicitor; and Mr Hardie opened for Sir Peter Plyem with singular ability, and to such good purpose, that I understand he has since had fewer play-bills and more briefs in his pocket. And both the young gentlemen deserve their good fortune; for I learned from Dunover, who called on me some weeks afterwards, and communicated the intelligence with tears in his eyes, that their interest had availed to obtain him a small office for the decent maintenance of his family; and that, after a train of constant and uninterrupted misfortune, he could trace a dawn of prosperity to his having the good fortune to be flung from the top of a mail-coach into the river Gander, in company with an advocate and a writer to the signet. The reader will not perhaps deem himself equally obliged to the accident, since it brings upon him the following narrative, founded upon the conversation of the evening.

CHAPTER II.

Whoe'er 's been at Paris must needs know the Grève,
The fatal retreat of the unfortunate brave,
Where honour and justice most oddly contribute,
To ease heroes' pains by an halter and gibbet.

There death breaks the shackles which force had put on,
And the hangman completes what the judge but began;
There the squire of the poet, and knight of the post,
Find their pains no more baulk'd, and their hopes no more cross'd.

PRIOR.

In former times, England had her Tyburn, to which the devoted victims of justice were conducted in solemn procession up what is now called Oxford-Road. In Edinburgh, a large open street, or rather oblong square, surrounded by high houses, called the Grassmarket, was used for the same melancholy purpose. It was not ill chosen for such a scene, being of considerable extent, and therefore fit to accommodate a great number of spectators, such as are usually assembled by this melancholy spectacle. On the other hand, few of the houses which surround it were, even in early times, inhabited by persons of fashion; so that those likely to be offended or over deeply affected by such unpleasant exhibitions were not in the way of having their quiet disturbed by them. The houses in the Grassmarket are, generally speaking, of a mean description; yet the place is not without some features of grandeur, being overhung by the southern side of the huge rock on which the castle stands, and by the moss-grown battlements and turreted walls of that ancient fortress.

It was the custom, until within these thirty years, or thereabouts, to use this esplanade for the scene of public executions. The fatal day was announced to the public, by the appearance of a huge black gallows-tree towards the eastern end of the Grass-

market. This ill-omened apparition was of great height, with a scaffold surrounding it, and a double ladder placed against it, for the ascent of the unhappy criminal and executioner. As this apparatus was always arranged before dawn, it seemed as if the gallows had grown out of the earth in the course of one night, like the production of some foul demon; and I well remember the fright with which the school-boys, when I was one of their number, used to regard these ominous signs of deadly preparation. On the night after the execution the gallows again disappeared, and was conveyed in silence and darkness to the place where it was usually deposited, which was one of the vaults under the Parliament-house, or courts of justice. This mode of execution is now exchanged for one similar to that in front of Newgate,—with what beneficial effect is uncertain. The mental sufferings of the convict are indeed shortened. He no longer stalks between the attendant clergymen, dressed in his grave-clothes, through a considerable part of the city, looking like a moving and walking corpse, while yet an inhabitant of this world; but, as the ultimate purpose of punishment has in view the prevention of crimes, it may at least be doubted, whether, in abridging the melancholy ceremony, we have not in part diminished that appalling effect upon the spectators which is the useful end of all such inflictions, and in consideration of which alone, unless in very particular cases, capital sentences can be altogether justified.

On the 7th day of September, 1736, these ominous preparations for execution were descried in the place we have described, and at an early hour the space around began to be occupied by several groups, who gazed on the scaffold and gibbet with a stern and vindictive show of satisfaction very seldom testified by the populace, whose good-nature, in most cases, forgets the crime of the condemned person, and dwells only on his misery. But the act of which the expected culprit had been convicted was of a description calculated nearly and closely to awaken and irritate the resentful feelings of the multitude. The tale is well known; yet it is necessary to recapitulate its leading circumstances, for the better understanding what is to follow; and the narrative may prove long, but I trust not uninteresting, even to those who have heard its general issue. At any rate, some detail is necessary, in order to render intelligible the subsequent events of our narrative.

Contraband trade, though it strikes at the root of legitimate government, by encroaching on its revenues,—though it injures the fair trader, and debauches the mind of those engaged in it,—is not usually looked upon, either by the vulgar or by their betters, in a very heinous point of view. On the contrary, in those counties where it prevails, the cleverest, boldest, and most intelligent of the peasantry, are uniformly engaged in illicit transactions, and very often with the sanction of the farmers and inferior gentry. Smuggling was almost universal in Scotland in the reigns of George I. and II.; for the people, unaccustomed to imposts, and regarding them as an unjust aggression upon their ancient liberties, made no scruple to elude them whenever it was possible to do so.

The county of Fife, bounded by two firths on the south and north, and by the sea on the east, and having a number of small seaports, was long famed for maintaining successfully a contraband trade; and, as there were many seafaring men residing there, who had been pirates and buccaneers in their youth, there were not wanting a sufficient number of daring men to carry it on. Among these, a fellow, called Andrew Wilson, originally a baker in the village of Pathhead, was particularly obnoxious to the revenue officers. He was possessed of great personal strength, courage, and cunning,—was perfectly acquainted with the coast, and capable of conducting the most desperate enterprises. On several occasions he succeeded in baffling the pursuit and researches of the king's officers; but he became so much the object of their suspicions and watchful attention, that at length he was totally ruined by repeated seizures. The man became desperate. He considered himself as robbed and plundered; and took it into his head, that he had a right to make reprisals, as he could find opportunity. Where the heart is prepared for evil, opportunity is seldom long wanting. This Wilson learned, that the Collector of the Customs at Kirkaldy had come to Pittenweem, in the course of his official round of duty, with a considerable sum of public money in his custody. As the amount was greatly within the value of the goods which had been seized from him, Wilson felt no scruple of conscience in resolving to reimburse himself for his losses, at the expense of the Collector and the revenue. He associated with himself one Robertson, and two other idle young men, whom, having been concerned in the same illicit trade, he persuaded to view the transaction in the same justifiable light in which he himself considered it. They watched the motions of the Collector; they broke forcibly into the house where he lodged,—Wilson, with two of his associates, entering the Collector's apartment, while Robertson, the fourth, kept watch at the door with a drawn cutlass in his hand. The officer of the customs, conceiving his life in danger, escaped out of his bedroom window, and fled in his shirt, so that the plunderers, with much ease, possessed themselves of about two hundred pounds of public money. The robbery was committed in a very audacious manner, for several persons were passing in the street at the time. But Robertson, representing the noise they heard as a dispute or fray betwixt the Collector and the people of the house, the worthy citizens of Pittenweem felt themselves no way called on to interfere in behalf of the obnoxious revenue officer; so, satisfying themselves with this very superficial account of the matter, like the Levite in the parable, they passed on the opposite side of the way. An alarm was at length given, military were called in, the depredators were pursued, the booty recovered, and Wilson and Robertson tried and condemned to death, chiefly on the evidence of an accomplice.

Many thought, that, in consideration of the men's erroneous opinion of the nature of the action they had committed, justice might have been satisfied with a less forfeiture than that of two lives. On the other hand, from the audacity of the fact, a severe example was judged necessary; and such was the opinion of the government. When it became apparent that the sentence of death was to be executed, files, and other implements necessary for their escape, were transmitted secretly to the culprits by a friend from without. By these

means they sawed a bar out of one of the prison windows, and might have made their escape, but for the obstinacy of Wilson, who, as he was daringly resolute, was doggedly pertinacious of his opinion. His comrade, Robertson, a young and slender man, proposed to make the experiment of passing the foremost through the gap they had made, and enlarging it from the outside, if necessary, to allow Wilson free passage. Wilson, however, insisted on making the first experiment, and being a robust and lusty man, he not only found it impossible to get through betwixt the bars, but, by his struggles, he jammed himself so fast, that he was unable, to draw his body back again. In these circumstances discovery became unavoidable, and sufficient precautions were taken by the jailor to prevent any repetition of the same attempt. Robertson uttered not a word of reflection on his companion for the consequences of his obstinacy; but it appeared from the sequel, that Wilson's mind was deeply impressed with the recollection, that, but for him, his comrade, over whose mind he exercised considerable influence, would not have engaged in the criminal enterprise which had terminated thus fatally; and that now he had become his destroyer a second time, since, but for his obstinacy, Robertson might have effected his escape. Minds like Wilson's, even when exercised in evil practices, sometimes retain the power of thinking and resolving with enthusiastic generosity. His whole thoughts were now bent on the possibility of saving Robertson's life, without the least respect to his own. The resolution which he adopted, and the manner in which he carried it into effect, were striking and unusual.

Adjacent to the tolbooth, or city jail of Edinburgh, is one of three churches into which the cathedral of St Giles is now divided, called, from its vicinity, the Tolbooth Church. It was the custom, that criminals under sentence of death were brought to this church, with a sufficient guard, to hear and join in public worship on the Sabbath before execution. It was supposed that the hearts of these unfortunate persons, however hardened before against feelings of devotion, could not but be accessible to them upon uniting their thoughts and voices, for the last time, along with their fellow-mortals, in addressing their Creator. And to the rest of the congregation, it was thought it could not but be impressive and affecting, to find their devotions mingling with those, who, sent by the doom of an earthly tribunal to appear where the whole earth is judged, might be considered as beings trembling on the verge of eternity. The practice, however edifying, has been discontinued, in consequence of the incident we are about to detail.

The clergyman, whose duty it was to officiate in the Tolbooth Church, had concluded an affecting discourse, part of which was particularly directed to the unfortunate men, Wilson and Robertson, who were in the pew set apart for the persons in their unhappy situation, each secured betwixt two soldiers of the city guard. The clergyman had reminded them, that the next congregation they must join would be that of the just, or of the unjust: that the psalms they now heard must be exchanged, in the space of two brief days, for eternal hallelujahs, or eternal lamentations; and that this fearful alternative must depend upon the state to which they might be able to bring their minds before the moment of awful preparation: that they should not despair on account of the suddenness of the summons, but rather to feel this comfort in their misery, that, though all who now lifted the voice, or bent the knee in conjunction with them, lay under the same sentence of certain death, *they* only had the advantage of knowing the precise moment at which it should be executed upon them. "Therefore," urged the good man, his voice trembling with emotion, "redeem the time, my unhappy brethren, which is yet left; and remember, that, with the grace of Him to whom space and time are but as nothing, salvation may yet be assured, even in the pittance of delay which the laws of your country afford you."

Robertson was observed to weep at these words; but Wilson seemed as one whose brain had not entirely received their meaning, or whose thoughts were deeply impressed with some different subject, —an expression so natural to a person in his situation, that it excited neither suspicion nor surprise.

The benediction was pronounced as usual, and the congregation was dismissed, many lingering to indulge their curiosity with a more fixed look at the two criminals, who now, as well as their guards, rose up, as if to depart when the crowd should permit them. A murmur of compassion was heard to pervade the spectators, the more general, perhaps, on account of the alleviating circumstances of the case; when all at once, Wilson, who, as we have already noticed, was a very strong man, seized two of the soldiers, one with each hand, and calling at the same time to his companion, "Run, Geordie, run!" threw himself on a third, and fastened his teeth on the collar of his coat. Robertson stood for a second as if thunderstruck, and unable to avail himself of the opportunity of escape; but the cry of "Run, run!" being echoed from many around, whose feelings surprised them into a very natural interest in his behalf, he shook off the grasp of the remaining soldier, threw himself over the pew, mixed with the dispersing congregation, none of whom felt inclined to stop a poor wretch taking his last chance for his life, gained the door of the church, and was lost to all pursuit.

The generous intrepidity which Wilson had displayed on this occasion augmented the feeling of compassion which attended his fate. The public, where their own prejudices are not concerned, are easily engaged on the side of disinterestedness and humanity, admired Wilson's behaviour, and rejoiced in Robertson's escape. This general feeling was so great, that it excited a vague report that Wilson would be rescued at the place of execution, either by the mob or by some of his old associates, or by some second extraordinary and unexpected exertion of strength and courage on his own part. The magistrates thought it their duty to provide against the possibility of disturbance. They ordered out, for protection of the execution of the sentence, the greater part of their own City Guard, under the command of Captain Porteous, a man whose name became too memorable from the melancholy circumstances of the day, and subsequent events. It may be necessary to say a word about this person, and the corps which he commanded. But the subject is of importance sufficient to deserve another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

> And thou, great god of aqua-vitæ!
> Wha sways the empire of this city,
> (When fou we 're sometimes capernoity,)
> Be thou prepared,
> To save us frae that black banditti,
> The City Guard!
> FERGUSON'S *Daft Days.*

CAPTAIN JOHN PORTEOUS, a name memorable in the traditions of Edinburgh, as well as in the records of criminal jurisprudence, was the son of a citizen of Edinburgh, who endeavoured to breed him up to his own mechanical trade of a tailor. The youth, however, had a wild and irreclaimable propensity to dissipation, which finally sent him to serve in the corps long maintained in the service of the States of Holland, and called the Scotch Dutch. Here he learned military discipline; and, returning afterwards, in the course of an idle and wandering life, to his native city, his services were required by the magistrates of Edinburgh in the disturbed year 1715, for disciplining their City Guard, in which he shortly afterwards received a captain's commission. It was only by his military skill, and an alert and resolute character as an officer of police, that he merited this promotion, for he is said to have been a man of profligate habits, an unnatural son, and a brutal husband. He was, however, useful in his station, and his harsh and fierce habits rendered him formidable to rioters or disturbers of the public peace.

The corps in which he held his command is, or perhaps we should rather say *was*, a body of about one hundred and twenty soldiers, divided into three companies, and regularly armed, clothed, and embodied. They were chiefly veterans who enlisted in this corps, having the benefit of working at their trades when they were off duty. These men had the charge of preserving public order, repressing riots and street robberies, acting, in short, as an armed police, and attending on all public occasions where confusion or popular disturbance might be expected.[1] Poor Ferguson, whose irregularities sometimes led him into unpleasant rencontres with these military conservators of public order, and who mentions them so often that he may be termed their poet laureate, thus admonishes his readers, warned doubtless by his own experience:

> "Gude folk, as ye come frae the fair,
> Bide yont frae this black squad;
> There 's nae sic savages elsewhere
> Allow'd to wear cockad."

In fact, the soldiers of the City Guard, being, as we have said, in general discharged veterans, who had strength enough remaining for this municipal duty, and being, moreover, for the greater part, Highlanders, were neither by birth, education, or former habits, trained to endure with much patience the insults of the rabble, or the provoking petulance of truant schoolboys, and idle debauchees of all descriptions, with whom their occupation brought them into contact. On the contrary, the tempers of the poor old fellows were soured by the indignities with which the mob distinguished them on many occasions, and frequently might have required the soothing strains of the poet we have just quoted —

> "O soldiers! for your ain dear sakes,
> For Scotland's love, the Land o' Cakes,
> Gie not her bairns sic deadly paiks,
> Nor be sae rude,
> Wi' firelock or Lochaber-axe,
> As spill their bluid!"

On all occasions when a holyday licensed some riot and irregularity, a skirmish with these veterans was a favourite recreation with the rabble of Edinburgh. These pages may perhaps see the light when many have in fresh recollection such onsets as we allude to. But the venerable corps, with whom the contention was held, may now be considered as totally extinct. Of late the gradual diminution of these civic soldiers, reminds one of the abatement of King Lear's hundred knights. The edicts of each succeeding set of magistrates have, like those of Goneril and Regan, diminished this venerable band with the similar question, "What need we five-and-twenty? — ten? — or five?" And it is now nearly come to, "What need one?" A spectre may indeed here and there still be seen, of an old grey-headed and grey-bearded Highlander, with war-worn features, but bent double by age; dressed in an old-fashioned cocked hat, bound with white tape instead of silver lace; and in coat, waistcoat, and breeches of a muddy-coloured red, bearing in his withered hand an ancient weapon, called a Lochaber-axe; a long pole, namely, with an axe at the extremity, and a hook at the back of the hatchet.[2] Such a phantom of former days still creeps, I have been informed, round the statue of Charles the Second, in the Parliament Square, as if the image of a Stewart were the last refuge for any memorial of our ancient manners; and one or two others are supposed to glide around the door of the guard-house assigned to them in the Luckenbooths, when their ancient refuge in the High Street was laid low.[3] But the fate of manuscripts bequeathed to friends and executors is so uncertain, that the narrative containing these frail memorials of the old Town-Guard of Edinburgh, who, with their grim and valiant corporal, John Dhu, (the fiercest-looking fellow I ever saw,) were, in my boyhood, the alternate terror and derision of the petulant brood of the High-school, may, perhaps, only come to light when all memory of the institution has faded away, and then serve as an illustration of Kay's caricatures, who has preserved the features of some of their heroes. In the preceding generation, when there was a perpetual alarm for the plots and activity of the Jacobites, some pains were taken by the magistrates of Edinburgh to keep this corps, though composed always of such materials as we have noticed, in a more effective state than was afterwards judged necessary, when their most dangerous service was to skirmish with the rabble on the king's birth-day. They were, therefore, more the objects of hatred, and less that of scorn, than they were afterwards accounted.

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1 The Lord Provost was ex-officio commander and colonel of the corps, which might be increased to three hundred men when the times required it. No other drum but theirs was allowed to sound on the High Street between the Luckenbooths and the Netherbow.

2 This hook was to enable the bearer of the Lochaber-axe to scale a gateway, by grappling the top of the door, and swinging himself up by the staff of his weapon.

3 See Note A. *Soldiers of the City Guard.*

To Captain John Porteous, the honour of his command and of his corps seems to have been a matter of high interest and importance. He was exceedingly incensed against Wilson for the affront which he construed him to have put upon his soldiers, in the effort he made for the liberation of his companion, and expressed himself most ardently on the subject. He was no less indignant at the report, that there was an intention to rescue Wilson himself from the gallows, and uttered many threats and imprecations upon that subject, which were afterwards remembered to his disadvantage. In fact, if a good deal of determination and promptitude rendered Porteous, in one respect, fit to command guards designed to suppress popular commotion, he seems, on the other, to have been disqualified for a charge so delicate, by a hot and surly temper, always too ready to come to blows and violence ; a character void of principle ; and a disposition to regard the rabble, who seldom failed to regale him and his soldiers with some marks of their displeasure, as declared enemies, upon whom it was natural and justifiable that he should seek opportunities of vengeance. Being, however, the most active and trust-worthy among the captains of the City Guard, he was the person to whom the magistrates confided the command of the soldiers appointed to keep the peace at the time of Wilson's execution. He was ordered to guard the gallows and scaffold, with about eighty men, all the disposable force that could be spared for that duty.

But the magistrates took farther precautions, which affected Porteous's pride very deeply. They requested the assistance of part of a regular infantry regiment, not to attend upon the execution, but to remain drawn up on the principal street of the city during the time that it went forward, in order to intimidate the multitude, in case they should be disposed to be unruly, with a display of force which could not be resisted without desperation. It may sound ridiculous in our ears, considering the fallen state of this ancient civic corps, that its officer should have felt punctiliously jealous of its honour. Yet so it was. Captain Porteous resented, as an indignity, the introducing the Welsh Fusileers within the city, and drawing them up in the street where no drums but his own were allowed to be sounded, without the special command or permission of the magistrates. As he could not shew his ill-humour to his patrons the magistrates, it increased his indignation and his desire to be revenged on the unfortunate criminal Wilson, and all who favoured him. These internal emotions of jealousy and rage wrought a change on the man's mien and bearing, visible to all who saw him on the fatal morning when Wilson was appointed to suffer. Porteous's ordinary appearance was rather favourable. He was about the middle size, stout, and well made, having a military air, and yet rather a gentle and mild countenance. His complexion was brown, his face somewhat fretted with the scars of the small-pox, his eyes rather languid than keen or fierce. On the present occasion, however, it seemed to those who saw him as if he were agitated by some evil demon. His step was irregular, his voice hollow and broken, his countenance pale, his eyes staring and wild, his speech imperfect and confused, and his whole appearance so disordered, that many remarked he seemed to be *fey*, a Scottish expression, meaning the state of those who are driven on to their impending fate by the strong impulse of some irresistible necessity.

One part of his conduct was truly diabolical, if, indeed, it has not been exaggerated by the general prejudice entertained against his memory. When Wilson, the unhappy criminal, was delivered to him by the keeper of the prison, in order that he might be conducted to the place of execution, Porteous, not satisfied with the usual precautions to prevent escape, ordered him to be manacled. This might be justifiable from the character and bodily strength of the malefactor, as well as from the apprehensions so generally entertained of an expected rescue. But the handcuffs which were produced being found too small for the wrists of a man so big-boned as Wilson, Porteous proceeded with his own hands, and by great exertion of strength, to force them till they clasped together, to the exquisite torture of the unhappy criminal. Wilson remonstrated against such barbarous usage, declaring that the pain distracted his thoughts from the subjects of meditation proper to his unhappy condition.

"It signifies little," replied Captain Porteous; "your pain will be soon at an end."

"Your cruelty is great," answered the sufferer. "You know not how soon you yourself may have occasion to ask the mercy, which you are now refusing to a fellow-creature. May God forgive you!"

These words, long afterwards quoted and remembered, were all that passed between Porteous and his prisoner; but as they took air, and became known to the people, they greatly increased the popular compassion for Wilson, and excited a proportionate degree of indignation against Porteous; against whom, as strict, and even violent in the discharge of his unpopular office, the common people had some real, and many imaginary causes of complaint.

When the painful procession was completed, and Wilson, with the escort, had arrived at the scaffold in the Grassmarket, there appeared no signs of that attempt to rescue him which had occasioned such precautions. The multitude, in general, looked on with deeper interest than at ordinary executions; and there might be seen, on the countenances of many, a stern and indignant expression, like that with which the ancient Cameronians might be supposed to witness the execution of their brethren, who glorified the Covenant on the same occasion, and at the same spot. But there was no attempt at violence. Wilson himself seemed disposed to hasten over the space that divided time from eternity. The devotions proper and usual on such occasions were no sooner finished than he submitted to his fate, and the sentence of the law was fulfilled.

He had been suspended on the gibbet so long as to be totally deprived of life, when at once, as if occasioned by some newly-received impulse, there arose a tumult among the multitude. Many stones were thrown at Porteous and his guards; some mischief was done; and the mob continued to press forward with whoops, shrieks, howls, and exclamations. A young fellow, with a sailor's cap slouched over his face, sprung on the scaffold, and cut the rope by which the criminal was sus-

pended. Others approached to carry off the body, either to secure for it a decent grave, or to try, perhaps, some means of resuscitation. Captain Porteous was wrought, by this appearance of insurrection against his authority, into a rage so headlong as made him forget, that, the sentence having been fully executed, it was his duty not to engage in hostilities with the misguided multitude, but to draw off his men as fast as possible. He sprung from the scaffold, snatched a musket from one of his soldiers, commanded the party to give fire, and, as several eye-witnesses concurred in swearing, set them the example, by discharging his piece, and shooting a man dead on the spot. Several soldiers obeyed his command or followed his example; six or seven persons were slain, and a great many were hurt and wounded.

After this act of violence, the Captain proceeded to withdraw his men towards their guard-house in the High Street. The mob were not so much intimidated as incensed by what had been done. They pursued the soldiers with execrations, accompanied by volleys of stones. As they pressed on them, the rearmost soldiers turned, and again fired with fatal aim and execution. It is not accurately known whether Porteous commanded this second act of violence; but of course the odium of the whole transactions of the fatal day attached to him, and to him alone. He arrived at the guard-house, dismissed his soldiers, and went to make his report to the magistrates concerning the unfortunate events of the day.

Apparently by this time Captain Porteous had begun to doubt the propriety of his own conduct, and the reception he met with from the magistrates was such as to make him still more anxious to gloss it over. He denied that he had given orders to fire; he denied he had fired with his own hand; he even produced the fusee which he carried as an officer for examination; it was found still loaded. Of three cartridges which he was seen to put in his pouch that morning, two were still there; a white handkerchief was thrust into the muzzle of the piece, and returned unsoiled or blackened. To the defence founded on these circumstances it was answered, that Porteous had not used his own piece, but had been seen to take one from a soldier. Among the many who had been killed and wounded by the unhappy fire, there were several of better rank; for even the humanity of such soldiers as fired over the heads of the mere rabble around the scaffold, proved in some instances fatal to persons who were stationed in windows, or observed the melancholy scene from a distance. The voice of public indignation was loud and general; and, ere men's tempers had time to cool, the trial of Captain Porteous took place before the High Court of Justiciary. After a long and patient hearing, the jury had the difficult duty of balancing the positive evidence of many persons, and those of respectability, who deposed positively to the prisoner's commanding his soldiers to fire, and himself firing his piece, of which some swore that they saw the smoke and flash, and beheld a man drop at whom it was pointed, with the negative testimony of others, who, though well stationed for seeing what had passed, neither heard Porteous give orders to fire, nor saw him fire himself; but, on the contrary, averred that the first shot was fired by a soldier who stood close by him. A great part of his defence was also founded on the turbulence of the mob, which witnesses, according to their feelings, their predilections, and their opportunities of observation, represented differently; some describing as a formidable riot, what others represented as a trifling disturbance, such as always used to take place on the like occasions, when the executioner of the law, and the men commissioned to protect him in his task, were generally exposed to some indignities. The verdict of the jury sufficiently shews how the evidence preponderated in their minds. It declared that John Porteous fired a gun among the people assembled at the execution; that he gave orders to his soldiers to fire, by which many persons were killed and wounded; but, at the same time, that the prisoner and his guard had been wounded and beaten, by stones thrown at them by the multitude. Upon this verdict, the Lords of Justiciary passed sentence of death against Captain John Porteous, adjudging him, in the common form, to be hanged on a gibbet at the common place of execution, on Wednesday, 8th September, 1736, and all his moveable property to be forfeited to the king's use, according to the Scottish law in cases of wilful murder.

CHAPTER IV.

"The hour 's come, but not the man."[1]
Kelpie.

On the day when the unhappy Porteous was expected to suffer the sentence of the law, the place of execution, extensive as it is, was crowded almost to suffocation. There was not a window in all the lofty tenements around it, or in the steep and crooked street called the Bow, by which the fatal procession was to descend from the High Street, that was not absolutely filled with spectators. The uncommon height and antique appearance of these houses, some of which were formerly the property of the Knights Templars, and the Knights of St John, and still exhibit on their fronts and gables the iron cross of these orders, gave additional effect to a scene in itself so striking. The area of the Grassmarket resembled a huge dark lake or sea of human heads, in the centre of which arose the fatal tree, tall, black, and ominous, from which dangled the deadly halter. Every object takes interest from its uses and associations, and the erect beam and empty noose, things so simple in themselves, became, on such an occasion, objects of terror and of solemn interest.

Amid so numerous an assembly there was scarcely a word spoken, save in whispers. The thirst of vengeance was in some degree allayed by its supposed certainty; and even the populace, with deeper feeling than they are wont to entertain, suppressed all clamorous exultation, and prepared to enjoy the scene of retaliation in triumph, silent and decent, though stern and relentless. It seemed as if the depth of their hatred to the unfortunate criminal scorned to display itself in any thing resembling the more noisy current of their ordinary

[1] See Note B. *The Kelpie.*

feelings. Had a stranger consulted only the evidence of his ears, he might have supposed that so vast a multitude were assembled for some purpose which affected them with the deepest sorrow, and stilled those noises which, on all ordinary occasions, arise from such a concourse; but if he gazed upon their faces, he would have been instantly undeceived. The compressed lip, the bent brow, the stern and flashing eye of almost every one on whom he looked, conveyed the expression of men come to glut their sight with triumphant revenge. It is probable that the appearance of the criminal might have somewhat changed the temper of the populace in his favour, and that they might in the moment of death have forgiven the man against whom their resentment had been so fiercely heated. It had, however, been destined, that the mutability of their sentiments was not to be exposed to this trial.

The usual hour for producing the criminal had been past for many minutes, yet the spectators observed no symptom of his appearance. "Would they venture to defraud public justice?" was the question which men began anxiously to ask at each other. The first answer in every case was bold and positive,—"They dare not." But when the point was farther canvassed, other opinions were entertained, and various causes of doubt were suggested. Porteous had been a favourite officer of the magistracy of the city, which, being a numerous and fluctuating body, requires for its support a degree of energy in its functionaries, which the individuals who compose it cannot at all times alike be supposed to possess in their own persons. It was remembered, that in the Information for Porteous, (the paper, namely, in which his case was stated to the Judges of the criminal court,) he had been described by his counsel as the person on whom the magistrates chiefly relied in all emergencies of uncommon difficulty. It was argued, too, that his conduct, on the unhappy occasion of Wilson's execution, was capable of being attributed to an imprudent excess of zeal in the execution of his duty, a motive for which those under whose authority he acted might be supposed to have great sympathy. And as these considerations might move the magistrates to make a favourable representation of Porteous's case, there were not wanting others in the higher departments of government, which would make such suggestions favourably listened to.

The mob of Edinburgh, when thoroughly excited, had been at all times one of the fiercest which could be found in Europe; and of late years they had risen repeatedly against the government, and sometimes not without temporary success. They were conscious, therefore, that they were no favourites with the rulers of the period, and that, if Captain Porteous's violence was not altogether regarded as good service, it might certainly be thought, that to visit it with a capital punishment would render it both delicate and dangerous for future officers, in the same circumstances, to act with effect in repressing tumults. There is also a natural feeling, on the part of all members of government, for the general maintenance of authority; and it seemed not unlikely, that what to the relatives of the sufferers appeared a wanton and unprovoked massacre, should be otherwise viewed in the cabinet of St James's. It might be there supposed, that, upon the whole matter, Captain Porteous was in the exercise of a trust delegated to him by the lawful civil authority; that he had been assaulted by the populace, and several of his men hurt; and that, in finally repelling force by force, his conduct could be fairly imputed to no other motive than self-defence in the discharge of his duty.

These considerations, of themselves very powerful, induced the spectators to apprehend the possibility of a reprieve; and to the various causes which might interest the rulers in his favour, the lower part of the rabble added one which was peculiarly well adapted to their comprehension. It was averred, in order to increase the odium against Porteous, that while he repressed with the utmost severity the slightest excesses of the poor, he not only overlooked the licence of the young nobles and gentry, but was very willing to lend them the countenance of his official authority, in execution of such loose pranks as it was chiefly his duty to have restrained. This suspicion, which was perhaps much exaggerated, made a deep impression on the minds of the populace; and when several of the higher rank joined in a petition, recommending Porteous to the mercy of the crown, it was generally supposed he owed their favour not to any conviction of the hardship of his case, but to the fear of losing a convenient accomplice in their debaucheries. It is scarcely necessary to say how much this suspicion augmented the people's detestation of this obnoxious criminal, as well as their fear of his escaping the sentence pronounced against him.

While these arguments were stated and replied to, and canvassed and supported, the hitherto silent expectation of the people became changed into that deep and agitating murmur, which is sent forth by the ocean before the tempest begins to howl. The crowded populace, as if their motions had corresponded with the unsettled state of their minds, fluctuated to and fro without any visible cause of impulse, like the agitation of the waters, called by sailors the ground-swell. The news, which the magistrates had almost hesitated to communicate to them, were at length announced, and spread among the spectators with a rapidity like lightning. A reprieve from the Secretary of State's office, under the hand of his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, had arrived, intimating the pleasure of Queen Caroline, (regent of the kingdom during the absence of George II. on the Continent,) that the execution of the sentence of death pronounced against John Porteous, late Captain-Lieutenant of the City-Guard of Edinburgh, present prisoner in the tolbooth of that city, be respited for six weeks from the time appointed for his execution.

The assembled spectators of almost all degrees, whose minds had been wound up to the pitch which we have described, uttered a groan, or rather a roar of indignation and disappointed revenge, similar to that of a tiger from whom his meal has been rent by his keeper when he was just about to devour it. This fierce exclamation seemed to forebode some immediate explosion of popular resentment, and, in fact, such had been expected by the magistrates, and the necessary measures had been taken to repress it. But the shout was not repeated, nor did any sudden tumult ensue, such as it appeared to announce. The populace seemed to be ashamed of having expressed their disappointment in a vain clamour, and the sound changed, not into the silence which had preceded the arrival of these stunning

news, but into stifled mutterings, which each group maintained among themselves, and which were blended into one deep and hoarse murmur which floated above the assembly.

Yet still, though all expectation of the execution was over, the mob remained assembled, stationary, as it were, through very resentment, gazing on the preparations for death, which had now been made in vain, and stimulating their feelings, by recalling the various claims which Wilson might have had on royal mercy, from the mistaken motives on which he acted, as well as from the generosity he had displayed towards his accomplice. "This man," they said, — "the brave, the resolute, the generous, was executed to death without mercy for stealing a purse of gold, which in some sense he might consider as a fair reprisal; while the profligate satellite, who took advantage of a trifling tumult, inseparable from such occasions, to shed the blood of twenty of his fellow-citizens, is deemed a fitting object for the exercise of the royal prerogative of mercy. Is this to be borne? — would our fathers have borne it? Are not we, like them, Scotsmen and burghers of Edinburgh?"

The officers of justice began now to remove the scaffold, and other preparations which had been made for the execution, in hopes, by doing so, to accelerate the dispersion of the multitude. The measure had the desired effect; for no sooner had the fatal tree been unfixed from the large stone pedestal or socket in which it was secured, and sunk slowly down upon the wain intended to remove it to the place where it was usually deposited, than the populace, after giving vent to their feelings in a second shout of rage and mortification, began slowly to disperse to their usual abodes and occupations.

The windows were in like manner gradually deserted, and groups of the more decent class of citizens formed themselves, as if waiting to return homewards when the streets should be cleared of the rabble. Contrary to what is frequently the case, this description of persons agreed in general with the sentiments of their inferiors, and considered the cause as common to all ranks. Indeed, as we have already noticed, it was by no means amongst the lowest class of the spectators, or those most likely to be engaged in the riot at Wilson's execution, that the fatal fire of Porteous's soldiers had taken effect. Several persons were killed who were looking out at windows at the scene, who could not of course belong to the rioters, and were persons of decent rank and condition. The burghers, therefore, resenting the loss which had fallen on their own body, and proud and tenacious of their rights, as the citizens of Edinburgh have at all times been, were greatly exasperated at the unexpected respite of Captain Porteous.

It was noticed at the time, and afterwards more particularly remembered, that, while the mob were in the act of dispersing, several individuals were seen busily passing from one place and one group of people to another, remaining long with none, but whispering for a little time with those who appeared to be declaiming most violently against the conduct of government. These active agents had the appearance of men from the country, and were generally supposed to be old friends and confederates of Wilson, whose minds were of course highly excited against Porteous.

If, however, it was the intention of these men to stir the multitude to any sudden act of mutiny, it seemed for the time to be fruitless. The rabble, as well as the more decent part of the assembly, dispersed, and went home peaceably; and it was only by observing the moody discontent on their brows, or catching the tenor of the conversation they held with each other, that a stranger could estimate the state of their minds. We will give the reader this advantage, by associating ourselves with one of the numerous groups who were painfully ascending the steep declivity of the West Bow, to return to their dwellings in the Lawnmarket.

"An unco thing this, Mrs Howden," said old Peter Plumdamas to his neighbour the rouping-wife, or saleswoman, as he offered her his arm to assist her in the toilsome ascent, "to see the grit folk at Lunnon set their face against law and gospel, and let loose sic a reprobate as Porteous upon a peaceable town!"

"And to think o' the weary walk they hae gien us," answered Mrs Howden, with a groan; "and sic a comfortable window as I had gotten, too, just within a penny-stane-cast of the scaffold — I could hae heard every word the minister said — and to pay twalpennies for my stand, and a' for naething!"

"I am judging," said Mr Plumdamas, "that this reprieve wadna stand gude in the auld Scots law, when the kingdom *was* a kingdom."

"I dinna ken muckle about the law," answered Mrs Howden; "but I ken, when we had a king, and a chancellor, and parliament-men o' our ain, we could aye peeble them wi' stanes when they werena gude bairns — But naebody's nails can reach the length o' Lunnon."

"Weary on Lunnon, and a' that e'er came out o't!" said Miss Grizel Damahoy, an ancient seamstress; "they hae taen away our parliament and they hae oppressed our trade. Our gentles will hardly allow that a Scots needle can sew ruffles on a sark, or lace on an owerlay."

"Ye may say that — Miss Damahoy, and I ken o' them that hae gotten raisins frae Lunnon by forpits at ance," responded Plumdamas; "and then sic an host of idle English gaugers and excisemen as hae come down to vex and torment us, that an honest man canna fetch sae muckle as a bit anker o' brandy frae Leith to the Lawnmarket, but he 's like to be rubbit o' the very gudes he 's bought and paid for. — Weel, I winna justify Andrew Wilson for pitting hands on what wasna his; but if he took nae mair than his ain, there 's an awfu' difference between that and the fact this man stands for."

"If ye speak about the law," said Mrs Howden, "here comes Mr Saddletree, that can settle it as weel as ony on the bench."

The party she mentioned, a grave elderly person with a superb periwig, dressed in a decent suit of sad-coloured clothes, came up as she spoke, and courteously gave his arm to Miss Grizel Damahoy.

It may be necessary to mention, that Mr Bartoline Saddletree kept an excellent and highly-esteemed shop for harness, saddles, &c. &c. at the sign of the Golden Nag, at the head of Bess Wynd. His genius, however, (as he himself and most of his neighbours conceived,) lay towards the weightier matters of the law, and he failed not to give frequent attendance upon the pleadings and arguments of the lawyers and judges in the neighbouring square, where, to say the truth, he was oftener to

be found than would have consisted with his own emolument, but that his wife, an active painstaking person, could, in his absence, make an admirable shift to please the customers and scold the journeymen. This good lady was in the habit of letting her husband take his way, and go on improving his stock of legal knowledge without interruption; but, as if in requital, she insisted upon having her own will in the domestic and commercial departments which he abandoned to her. Now, as Bartoline Saddletree had a considerable gift of words, which he mistook for eloquence, and conferred more liberally upon the society in which he lived than was at all times gracious and acceptable, there went forth a saying, with which wags used sometimes to interrupt his rhetoric, that, as he had a golden nag at his door, so he had a grey mare in his shop. This reproach induced Mr Saddletree, on all occasions, to assume rather a haughty and stately tone towards his good woman, a circumstance by which she seemed very little affected, unless he attempted to exercise any real authority, when she never failed to fly into open rebellion. But such extremes Bartoline seldom provoked; for, like the gentle King Jamie, he was fonder of talking of authority than really exercising it. This turn of mind was, on the whole, lucky for him; since his substance was increased without any trouble on his part, or any interruption of his favourite studies.

This word in explanation has been thrown in to the reader, while Saddletree was laying down, with great precision, the law upon Porteous's case, by which he arrived at this conclusion, that, if Porteous had fired five minutes sooner, before Wilson was cut down, he would have been *versans in licito;* engaged, that is, in a lawful act, and only liable to be punished *propter excessum*, or for lack of discretion, which might have mitigated the punishment to *pœna ordinaria.*

"Discretion!" echoed Mrs Howden, on whom, it may well be supposed, the fineness of this distinction was entirely thrown away,—"whan had Jock Porteous either grace, discretion, or gude manners?—I mind when his father——"

"But, Mrs Howden," said Saddletree——

"And I," said Miss Damahoy, "mind when his mother——"

"Miss Damahoy," entreated the interrupted orator——

"And I," said Plumdamas, "mind when his wife——"

"Mr Plumdamas—Mrs Howden—Miss Damahoy," again implored the orator,—"mind the distinction, as Counsellor Crossmyloof says—'I,' says he, 'take a distinction.' Now, the body of the criminal being cut down, and the execution ended, Porteous was no longer official; the act which he came to protect and guard, being done and ended, he was no better than *cuivis ex populo.*"

"*Quivis*—*quivis*, Mr Saddletree, craving your pardon," said (with a prolonged emphasis on the first syllable) Mr Butler, the deputy schoolmaster of a parish near Edinburgh, who at that moment came up behind them as the false Latin was uttered.

"What signifies interrupting me, Mr Butler?—but I am glad to see ye notwithstanding—I speak after Counsellor Crossmyloof, and he said *cuivis.*"

"If Counsellor Crossmyloof used the dative for the nominative, I would have crossed *his* loof with a tight leathern strap, Mr Saddletree; there is not a boy on the booby form but should have been scourged for such a solecism in grammar."

"I speak Latin like a lawyer, Mr Butler, and not like a schoolmaster," retorted Saddletree.

"Scarce like a schoolboy, I think," rejoined Butler.

"It matters little," said Bartoline; "all I mean to say is, that Porteous has become liable to the *pœna extra ordinem*, or capital punishment—which is to say, in plain Scotch, the gallows—simply because he did not fire when he was in office, but waited till the body was cut down, the execution whilk he had in charge to guard implemented, and he himself exonered of the public trust imposed on him."

"But, Mr Saddletree," said Plumdamas, "do ye really think John Porteous's case wad hae been better if he had begun firing before ony stanes were flung at a'?"

"Indeed do I, neighbour Plumdamas," replied Bartoline, confidently, "he being then in point of trust and in point of power, the execution being but inchoat, or, at least, not implemented, or finally ended; but after Wilson was cut down, it was a' ower—he was clean exauctorate, and had nae mair ado but to get awa wi' his guard up this West Bow as fast as if there had been a caption after him—And this is law, for I heard it laid down by Lord Vincovincentem."

"Vincovincentem?—Is he a lord of state, or a lord of seat?" inquired Mrs Howden.[1]

"A lord of seat—a lord of session.—I fash mysell little wi' lords o' state; they vex me wi' a wheen idle questions about their saddles, and curpels, and holsters, and horse-furniture, and what they 'll cost, and whan they 'll be ready—a wheen galloping geese—my wife may serve the like o' them."

"And so might she, in her day, hae served the best lord in the land, for as little as ye think o' her, Mr Saddletree," said Mrs Howden, somewhat indignant at the contemptuous way in which her gossip was mentioned; "when she and I were twa gilpies, we little thought to hae sitten doun wi' the like o' my auld Davie Howden, or you either, Mr Saddletree."

While Saddletree, who was not bright at a reply, was cudgelling his brains for an answer to this home-thrust, Miss Damahoy broke in on him.

"And as for the lords of state," said Miss Damahoy, "ye suld mind the riding o' the parliament, Mr Saddletree, in the gude auld time before the Union,—a year's rent o' mony a gude estate gaed for horse-graith and harnessing, forby broidered robes and foot-manties, that wad hae stude by their lane wi' gold brocade, and that were muckle in my ain line."

"Ay, and then the lusty banqueting, with sweetmeats and comfits wet and dry, and dried fruits of divers sorts," said Plumdamas. "But Scotland was Scotland in these days."

"I 'll tell ye what it is, neighbours," said Mrs Howden, "I 'll ne'er believe Scotland is Scotland ony mair, if our kindly Scots sit doun wi' the affront

[1] A nobleman was called a Lord of State. The Senators of the College of Justice were termed Lords of Seat, or of the Session.

they hae gien us this day. It 's not only the blude that *is* shed, but the blude that might hae been shed, that 's required at our hands; there was my daughter's wean, little Eppie Daidle—my oe, ye ken, Miss Grizel—had played the truant frae the school, as bairns will do, ye ken, Mr Butler ——"

"And for which," interjected Mr Butler, "they should be soundly scourged by their well-wishers."

"And had just cruppen to the gallows-foot to see the hanging, as was natural for a wean; and what for mightna she hae been shot as weel as the rest o' them, and where wad we a' hae been then? I wonder how Queen Carline (if her name be Carline) wad hae liked to hae had ane o' her ain bairns in sic a venture?"

"Report says," answered Butler, "that such a circumstance would not have distressed her majesty beyond endurance."

"Aweel," said Mrs Howden, "the sum o' the matter is, that, were I a man, I wad hae amends o' Jock Porteous, be the upshot what like o't, if a' the carles and carlines in England had sworn to the nay-say."

"I would claw down the tolbooth door wi' my nails," said Miss Grizel, "but I wad be at him."

"Ye may be very right, ladies," said Butler, "but I would not advise you to speak so loud."

"Speak!" exclaimed both the ladies together, "there will be naething else spoken about frae the Weigh-house to the Water-gate, till this is either ended or mended."

The females now departed to their respective places of abode. Plumdamas joined the other two gentlemen in drinking their *meridian*, (a bumper-dram of brandy,) as they passed the well-known low-browed shop in the Lawnmarket, where they were wont to take that refreshment. Mr Plumdamas then departed towards his shop, and Mr Butler, who happened to have some particular occasion for the rein of an old bridle, (the truants of that busy day could have anticipated its application,) walked down the Lawnmarket with Mr Saddletree, each talking as he could get a word thrust in, the one on the laws of Scotland, the other on those of syntax, and neither listening to a word which his companion uttered.

CHAPTER V.

Elswhair he colde right weel lay down the law,
But in his house was meek as is a daw.
DAVIE LINDSAY.

"THERE has been Jock Driver the carrier here, speering about his new graith," said Mrs Saddletree to her husband, as he crossed his threshold, not with the purpose, by any means, of consulting him upon his own affairs, but merely to intimate, by a gentle recapitulation, how much duty she had gone through in his absence.

"Weel," replied Bartoline, and deigned not a word more.

"And the Laird of Girdingburst has had his running footman here, and ca'd himsell, (he 's a civil pleasant young gentleman,) to see when the broidered saddle-cloth for his sorrel horse will be ready, for he wants it agane the Kelso races."

"Weel, aweel," replied Bartoline, as laconically as before.

"And his lordship, the Earl of Blazonbury, Lord Flash and Flame, is like to be clean daft, that the harness for the six Flanders mears, wi' the crests, coronets, housings, and mountings conform, are no sent hame according to promise gien."

"Weel, weel, weel — weel, weel, gudewife," said Saddletree, "if he gangs daft, we 'll hae him cognosced — it 's a' very weel."

"It 's weel that ye think sae, Mr Saddletree," answered his helpmate, rather nettled at the indifference with which her report was received; "there 's mony ane wad hae thought themselves affronted, if sae mony customers had ca'd and nae-body to answer them but women-folk; for a' the lads were aff, as soon as your back was turned, to see Porteous hanged, that might be counted upon; and sae, you no being at hame ——"

"Houts, Mrs Saddletree," said Bartoline, with an air of consequence, "dinna deave me wi' your nonsense; I was under the necessity of being elsewhere — *non omnia* — as Mr Crossmyloof said, when he was called by two macers at once, *non omnia possumus — pessimus — possimis* — I ken our law-latin offends Mr Butler's ears, but it means, Nae-body, an it were the Lord President himsell, can do twa turns at ance."

"Very right, Mr Saddletree," answered his careful helpmate, with a sarcastic smile; "and nae doubt it 's a decent thing to leave your wife to look after young gentlemen's saddles and bridles, when ye gang to see a man, that never did ye nae ill, raxing a halter."

"Woman," said Saddletree, assuming an elevated tone, to which the *meridian* had somewhat contributed, "desist, — I say forbear, from intromitting with affairs thou canst not understand. D'ye think I was born to sit here brogging an elshin through bend-leather, when sic men as Duncan Forbes, and that other Arniston chield there, without muckle greater parts, if the close-head speak true, than mysell, maun be presidents and king's advocates, nae doubt, and wha but they? Whereas, were favour equally distribute, as in the days of the wight Wallace ——"

"I ken naething we wad hae gotten by the wight Wallace," said Mrs Saddletree, "unless, as I hae heard the auld folk tell, they fought in thae days wi' bend-leather guns, and then it 's a chance but what, if he had bought them, he might have forgot to pay for them. And as for the greatness of your parts, Bartley, the folk in the close-head maun ken mair about them than I do, if they make sic a report of them."

"I tell ye, woman," said Saddletree in high dudgeon, "that ye ken naething about these matters. In Sir William Wallace's days, there was nae man pinned down to sic a slavish wark as a saddler's, for they got ony leather graith that they had use for ready-made out of Holland."

"Well," said Butler, who was, like many of his profession, something of a humorist and dry joker, "if that be the case, Mr Saddletree, I think we have changed for the better; since we make our own harness, and only import our lawyers from Holland."

"It 's ower true, Mr Butler," answered Bartoline, with a sigh; "if I had had the luck — or rather if my father had had the sense to send me to Leyden and Utrecht to learn the Substitutes and Pandex ——"

"You mean the Institutes — Justinian's Institutes, Mr Saddletree?" said Butler.

"Institutes and substitutes are synonymous words, Mr Butler, and used indifferently as such in deeds of tailzie, as you may see in Balfour's Practiques, or Dallas of St Martin's Styles. I understand these things pretty weel, I thank God; but I own I should have studied in Holland."

"To comfort you, you might not have been farther forward than you are now, Mr Saddletree," replied Mr Butler; "for our Scottish advocates are an aristocratic race. Their brass is of the right Corinthian quality, and *Non cuivis contigit adire Corinthum* — Aha, Mr Saddletree?"

"And aha, Mr Butler," rejoined Bartoline, upon whom, as may be well supposed, the jest was lost, and all but the sound of the words, "ye said a gliff syne it was *quivis*, and now I heard ye say *cuivis* with my ain ears, as plain as ever I heard a word at the fore-bar."

"Give me your patience, Mr Saddletree, and I'll explain the discrepancy in three words," said Butler, as pedantic in his own department, though with infinitely more judgment and learning, as Bartoline was in his self-assumed profession of the law —"Give me your patience for a moment—You 'll grant that the nominative case is that by which a person or thing is nominated or designed, and which may be called the primary case, all others being formed from it by alterations of the termination in the learned languages, and by prepositions in our modern Babylonian jargons—You 'll grant me that, I suppose, Mr Saddletree?"

"I dinna ken whether I will or no—*ad avisandum*, ye ken—naebody should be in a hurry to make admissions, either in point of law, or in point of fact," said Saddletree, looking, or endeavouring to look, as if he understood what was said.

"And the dative case," continued Butler——

"I ken what a tutor dative is," said Saddletree, "readily enough."

"The dative case," resumed the grammarian, "is that in which any thing is given or assigned as properly belonging to a person, or thing—You cannot deny that, I am sure."

"I am sure I 'll no grant it though," said Saddletree.

"Then what the *deevil* d 'ye take the nominative and the dative cases to be?" said Butler, hastily, and surprised at once out of his decency of expression and accuracy of pronunciation.

"I 'll tell you that at leisure, Mr Butler," said Saddletree, with a very knowing look; "I 'll take a day to see and answer every article of your condescendence, and then I 'll hold you to confess or deny, as accords."

"Come, come, Mr Saddletree," said his wife, "we 'll hae nae confessions and condescendences here, let them deal in thae sort o' wares that are paid for them — they suit the like o' us as ill as a demipique saddle would suit a draught ox."

"Aha!" said Mr Butler, "*Optat ephippia bos piger*, nothing new under the sun — But it was a fair hit of Mrs Saddletree, however."

"And it wad far better become ye, Mr Saddletree," continued his helpmate, "since ye say ye hae skeel o' the law, to try if ye can do ony thing for Effie Deans, puir thing, that 's lying up in the tolbooth yonder, cauld, and hungry, and comfortless — A servant lass of ours, Mr Butler, and as innocent a lass, to my thinking, and as usefu' in the chop — When Mr Saddletree gangs out, — and ye 're aware he 's seldom at hame when there 's ony o' the plea-houses open, — poor Effie used to help me to tumble the bundles o' barkened leather up and down, and range out the gudes, and suit a' body's humours — And troth she could aye please the customers wi' her answers, for she was aye civil, and a bonnier lass wasna in Auld Reekie. And when folk were hasty and unreasonable, she could serve them better than me, that am no sae young as I hae been, Mr Butler, and a wee bit short in the temper into the bargain. For when there 's ower mony folks crying on me at anes, and nane but ae tongue to answer them, folk maun speak hastily, or they 'll ne'er get through their wark — Sae I miss Effie daily."

"*De die in diem*," added Saddletree.

"I think," said Butler, after a good deal of hesitation, "I have seen the girl in the shop — a modest-looking, fair-haired girl?"

"Ay, ay, that 's just puir Effie," said her mistress. "How she was abandoned to hersell, or whether she was sackless o' the sinfu' deed, God in Heaven knows; but if she 's been guilty, she 's been sair tempted, and I wad amaist take my Bible-aith she hasna been hersell at the time."

Butler had by this time become much agitated; he fidgeted up and down the shop, and shewed the greatest agitation that a person of such strict decorum could be supposed to give way to. "Was not this girl," he said, "the daughter of David Deans, that had the parks at St Leonards taken? and has she not a sister?"

"In troth has she — puir Jeanie Deans, ten years aulder than hersell; she was here greeting a wee while syne about her tittie. And what could I say to her, but that she behoved to come and speak to Mr Saddletree when he was at hame? It wasna that I thought Mr Saddletree could do her or ony ither body muckle gude or ill, but it wad aye serve to keep the puir thing's heart up for a wee while; and let sorrow come when sorrow maun."

"Ye 're mistaen though, gudewife," said Saddletree, scornfully, "for I could hae gien her great satisfaction; I could hae proved to her that her sister was indicted upon the statute saxteen hundred and ninety, chapter one — For the mair ready prevention of child-murder — for concealing her pregnancy, and giving no account of the child which she had borne."

"I hope," said Butler, — "I trust in a gracious God that she can clear herself."

"And sae do I, Mr Butler," replied Mrs Saddletree. "I am sure I wad hae answered for her as my ain daughter; but, wae 's my heart, I had been tender a' the simmer, and scarce ower the door o' my room for twal weeks. And as for Mr Saddletree, he might be in a lying-in hospital, and ne'er find out what the women cam there for. Sae I could see little or naething o' her, or I wad hae had the truth o' her situation out o' her, I 'se warrant ye — But we a' think her sister maun be able to speak something to clear her."

"The haill Parliament House," said Saddletree, "was speaking o' naething else, till this job o' Porteous's put it out o' head — It 's a beautiful point of presumptive murder, and there 's been nane like it in the Justiciar Court since the case of Luckie Smith

the howdie, that suffered in the year saxteen hundred and seventy-nine."

"But what's the matter wi' you, Mr Butler?" said the good woman; "ye are looking as white as a sheet; will ye tak a dram?"

"By no means," said Butler, compelling himself to speak. "I walked in from Dumfries yesterday, and this is a warm day."

"Sit down," said Mrs Saddletree, laying hands on him kindly, "and rest ye — ye'll kill yoursell, man, at that rate. — And are we to wish you joy o' getting the scule, Mr Butler?"

"Yes — no — I do not know," answered the young man vaguely. But Mrs Saddletree kept him to the point, partly out of real interest, partly from curiosity.

"Ye dinna ken whether ye are to get the free scule o' Dumfries or no, after hinging on and teaching it a' the simmer?"

"No, Mrs Saddletree — I am not to have it," replied Butler, more collectedly. "The Laird of Black-at-the-bane had a natural son bred to the kirk, that the presbytery could not be prevailed upon to license; and so ——"

"Ay, ye need say nae mair about it; if there was a laird that had a puir kinsman, or a bastard that it wad suit, there's eneugh said. — And ye're e'en come back to Libberton to wait for dead men's shoon? — and, for as frail as Mr Whackbairn is, he may live as lang as you, that are his assistant and successor."

"Very like," replied Butler with a sigh; "I do not know if I should wish it otherwise."

"Nae doubt it's a very vexing thing," continued the good lady, "to be in that dependent station; and you that hae right and title to sae muckle better, I wonder how ye bear these crosses."

"*Quos diligit castigat*," answered Butler; "even the Pagan Seneca could see an advantage in affliction. The Heathens had their philosophy, and the Jews their revelation, Mrs Saddletree, and they endured their distresses in their day. Christians have a better dispensation than either — but doubtless ——"

He stopped and sighed.

"I ken what ye mean," said Mrs Saddletree, looking toward her husband; "there's whiles we lose patience in spite of baith book and Bible — But ye are no gaun awa, and looking sae poorly — ye'll stay and take some kale wi' us?"

Mr Saddletree laid aside Balfour's Practiques, (his favourite study, and much good may it do him,) to join in his wife's hospitable importunity. But the teacher declined all entreaty, and took his leave upon the spot.

"There's something in a' this," said Mrs Saddletree, looking after him as he walked up the street; "I wonder what makes Mr Butler sae distressed about Effie's misfortune — there was nae acquaintance atween them that ever I saw or heard of; but they were neighbours when David Deans was on the Laird o' Dumbiedikes' land. Mr Butler wad ken her father or some o' her folk. — Get up, Mr Saddletree — ye have set yoursell down on the very brecham that wants stitching — and here's little Willie, the prentice. — Ye little rin-there-out deil that ye are, what takes you raking through the gutters to see folk hangit? — how wad ye like when it comes to be your ain chance, as I winna ensure ye, if ye dinna mend your manners? — And what are ye maundering and greeting for, as if a word were breaking your banes? — Gang in by, and be a better bairn another time, and tell Peggy to gie ye a bicker o' broth, for ye'll be as gleg as a gled, I'se warrant ye. — It's a fatherless bairn, Mr Saddletree, and motherless, whilk in some cases may be waur, and ane would take care o' him if they could — it's a Christian duty."

"Very true, gudewife," said Saddletree, in reply, "we are *in loco parentis* to him during his years of pupillarity, and I hae had thoughts of applying to the Court for a commission as factor *loco tutoris*, seeing there is nae tutor nominate, and the tutor-at-law declines to act; but only I fear the expense of the procedure wad not be *in rem versam*, for I am not aware if Willie has ony effects whereof to assume the administration."

He concluded this sentence with a self-important cough, as one who has laid down the law in an indisputable manner.

"Effects!" said Mrs Saddletree, "what effects has the puir wean? — he was in rags when his mother died; and the blue polonie that Effie made for him out of an auld mantle of my ain, was the first decent dress the bairn ever had on. Poor Effie! can ye tell me now really, wi' a' your law, will her life be in danger, Mr Saddletree, when they arena able to prove that ever there was a bairn ava?"

"Whoy," said Mr Saddletree, delighted at having for once in his life seen his wife's attention arrested by a topic of legal discussion — "Whoy, there are two sorts of *murdrum* or *murdragium*, or what you *populariter et vulgariter* call murther. I mean there are many sorts; for there's your *murthrum per vigilias et insidias*, and your *murthrum* under trust."

"I am sure," replied his moiety, "that murther by trust is the way that the gentry murther us merchants, and whiles make us shut the booth up — but that has naething to do wi' Effie's misfortune."

"The case of Effie (or Euphemia) Deans," resumed Saddletree, "is one of those cases of murder presumptive, that is, a murder of the law's inferring or construction, being derived from certain *indicia*, or grounds of suspicion."

"So that," said the good woman, "unless poor Effie has communicated her situation, she'll be hanged by the neck, if the bairn was still-born, or if it be alive at this moment?"

"Assuredly," said Saddletree, "it being a statute made by our sovereign Lord and Lady, to prevent the horrid delict of bringing forth children in secret — The crime is rather a favourite of the law, this species of murther being one of its ain creation."

"Then, if the law makes murders," said Mrs Saddletree, "the law should be hanged for them; or if they wad hang a lawyer instead, the country wad find nae faut."

A summons to their frugal dinner interrupted the farther progress of the conversation, which was otherwise like to take a turn much less favourable to the science of jurisprudence and its professors, than Mr Bartoline Saddletree, the fond admirer of both, had at its opening anticipated.

CHAPTER VI.

But up then raise all Edinburgh,
They all rose up by thousands three.
Johnnie Armstrang's Goodnight.

Butler, on his departure from the sign of the Golden Nag, went in quest of a friend of his connected with the law, of whom he wished to make particular inquiries concerning the circumstances in which the unfortunate young woman mentioned in the last chapter was placed, having, as the reader has probably already conjectured, reasons much deeper than those dictated by mere humanity, for interesting himself in her fate. He found the person he sought absent from home, and was equally unfortunate in one or two other calls which he made upon acquaintances whom he hoped to interest in her story. But every body was, for the moment, stark-mad on the subject of Porteous, and engaged busily in attacking or defending the measures of government in reprieving him; and the ardour of dispute had excited such universal thirst, that half the young lawyers and writers, together with their very clerks, the class whom Butler was looking after, had adjourned the debate to some favourite tavern. It was computed by an experienced arithmetician, that there was as much twopenny ale consumed on the discussion as would have floated a first-rate man-of-war.

Butler wandered about until it was dusk, resolving to take that opportunity of visiting the unfortunate young woman, when his doing so might be least observed; for he had his own reasons for avoiding the remarks of Mrs Saddletree, whose shop-door opened at no great distance from that of the jail, though on the opposite or south side of the street, and a little higher up. He passed, therefore, through the narrow and partly-covered passage leading from the north-west end of the Parliament Square.

He stood now before the Gothic entrance of the ancient prison, which, as is well known to all men, rears its ancient front in the very middle of the High Street, forming, as it were, the termination to a huge pile of buildings called the Luckenbooths, which, for some inconceivable reason, our ancestors had jammed into the midst of the principal street of the town, leaving for passage a narrow street on the north, and on the south, into which the prison opens, a narrow crooked lane, winding betwixt the high and sombre walls of the Tolbooth and the adjacent houses on the one side, and the buttresses and projections of the old Cathedral upon the other. To give some gaiety to this sombre passage, (well known by the name of the Krames,) a number of little booths, or shops, after the fashion of cobblers' stalls, are plastered, as it were, against the Gothic projections and abutments, so that it seemed as if the traders had occupied with nests, bearing the same proportion to the building, every buttress and coign of vantage, as the martlett did in Macbeth's Castle. Of later years these booths have degenerated into mere toy-shops, where the little loiterers chiefly interested in such wares are tempted to linger, enchanted by the rich display of hobby-horses, babies, and Dutch toys, arranged in artful and gay confusion; yet half-scared by the cross-looks of the withered pantaloon, or spectacled old lady, by whom these tempting stores are watched and superintended. But, in the times we write of, the hosiers, the glovers, the hatters, the mercers, the milliners, and all who dealt in the miscellaneous wares now termed haberdasher's goods, were to be found in this narrow alley.

To return from our digression. Butler found the outer turnkey, a tall thin old man, with long silver hair, in the act of locking the outward door of the jail. He addressed himself to this person, and asked admittance to Effie Deans, confined upon accusation of child-murder. The turnkey looked at him earnestly, and, civilly touching his hat out of respect to Butler's black coat and clerical appearance, replied, "It was impossible any one could be admitted at present."

"You shut up earlier than usual, probably on account of Captain Porteous's affair?" said Butler.

The turnkey, with the true mystery of a person in office, gave two grave nods, and withdrawing from the wards a ponderous key of about two feet in length, he proceeded to shut a strong plate of steel, which folded down above the keyhole, and was secured by a steel spring and catch. Butler stood still instinctively while the door was made fast, and then looking at his watch, walked briskly up the street, muttering to himself almost unconsciously—

Porta adversa, ingens, solidoque adamante columnæ;
Vis ut nulla virûm, non ipsi exscindere ferro
Cœlicolæ valeant — Stat ferrea turris ad auras — &c. [1]

Having wasted half an hour more in a second fruitless attempt to find his legal friend and adviser, he thought it time to leave the city and return to his place of residence, in a small village about two miles and a half to the southward of Edinburgh. The metropolis was at this time surrounded by a high wall, with battlements and flanking projections at some intervals, and the access was through gates, called in the Scottish language *ports*, which were regularly shut at night. A small fee to the keepers, would indeed procure egress and ingress at any time, through a wicket left for that purpose in the large gate, but it was of some importance, to a man so poor as Butler, to avoid even this slight pecuniary mulct; and fearing the hour of shutting the gates might be near, he made for that to which he found himself nearest, although, by doing so, he somewhat lengthened his walk homewards. Bristo Port was that by which his direct road lay, but the West Port, which leads out of the Grassmarket, was the nearest of the city gates to the place where he found himself, and to that, therefore, he directed his course. He reached the port in ample time to pass the circuit of the walls, and enter a suburb called Portsburgh, chiefly inhabited by the lower order of citizens and mechanics. Here he was unexpectedly interrupted.

He had not gone far from the gate before he heard the sound of a drum, and, to his great surprise, met a number of persons, sufficient to occupy the whole front of the street, and form a considerable mass behind, moving with great speed towards the gate he had just come from, and having in front of them a drum beating to arms. While he

[1] Wide is the fronting gate, and, raised on high,
With adamantine columns threats the sky;
Vain is the force of man, and Heaven's as vain,
To crush the pillars which the pile sustain;
Sublime on these a tower of steel is rear'd.
Dryden's *Virgil*, book vi.

considered how he should escape a party, assembled, as it might be presumed, for no lawful purpose, they came full on him and stopped him.

"Are you a clergyman?" one questioned him.

Butler replied that "he was in orders, but was not a placed minister."

"It's Mr Butler from Libberton," said a voice from behind; "he 'll discharge the duty as weel as ony man."

"You must turn back with us, sir," said the first speaker, in a tone civil but peremptory.

"For what purpose, gentlemen?" said Mr Butler. "I live at some distance from town — the roads are unsafe by night — you will do me a serious injury by stopping me."

"You shall be sent safely home — no man shall touch a hair of your head — but you must and shall come along with us."

"But to what purpose or end, gentlemen," said Butler. "I hope you will be so civil as to explain that to me?"

"You shall know that in good time. Come along — for come you must, by force or fair means; and I warn you to look neither to the right hand nor the left, and to take no notice of any man's face, but consider all that is passing before you as a dream."

"I would it were a dream I could awaken from," said Butler to himself; but having no means to oppose the violence with which he was threatened, he was compelled to turn round and march in front of the rioters, two men partly supporting and partly holding him. During this parley the insurgents had made themselves masters of the West Port, rushing upon the Waiters, (so the people were called who had the charge of the gates,) and possessing themselves of the keys. They bolted and barred the folding doors, and commanded the person, whose duty it usually was, to secure the wicket, of which they did not understand the fastenings. The man, terrified at an incident so totally unexpected, was unable to perform his usual office, and gave the matter up, after several attempts. The rioters, who seemed to have come prepared for every emergency, called for torches, by the light of which they nailed up the wicket with long nails, which, it seemed probable, they had provided on purpose.

While this was going on, Butler could not, even if he had been willing, avoid making remarks on the individuals who seemed to lead this singular mob. The torch-light, while it fell on their forms and left him in the shade, gave him an opportunity to do so without their observing him. Several of those who seemed most active were dressed in sailors' jackets, trowsers, and sea caps; others in large loose-bodied great-coats, and slouched hats; and there were several who, judging from their dress, should have been called women, whose rough deep voices, uncommon size, and masculine deportment and mode of walking, forbade them being so interpreted. They moved as if by some well-concerted plan of arrangement. They had signals by which they knew, and nick-names by which they distinguished each other. Butler remarked, that the name of Wildfire was used among them, to which one stout Amazon seemed to reply.

The rioters left a small party to observe the West Port, and directed the Waiters, as they valued their lives, to remain within their lodge, and make no attempt for that night to repossess themselves of the gate. They then moved with rapidity along the low street called the Cowgate, the mob of the city every where rising at the sound of their drum, and joining them. When the multitude arrived at the Cowgate Port, they secured it with as little opposition as the former, made it fast, and left a small party to observe it. It was afterwards remarked, as a striking instance of prudence and precaution, singularly combined with audacity, that the parties left to guard those gates did not remain stationary on their posts, but flitted to and fro, keeping so near the gates as to see that no efforts were made to open them, yet not remaining so long as to have their persons closely observed. The mob, at first only about one hundred strong, now amounted to thousands, and were increasing every moment. They divided themselves so as to ascend with more speed the various narrow lanes which lead up from the Cowgate to the High Street; and still beating to arms as they went, and calling on all true Scotsmen to join them, they now filled the principal street of the city.

The Netherbow Port might be called the Temple-bar of Edinburgh, as, intersecting the High Street at its termination, it divided Edinburgh, properly so called, from the suburb named the Canongate, as Temple-bar separates London from Westminster. It was of the utmost importance to the rioters to possess themselves of this pass, because there was quartered in the Canongate at that time a regiment of infantry, commanded by Colonel Moyle, which might have occupied the city by advancing through this gate, and would possess the power of totally defeating their purpose. The leaders therefore hastened to the Netherbow Port, which they secured in the same manner, and with as little trouble, as the other gates, leaving a party to watch it, strong in proportion to the importance of the post.

The next object of these hardy insurgents was at once to disarm the City Guard, and to procure arms for themselves; for scarce any weapons but staves and bludgeons had been yet seen among them. The Guard-house was a long, low, ugly building, (removed in 1787,) which to a fanciful imagination might have suggested the idea of a long black snail crawling up the middle of the High Street, and deforming its beautiful esplanade. This formidable insurrection had been so unexpected, that there were no more than the ordinary sergeant's guard of the city-corps upon duty; even these were without any supply of powder and ball; and sensible enough what had raised the storm, and which way it was rolling, could hardly be supposed very desirous to expose themselves by a valiant defence to the animosity of so numerous and desperate a mob, to whom they were on the present occasion much more than usually obnoxious.

There was a sentinel upon guard, who (that one town-guard soldier might do his duty on that eventful evening) presented his piece, and desired the foremost of the rioters to stand off. The young amazon, whom Butler had observed particularly active, sprung upon the soldier, seized his musket, and after a struggle succeeded in wrenching it from him, and throwing him down on the cause-

way. One or two soldiers, who endeavoured to turn out to the support of their sentinel, were in the same manner seized and disarmed, and the mob without difficulty possessed themselves of the Guard-house, disarming and turning out of doors the rest of the men on duty. It was remarked, that, notwithstanding the city soldiers had been the instruments of the slaughter which this riot was designed to revenge, no ill usage or even insult was offered to them. It seemed as if the vengeance of the people disdained to stoop at any head meaner than that which they considered as the source and origin of their injuries.

On possessing themselves of the guard, the first act of the multitude was to destroy the drums, by which they supposed an alarm might be conveyed to the garrison in the castle; for the same reason they now silenced their own, which was beaten by a young fellow, son to the drummer of Portsburgh, whom they had forced upon that service. Their next business was to distribute among the boldest of the rioters the guns, bayonets, partisans, halberds, and battle or Lochaber axes. Until this period the principal rioters had preserved silence on the ultimate object of their rising, as being that which all knew, but none expressed. Now, however, having accomplished all the preliminary parts of their design, they raised a tremendous shout of "Porteous! Porteous! To the Tolbooth! To the Tolbooth!"

They proceeded with the same prudence when the object seemed to be nearly in their grasp, as they had done hitherto when success was more dubious. A strong party of the rioters, drawn up in front of the Luckenbooths, and facing down the street, prevented all access from the eastward, and the west end of the defile formed by the Luckenbooths was secured in the same manner; so that the Tolbooth was completely surrounded, and those who undertook the task of breaking it open effectually secured against the risk of interruption.

The magistrates, in the meanwhile, had taken the alarm, and assembled in a tavern, with the purpose of raising some strength to subdue the rioters. The deacons, or presidents of the trades, were applied to, but declared there was little chance of their authority being respected by the craftsmen, where it was the object to save a man so obnoxious. Mr Lindsay, member of parliament for the city, volunteered the perilous task of carrying a verbal message from the Lord Provost to Colonel Moyle, the commander of the regiment lying in the Canongate, requesting him to force the Netherbow Port, and enter the city to put down the tumult. But Mr Lindsay declined to charge himself with any written order, which, if found on his person by an enraged mob, might have cost him his life; and the issue of the application was, that Colonel Moyle, having no written requisition from the civil authorities, and having the fate of Porteous before his eyes as an example of the severe construction put by a jury on the proceedings of military men acting on their own responsibility, declined to encounter the risk to which the Provost's verbal communication invited him.

More than one messenger was despatched by different ways to the Castle, to require the commanding officer to march down his troops, to fire a few cannon-shot, or even to throw a shell among the mob, for the purpose of clearing the streets. But so strict and watchful were the various patrols whom the rioters had established in different parts of the street, that none of the emissaries of the magistrates could reach the gate of the Castle. They were, however, turned back without either injury or insult, and with nothing more of menace than was necessary to deter them from again attempting to accomplish their errand.

The same vigilance was used to prevent every body of the higher, and those which, in this case, might be deemed the more suspicious orders of society, from appearing in the street, and observing the movements, or distinguishing the persons, of the rioters. Every person in the garb of a gentleman was stopped by small parties of two or three of the mob, who partly exhorted, partly required of them, that they should return to the place from whence they came. Many a quadrille table was spoilt that memorable evening; for the sedan chairs of ladies, even of the highest rank, were interrupted in their passage from one point to another, in despite of the laced footmen and blazing flambeaux. This was uniformly done with a deference and attention to the feelings of the terrified females, which could hardly have been expected from the videttes of a mob so desperate. Those who stopped the chair usually made the excuse, that there was much disturbance on the streets, and that it was absolutely necessary for the lady's safety that the chair should turn back. They offered themselves to escort the vehicles which they had thus interrupted in their progress, from the apprehension, probably, that some of those who had casually united themselves to the riot might disgrace their systematic and determined plan of vengeance, by those acts of general insult and licence which are common on similar occasions.

Persons are yet living who remember to have heard from the mouths of ladies thus interrupted on their journey in the manner we have described, that they were escorted to their lodgings by the young men who stopped them, and even handed out of their chairs, with a polite attention far beyond what was consistent with their dress, which was apparently that of journeymen mechanics.[1] It seemed as if the conspirators, like those who assassinated Cardinal Beatoun in former days, had entertained the opinion, that the work about which they went was a judgment of Heaven, which, though unsanctioned by the usual authorities, ought to be proceeded in with order and gravity.

While their outposts continued thus vigilant, and suffered themselves neither from fear nor curiosity to neglect that part of the duty assigned to them, and while the main guards to the east and west secured them against interruption, a select body of the rioters thundered at the door of the jail, and demanded instant admission. No one answered, for the outer keeper had prudently made

[1] A near relation of the author's used to tell of having been stopped by the rioters, and escorted home in the manner described. On reaching her own home, one of her attendants, in appearance a *baxter*, *i. e.* a baker's lad, handed her out of her chair, and took leave with a bow, which, in the lady's opinion, argued breeding that could hardly be learned at the oven's mouth.

his escape with the keys at the commencement of the riot, and was nowhere to be found. The door was instantly assailed with sledge-hammers, iron-crows, and the coulters of ploughs, ready provided for the purpose, with which they prized, heaved, and battered for some time with little effect; for the door, besides being of double oak planks, clenched, both end-long and athwart, with broad-headed nails, was so hung and secured as to yield to no means of forcing, without the expenditure of much time. The rioters, however, appeared determined to gain admittance. Gang after gang relieved each other at the exercise, for, of course, only a few could work at once; but gang after gang retired, exhausted with their violent exertions, without making much progress in forcing the prison-door. Butler had been led up near to this the principal scene of action; so near, indeed, that he was almost deafened by the unceasing clang of the heavy fore-hammers against the iron-bound portal of the prison. He began to entertain hopes, as the task seemed protracted, that the populace might give it over in despair, or that some rescue might arrive to disperse them. There was a moment at which the latter seemed probable.

The magistrates, having assembled their officers, and some of the citizens who were willing to hazard themselves for the public tranquillity, now sallied forth from the tavern where they held their sitting, and approached the point of danger. Their officers went before them with links and torches, with a herald to read the riot act, if necessary. They easily drove before them the outposts and videttes of the rioters; but when they approached the line of guard which the mob, or rather, we should say, the conspirators, had drawn across the street in the front of the Luckenbooths, they were received with an unintermitted volley of stones, and, on their nearer approach, the pikes, bayonets, and Lochaber-axes, of which the populace had possessed themselves, were presented against them. One of their ordinary officers, a strong resolute fellow, went forward, seized a rioter, and took from him a musket; but, being unsupported, he was instantly thrown on his back in the street, and disarmed in his turn. The officer was too happy to be permitted to rise and run away without receiving any farther injury; which afforded another remarkable instance of the mode in which these men had united a sort of moderation towards all others, with the most inflexible inveteracy against the object of their resentment. The magistrates, after vain attempts to make themselves heard and obeyed, possessing no means of enforcing their authority, were constrained to abandon the field to the rioters, and retreat in all speed from the showers of missiles that whistled around their ears.

The passive resistance of the Tolbooth-gate promised to do more to baffle the purpose of the mob than the active interference of the magistrates. The heavy sledge-hammers continued to din against it without intermission, and with a noise which, echoed from the lofty buildings around the spot, seemed enough to have alarmed the garrison in the Castle. It was circulated among the rioters, that the troops would march down to disperse them, unless they could execute their purpose without loss of time; or that, even without quitting the fortress, the garrison might obtain the same end by throwing a bomb or two upon the street.

Urged by such motives for apprehension, they eagerly relieved each other at the labour of assailing the Tolbooth door: yet such was its strength, that it still defied their efforts. At length, a voice was heard to pronounce the words, "Try it with fire." The rioters, with an unanimous shout, called for combustibles, and as all their wishes seemed to be instantly supplied, they were soon in possession of two or three empty tar-barrels. A huge red glaring bonfire speedily arose close to the door of the prison, sending up a tall column of smoke and flame against its antique turrets and strongly-grated windows, and illuminating the ferocious and wild gestures of the rioters who surrounded the place, as well as the pale and anxious groups of those, who, from windows in the vicinage, watched the progress of this alarming scene. The mob fed the fire with whatever they could find fit for the purpose. The flames roared and crackled among the heaps of nourishment piled on the fire, and a terrible shout soon announced that the door had kindled, and was in the act of being destroyed. The fire was suffered to decay, but, long ere it was quite extinguished, the most forward of the rioters rushed, in their impatience, one after another, over its yet smouldering remains. Thick showers of sparkles rose high in the air, as man after man bounded over the glowing embers, and disturbed them in their passage. It was now obvious to Butler, and all others who were present, that the rioters would be instantly in possession of their victim, and have it in their power to work their pleasure upon him, whatever that might be.[1]

CHAPTER VII.

> The evil you teach us, we will execute; and it shall go hard but we will better the instruction.
>
> *Merchant of Venice.*

The unhappy object of this remarkable disturbance had been that day delivered from the apprehension of a public execution, and his joy was the greater, as he had some reason to question whether government would have run the risk of unpopularity by interfering in his favour, after he had been legally convicted by the verdict of a jury, of a crime so very obnoxious. Relieved from this doubtful state of mind, his heart was merry within him, and he thought, in the emphatic words of Scripture on a similar occasion, that surely the bitterness of death was past. Some of his friends, however, who had watched the manner and behaviour of the crowd when they were made acquainted with the reprieve, were of a different opinion. They augured, from the unusual sternness and silence with which they bore their disappointment, that the populace nourished some scheme of sudden and desperate vengeance; and they advised Porteous to lose no time in petitioning the proper authorities, that he might be conveyed to the Castle under a sufficient guard, to remain there in security until his ultimate fate should be deter-

[1] See Note C. *The Old Tolbooth.*

mined. Habituated, however, by his office, to overawe the rabble of the city, Porteous could not suspect them of an attempt so audacious as to storm a strong and defensible prison; and, despising the advice by which he might have been saved, he spent the afternoon of the eventful day in giving an entertainment to some friends who visited him in jail, several of whom, by the indulgence of the Captain of the Tolbooth, with whom he had an old intimacy, arising from their official connection, were even permitted to remain to supper with him, though contrary to the rules of the jail.

It was, therefore, in the hour of unalloyed mirth, when this unfortunate wretch was "full of bread," hot with wine, and high in mistimed and ill-grounded confidence, and, alas! with all his sins full blown, when the first distant shouts of the rioters mingled with the song of merriment and intemperance. The hurried call of the jailor to the guests, requiring them instantly to depart, and his yet more hasty intimation that a dreadful and determined mob had possessed themselves of the city gates and guard-house, were the first explanation of these fearful clamours.

Porteous might, however, have eluded the fury from which the force of authority could not protect him, had he thought of slipping on some disguise, and leaving the prison along with his guests. It is probable that the jailor might have connived at his escape, or even that, in the hurry of this alarming contingency, he might not have observed it. But Porteous and his friends alike wanted presence of mind to suggest or execute such a plan of escape. The former hastily fled from a place where their own safety seemed compromised, and the latter, in a state resembling stupefaction, awaited in his apartment the termination of the enterprise of the rioters. The cessation of the clang of the instruments with which they had at first attempted to force the door, gave him momentary relief. The flattering hopes, that the military had marched into the city, either from the Castle or from the suburbs, and that the rioters were intimidated and dispersing, were soon destroyed by the broad and glaring light of the flames, which, illuminating through the grated window every corner of his apartment, plainly shewed that the mob, determined on their fatal purpose, had adopted a means of forcing entrance equally desperate and certain.

The sudden glare of light suggested to the stupified and astonished object of popular hatred the possibility of concealment or escape. To rush to the chimney, to ascend it at the risk of suffocation, were the only means which seem to have occurred to him; but his progress was speedily stopped by one of those iron gratings, which are, for the sake of security, usually placed across the vents of buildings designed for imprisonment. The bars, however, which impeded his farther progress, served to support him in the situation which he had gained, and he seized them with the tenacious grasp of one who esteemed himself clinging to his last hope of existence. The lurid light, which had filled the apartment, lowered and died away; the sound of shouts was heard within the walls, and on the narrow and winding stair, which, cased within one of the turrets, gave access to the upper apartments of the prison. The huzza of the rioters was answered by a shout wild and desperate as their own, the cry, namely, of the imprisoned felons, who, expecting to be liberated in the general confusion, welcomed the mob as their deliverers. By some of these the apartment of Porteous was pointed out to his enemies. The obstacle of the lock and bolts was soon overcome, and from his hiding-place the unfortunate man heard his enemies search every corner of the apartment, with oaths and maledictions, which would but shock the reader if we recorded them, but which served to prove, could it have admitted of doubt, the settled purpose of soul with which they sought his destruction.

A place of concealment so obvious to suspicion and scrutiny as that which Porteous had chosen, could not long screen him from detection. He was dragged from his lurking-place, with a violence which seemed to argue an intention to put him to death on the spot. More than one weapon was directed towards him, when one of the rioters, the same whose female disguise had been particularly noticed by Butler, interfered in an authoritative tone. "Are ye mad?" he said, "or would ye execute an act of justice as if it were a crime and a cruelty? This sacrifice will lose half its savour if we do not offer it at the very horns of the altar. We will have him die where a murderer should die, on the common gibbet—We will have him die where he spilled the blood of so many innocents!"

A loud shout of applause followed the proposal, and the cry, "To the gallows with the murderer!—To the Grassmarket with him!" echoed on all hands.

"Let no man hurt him," continued the speaker; "let him make his peace with God, if he can; we will not kill both his soul and body."

"What time did he give better folk for preparing their account?" answered several voices. "Let us mete to him with the same measure he measured to them."

But the opinion of the spokesman better suited the temper of those he addressed, a temper rather stubborn than impetuous, sedate though ferocious, and desirous of colouring their cruel and revengeful action with a show of justice and moderation.

For an instant this man quitted the prisoner, whom he consigned to a selected guard, with instructions to permit him to give his money and property to whomsoever he pleased. A person confined in the jail for debt received this last deposit from the trembling hand of the victim, who was at the same time permitted to make some other brief arrangements to meet his approaching fate. The felons, and all others who wished to leave the jail, were now at full liberty to do so; not that their liberation made any part of the settled purpose of the rioters, but it followed as almost a necessary consequence of forcing the jail doors. With wild cries of jubilee they joined the mob, or disappeared among the narrow lanes to seek out the hidden receptacles of vice and infamy, where they were accustomed to lurk and conceal themselves from justice.

Two persons, a man about fifty years old, and a girl about eighteen, were all who continued within the fatal walls, excepting two or three debtors, who probably saw no advantage in attempting their escape. The persons we have mentioned remained in the strong-room of the prison, now deserted by

all others. One of their late companions in misfortune called out to the man to make his escape, in the tone of an acquaintance. "Rin for it, Ratcliffe — the road's clear."

"It may be sae, Willie," answered Ratcliffe, composedly, "but I have taen a fancy to leave aff trade, and set up for an honest man."

"Stay there, and be hanged, then, for a donnard auld deevil!" said the other, and ran down the prison-stair.

The person in female attire whom we have distinguished as one of the most active rioters, was about the same time at the ear of the young woman. "Flee, Effie, flee!" was all he had time to whisper. She turned towards him an eye of mingled fear, affection, and upbraiding, all contending with a sort of stupified surprise. He again repeated, "Flee, Effie, flee, for the sake of all that's good and dear to you!" Again she gazed on him, but was unable to answer. A loud noise was now heard, and the name of Madge Wildfire was repeatedly called from the bottom of the staircase.

"I am coming,—I am coming," said the person who answered to that appellative; and then reiterating hastily, "For God's sake—for your own sake —for my sake, flee, or they'll take your life!" he left the strong-room.

The girl gazed after him for a moment, and then, faintly muttering, "Better tyne life, since tint is gude fame," she sunk her head upon her hand, and remained, seemingly, unconscious as a statue, of the noise and tumult which passed around her.

That tumult was now transferred from the inside to the outside of the Tolbooth. The mob had brought their destined victim forth, and were about to conduct him to the common place of execution, which they had fixed as the scene of his death. The leader, whom they distinguished by the name of Madge Wildfire, had been summoned to assist at the procession by the impatient shouts of his confederates.

"I will ensure you five hundred pounds," said the unhappy man, grasping Wildfire's hand,—"five hundred pounds for to save my life."

The other answered in the same under-tone, and returning his grasp with one equally convulsive, "Five hundred-weight of coined gold should not save you.—Remember Wilson!"

A deep pause of a minute ensued, when Wildfire added, in a more composed tone, "Make your peace with Heaven.—Where is the clergyman?"

Butler, who, in great terror and anxiety, had been detained within a few yards of the Tolbooth door, to wait the event of the search after Porteous, was now brought forward, and commanded to walk by the prisoner's side, and to prepare him for immediate death. His answer was a supplication that the rioters would consider what they did. "You are neither judges nor jury," said he. "You cannot have, by the laws of God or man, power to take away the life of a human creature, however deserving he may be of death. If it is murder even in a lawful magistrate to execute an offender otherwise than in the place, time, and manner which the judges' sentence prescribes, what must it be in you, who have no warrant for interference but your own wills? In the name of Him who is all mercy, shew mercy to this unhappy man, and do not dip your hands in his blood, nor rush into the very crime which you are desirous of avenging!"

"Cut your sermon short—you are not in your pulpit," answered one of the rioters.

"If we hear more of your clavers," said another, "we are like to hang you up beside him."

"Peace—hush!" said Wildfire. "Do the good man no harm—he discharges his conscience, and I like him the better."

He then addressed Butler. "Now, sir, we have patiently heard you, and we just wish you to understand, in the way of answer, that you may as well argue to the ashler-work and iron-stanchels of the Tolbooth, as think to change our purpose — Blood must have blood. We have sworn to each other by the deepest oaths ever were pledged, that Porteous shall die the death he deserves so richly; therefore, speak no more to us, but prepare him for death as well as the briefness of his change will permit."

They had suffered the unfortunate Porteous to put on his night-gown and slippers, as he had thrown off his coat and shoes, in order to facilitate his attempted escape up the chimney. In this garb he was now mounted on the hands of two of the rioters, clasped together, so as to form what is called in Scotland, "The King's Cushion." Butler was placed close to his side, and repeatedly urged to perform a duty always the most painful which can be imposed on a clergyman deserving of the name, and now rendered more so by the peculiar and horrid circumstances of the criminal's case. Porteous at first uttered some supplications for mercy, but when he found that there was no chance that these would be attended to, his military education, and the natural stubbornness of his disposition, combined to support his spirits.

"Are you prepared for this dreadful end?" said Butler, in a faltering voice. "O turn to Him, in whose eyes time and space have no existence, and to whom a few minutes are as a lifetime, and a lifetime as a minute."

"I believe I know what you would say," answered Porteous sullenly. "I was bred a soldier; if they will murder me without time, let my sins as well as my blood lie at their door."

"Who was it," said the stern voice of Wildfire, "that said to Wilson at this very spot, when he could not pray, owing to the galling agony of his fetters, that his pains would soon be over?—I say to you to take your own tale home; and if you cannot profit by the good man's lessons, blame not them that are still more merciful to you than you were to others."

The procession now moved forward with a slow and determined pace. It was enlightened by many blazing links and torches; for the actors of this work were so far from affecting any secrecy on the occasion, that they seemed even to court observation. Their principal leaders kept close to the person of the prisoner, whose pallid yet stubborn features were seen distinctly by the torch-light, as his person was raised considerably above the concourse which thronged around him. Those who bore swords, muskets, and battle-axes, marched on each side, as if forming a regular guard to the procession. The windows, as they went along, were filled with the inhabitants, whose slumbers had been broken by this unusual disturbance. Some of the spectators muttered accents of encouragement; but in general they were so much appalled by a sight so strange and audacious, that they looked on with a

sort of stupified astonishment. No one offered, by act or word, the slightest interruption.

The rioters, on their part, continued to act with the same air of deliberate confidence and security which had marked all their proceedings. When the object of their resentment dropped one of his slippers, they stopped, sought for it, and replaced it upon his foot with great deliberation.[1] As they descended the Bow towards the fatal spot where they designed to complete their purpose, it was suggested that there should be a rope kept in readiness. For this purpose the booth of a man who dealt in cordage was forced open, a coil of rope fit for their purpose was selected to serve as a halter, and the dealer next morning found that a guinea had been left on his counter in exchange; so anxious were the perpetrators of this daring action to shew that they meditated not the slightest wrong or infraction of law, excepting so far as Porteous was himself concerned.

Leading, or carrying along with them, in this determined and regular manner, the object of their vengeance, they at length reached the place of common execution, the scene of his crime, and destined spot of his sufferings. Several of the rioters, (if they should not rather be described as conspirators) endeavoured to remove the stone which filled up the socket in which the end of the fatal tree was sunk when it was erected for its fatal purpose; others sought for the means of constructing a temporary gibbet, the place in which the gallows itself was deposited being reported too secure to be forced, without much loss of time. Butler endeavoured to avail himself of the delay afforded by these circumstances, to turn the people from their desperate design. "For God's sake," he exclaimed, "remember it is the image of your Creator which you are about to deface in the person of this unfortunate man! Wretched as he is, and wicked as he may be, he has a share in every promise of Scripture, and you cannot destroy him in impenitence without blotting his name from the Book of Life — Do not destroy soul and body; give time for preparation."

"What time had they," returned a stern voice, "whom he murdered on this very spot? — The laws both of God and man call for his death."

"But what, my friends," insisted Butler, with a generous disregard to his own safety — "what hath constituted you his judges?"

"We are not his judges," replied the same person; "he has been already judged and condemned by lawful authority. We are those whom Heaven, and our righteous anger, have stirred up to execute judgment, when a corrupt government would have protected a murderer."

"I am none," said the unfortunate Porteous; "that which you charge upon me fell out in self-defence, in the lawful exercise of my duty."

"Away with him — away with him!" was the general cry. "Why do you trifle away time in making a gallows? — that dyester's pole is good enough for the homicide."

The unhappy man was forced to his fate with remorseless rapidity. Butler, separated from him by the press, escaped the last horrors of his struggles. Unnoticed by those who had hitherto detained him as a prisoner, he fled from the fatal spot, without much caring in what direction his course lay. A loud shout proclaimed the stern delight with which the agents of this deed regarded its completion. Butler, then, at the opening into the low street called the Cowgate, cast back a terrified glance, and, by the red and dusky light of the torches, he could discern a figure wavering and struggling as it hung suspended above the heads of the multitude, and could even observe men striking at it with their Lochaber-axes and partizans. The sight was of a nature to double his horror, and to add wings to his flight.

The street down which the fugitive ran, opens to one of the eastern ports or gates of the city. Butler did not stop till he reached it, but found it still shut. He waited nearly an hour, walking up and down in inexpressible perturbation of mind. At length he ventured to call out, and rouse the attention of the terrified keepers of the gate, who now found themselves at liberty to resume their office without interruption. Butler requested them to open the gate. They hesitated. He told them his name and occupation.

"He is a preacher," said one; "I have heard him preach in Haddo's-hole."

"A fine preaching has he been at the night," said another; "but maybe least said is sunest mended."

Opening then the wicket of the main-gate, the keepers suffered Butler to depart, who hastened to carry his horror and fear beyond the walls of Edinburgh. His first purpose was, instantly to take the road homeward; but other fears and cares, connected with the news he had learned in that remarkable day, induced him to linger in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh until daybreak. More than one group of persons passed him as he was whileing away the hours of darkness that yet remained, whom, from the stifled tones of their discourse, the unwonted hour when they travelled, and the hasty pace at which they walked, he conjectured to have been engaged in the late fatal transaction.

Certain it was, that the sudden and total dispersion of the rioters, when their vindictive purpose was accomplished, seemed not the least remarkable feature of this singular affair. In general, whatever may be the impelling motive by which a mob is at first raised, the attainment of their object has usually been only found to lead the way to farther excesses. But not so in the present case. They seemed completely satiated with the vengeance they had prosecuted with such stanch and sagacious activity. When they were fully satisfied that life had abandoned their victim, they dispersed in every direction, throwing down the weapons which they had only assumed to enable them to carry through their purpose. At daybreak there remained not the least token of the events of the night, excepting the corpse of Porteous, which still hung suspended in the place where he had suffered, and the arms of various kinds which the rioters had taken from the city guard-house, which were found scattered about the streets as they had thrown them from their hands, when the purpose for which they had seized them was accomplished.

The ordinary magistrates of the city resumed their power, not without trembling at the late

[1] This little incident, characteristic of the extreme composure of this extraordinary mob, was witnessed by a lady, who, disturbed, like others, from her slumbers, had gone to the window. It was told to the author by the lady's daughter.

experience of the fragility of its tenure. To march troops into the city, and commence a severe inquiry into the transactions of the preceding night, were the first marks of returning energy which they displayed. But these events had been conducted on so secure and well-calculated a plan of safety and secrecy, that there was little or nothing learned to throw light upon the authors or principal actors in a scheme so audacious. An express was despatched to London with the tidings, where they excited great indignation and surprise in the council of regency, and particularly in the bosom of Queen Caroline, who considered her own authority as exposed to contempt by the success of this singular conspiracy. Nothing was spoke of for some time save the measure of vengeance which should be taken, not only on the actors of this tragedy, so soon as they should be discovered, but upon the magistrates who had suffered it to take place, and upon the city which had been the scene where it was exhibited. On this occasion, it is still recorded in popular tradition, that her Majesty, in the height of her displeasure, told the celebrated John, Duke of Argyle, that, sooner than submit to such an insult, she would make Scotland a hunting-field. "In that case, Madam," answered that high-spirited nobleman, with a profound bow, "I will take leave of your Majesty, and go down to my own country to get my hounds ready."

The import of the reply had more than met the ear; and as most of the Scottish nobility and gentry seemed actuated by the same national spirit, the royal displeasure was necessarily checked in mid-volley, and milder courses were recommended and adopted, to some of which we may hereafter have occasion to advert.[1]

CHAPTER VIII.

Arthur's Seat shall be my bed,
The sheets shall ne'er be press'd by me;
St Anton's well shall be my drink,
Sin' my true-love 's forsaken me.
Old Song.

If I were to choose a spot from which the rising or setting sun could be seen to the greatest possible advantage, it would be that wild path winding around the foot of the high belt of semi-circular rocks, called Salisbury Crags, and marking the verge of the steep descent which slopes down into the glen on the south-eastern side of the city of Edinburgh. The prospect, in its general outline, commands a close-built, high-piled city, stretching itself out beneath in a form, which, to a romantic imagination, may be supposed to represent that of a dragon; now, a noble arm of the sea, with its rocks, isles, distant shores, and boundary of mountains; and now, a fair and fertile champaign country, varied with hill, dale, and rock, and skirted by the picturesque ridge of the Pentland Mountains. But as the path gently circles around the base of the cliffs, the prospect, composed as it is of these enchanting and sublime objects, changes at every step, and presents them blended with, or divided from, each other, in every possible variety which can gratify the eye and the imagination. When a piece of scenery so beautiful, yet so varied,—so exciting by its intricacy, and yet so sublime,—is lighted up by the tints of morning or of evening, and displays all that variety of shadowy depth, exchanged with partial brilliancy, which gives character even to the tamest of landscapes, the effect approaches near to enchantment. This path used to be my favourite evening and morning resort, when engaged with a favourite author, or new subject of study. It is, I am informed, now become totally impassable; a circumstance which, if true, reflects little credit on the taste of the Good Town or its leaders.[1]

It was from this fascinating path—the scene to me of so much delicious musing, when life was young and promised to be happy, that I have been unable to pass it over without an episodical description—it was, I say, from this romantic path that Butler saw the morning arise the day after the murder of Porteous. It was possible for him with ease to have found a much shorter road to the house to which he was directing his course, and, in fact, that which he chose was extremely circuitous. But to compose his own spirits, as well as to while away the time, until a proper hour for visiting the family without surprise or disturbance, he was induced to extend his circuit by the foot of the rocks, and to linger upon his way until the morning should be considerably advanced. While, now standing with his arms across, and waiting the slow progress of the sun above the horizon, now sitting upon one of the numerous fragments which storms had detached from the rocks above him, he is meditating, alternately, upon the horrible catastrophe which he had witnessed, and upon the melancholy, and to him most interesting, news which he had learned at Saddletree's, we will give the reader to understand who Butler was, and how his fate was connected with that of Effie Deans, the unfortunate handmaiden of the careful Mrs Saddletree.

Reuben Butler was of English extraction, though born in Scotland. His grandfather was a trooper in Monk's army, and one of the party of dismounted dragoons which formed the forlorn hope at the storming of Dundee in 1651. Stephen Butler (called, from his talents in reading and expounding, Scripture Stephen, and Bible Butler) was a stanch Independent, and received in its fullest comprehension the promise that the saints should inherit the earth. As hard knocks were what had chiefly fallen to his share hitherto in the division of this common property, he lost not the opportunity which the storm and plunder of a commercial place afforded him, to appropriate as large a share of the better things of this world as he could possibly compass. It would seem that he had succeeded indifferently well, for his exterior circumstances appeared, in consequence of this event, to have been much mended.

The troop to which he belonged was quartered at the village of Dalkeith, as forming the body guard of Monk, who, in the capacity of general for the Commonwealth, resided in the neighbouring castle. When, on the eve of the Restoration, the general commenced his march from Scotland, a measure

[1] See Note D. *Memorial concerning the Murder of Captain Porteous.*

[1] A beautiful and solid pathway has, within a few years, been formed around these romantic rocks; and the author has the pleasure to think, that the passage in the text gave rise to the undertaking.

pregnant with such important consequences, he new-modelled his troops, and more especially those immediately about his person, in order that they might consist entirely of individuals devoted to himself. On this occasion Scripture Stephen was weighed in the balance, and found wanting. It was supposed he felt no call to any expedition which might endanger the reign of the military saint-hood, and that he did not consider himself as free in conscience to join with any party which might be likely ultimately to acknowledge the interest of Charles Stewart, the son of "the last man," as Charles I. was familiarly and irreverently termed by them in their common discourse, as well as in their more elaborate predications and harangues. As the time did not admit of cashiering such dissidents, Stephen Butler was only advised in a friendly way to give up his horse and accoutrements to one of Middleton's old troopers, who possessed an accommodating conscience of a military stamp, and which squared itself chiefly upon those of the Colonel and paymaster. As this hint came recommended by a certain sum of arrears presently payable, Stephen had carnal wisdom enough to embrace the proposal, and with great indifference saw his old corps depart for Coldstream, on their route for the south, to establish the tottering government of England on a new basis.

The *zone* of the ex-trooper, to use Horace's phrase, was weighty enough to purchase a cottage and two or three fields, (still known by the name of Beersheba,) within about a Scottish mile of Dalkeith; and there did Stephen establish himself with a youthful helpmate, chosen out of the said village, whose disposition to a comfortable settlement on this side of the grave reconciled her to the gruff manners, serious temper, and weather-beaten features of the martial enthusiast. Stephen did not long survive the falling on "evil days and evil tongues," of which Milton, in the same predicament, so mournfully complains. At his death his consort remained an early widow, with a male child of three years old, which, in the sobriety wherewith it demeaned itself, in the old-fashioned and even grim cast of its features, and in its sententious mode of expressing itself, would sufficiently have vindicated the honour of the widow of Beersheba, had any one thought proper to challenge the babe's descent from Bible Butler.

Butler's principles had not descended to his family, or extended themselves among his neighbours. The air of Scotland was alien to the growth of independency, however favourable to fanaticism under other colours. But, nevertheless, they were not forgotten; and a certain neighbouring Laird, who piqued himself upon the loyalty of his principles "in the worst of times," (though I never heard they exposed him to more peril than that of a broken head, or a night's lodging in the main guard, when wine and cavalierism predominated in his upper story,) had found it a convenient thing to rake up all matter of accusation against the deceased Stephen. In this enumeration his religious principles made no small figure, as, indeed, they must have seemed of the most exaggerated enormity to one whose own were so small and so faintly traced, as to be well-nigh imperceptible. In these circumstances, poor widow Butler was supplied with her full proportion of fines for non-conformity, and all the other oppressions of the time, until Beersheba was fairly wrenched out of her hands, and became the property of the Laird who had so wantonly, as it had hitherto appeared, persecuted this poor forlorn woman. When his purpose was fairly achieved, he shewed some remorse or moderation, or whatever the reader may please to term it, in permitting her to occupy her husband's cottage, and cultivate, on no very heavy terms, a croft of land adjacent. Her son, Benjamin, in the meanwhile, grew up to man's estate, and, moved by that impulse which makes men seek marriage, even when its end can only be the perpetuation of misery, he wedded and brought a wife, and, eventually, a son, Reuben, to share the poverty of Beersheba.

The Laird of Dumbiedikes[1] had hitherto been moderate in his exactions, perhaps because he was ashamed to tax too highly the miserable means of support which remained to the widow Butler. But when a stout active young fellow appeared as the labourer of the croft in question, Dumbiedikes began to think so broad a pair of shoulders might bear an additional burden. He regulated, indeed, his management of his dependents (who fortunately were but few in number) much upon the principle of the carters whom he observed loading their carts at a neighbouring coal-hill, and who never failed to clap an additional brace of hundred weights on their burden, so soon as by any means they had compassed a new horse of somewhat superior strength to that which had broken down the day before. However reasonable this practice appeared to the Laird of Dumbiedikes, he ought to have observed, that it may be overdone, and that it infers, as a matter of course, the destruction and loss of both horse, cart, and loading. Even so it befell when the additional "prestations" came to be demanded of Benjamin Butler. A man of few words, and few ideas, but attached to Beersheba with a feeling like that which a vegetable entertains to the spot in which it chances to be planted, he neither remonstrated with the Laird, nor endeavoured to escape from him, but toiling night and day to accomplish the terms of his task-master, fell into a burning fever and died. His wife did not long survive him; and as if it had been the fate of this family to be left orphans, our Reuben Butler was, about the year 1704-5, left in the same circumstances in which his father had been placed, and under the same guardianship, being that of his grandmother, the widow of Monk's old trooper.

The same prospect of misery hung over the head of another tenant of this hard-hearted lord of the soil. This was a tough true-blue Presbyterian, called Deans, who, though most obnoxious to the Laird on account of principles in church and state, contrived to maintain his ground upon the estate by regular payment of mail-duties, kain, arriage, carriage, dry multure, lock, gowpen, and knaveship, and all the various exactions now commuted for money, and summed up in the emphatic word RENT. But the years 1700 and 1701, long remembered in Scotland for dearth and general distress, subdued the stout heart of the agricultural whig. Citations by the ground officer, decreets of the Baron Court, sequestrations, poindings of outside and inside plenishing, flew about his ears as fast as ever the tory bullets whistled around those of the Covenanters at Pentland, Bothwell Brigg, or Airsmoss. Struggle as he

[1] See Note E *Dumbiedikes.*

might, and he struggled gallantly, "Douce David Deans" was routed horse and foot, and lay at the mercy of his grasping landlord just at the time that Benjamin Butler died. The fate of each family was anticipated; but they who prophesied their expulsion to beggary and ruin, were disappointed by an accidental circumstance.

On the very term-day when their ejection should have taken place, when all their neighbours were prepared to pity, and not one to assist them, the minister of the parish, as well as a doctor from Edinburgh, received a hasty summons to attend the Laird of Dumbiedikes. Both were surprised, for his contempt for both faculties had been pretty commonly his theme over an extra bottle, that is to say, at least once every day. The leech for the soul, and he for the body, alighted in the court of the little old manor-house at almost the same time; and when they had gazed a moment at each other with some surprise, they in the same breath expressed their conviction that Dumbiedikes must needs be very ill indeed, since he summoned them both to his presence at once. Ere the servant could usher them to his apartment the party was augmented by a man of law, Nichil Novit, writing himself procurator before the Sheriff-court, for in those days there were no solicitors. This latter personage was first summoned to the apartment of the Laird, where, after some short space, the soul-curer and the body-curer were invited to join him.

Dumbiedikes had been by this time transported into the best bed-room, used only upon occasions of death and marriage, and called, from the former of these occupations, the Dead-Room. There were in this apartment, besides the sick person himself and Mr Novit, the son and heir of the patient, a tall gawky silly-looking boy of fourteen or fifteen, and a housekeeper, a good buxom figure of a woman, betwixt forty and fifty, who had kept the keys and managed matters at Dumbiedikes since the lady's death. It was to these attendants that Dumbiedikes addressed himself pretty nearly in the following words; temporal and spiritual matters, the care of his health and his affairs, being strangely jumbled in a head which was never one of the clearest.

"These are sair times wi' me, gentlemen and neighbours! amaist as ill as at the aughty-nine, when I was rabbled by the collegeaners.[1] — They mistook me muckle — they ca'd me a papist, but there was never a papist bit about me, minister. — Jock, ye 'll take warning — it 's a debt we maun a' pay, and there stands Nichil Novit that will tell ye I was never gude at paying debts in my life. — Mr Novit, ye 'll no forget to draw the annual rent that 's due on the yerl's band — if I pay debt to other folk, I think they suld pay it to me — that equals aquals. — Jock, when ye hae naething else to do, ye may be aye sticking in a tree; it will be growing, Jock, when ye 're sleeping.[2] My father tauld me sae forty years sin', but I ne'er fand time to mind him — Jock, ne'er drink brandy in the morning, it files the stamach sair; gin ye take a morning's draught, let it be aqua mirabilis; Jenny there makes it weel. — Doctor, my breath is growing as scant as a broken-winded piper's, when he has played for four-and-twenty hours at a penny wedding. — Jenny, pit the cod aneath my head — but it 's a' needless! — Mass John, could ye think o' rattling ower some bit short prayer, it wad do me gude maybe, and keep some queer thoughts out o' my head. Say something, man."

"I cannot use a prayer like a rat-rhyme," answered the honest clergyman; "and if you would have your soul redeemed like a prey from the fowler, Laird, you must needs shew me your state of mind."

"And shouldna ye ken that without my telling you?" answered the patient. "What have I been paying stipend and teind, parsonage and vicarage, for, ever sin' the aughty-nine, an I canna get a spell of a prayer for't, the only time I ever asked for ane in my life? — Gang awa wi' your whiggery, if that 's a' ye can do; auld Curate Kiltstoup wad hae read half the Prayer-book to me by this time — Awa wi' ye! — Doctor, let 's see if ye can do ony thing better for me."

The Doctor, who had obtained some information in the meanwhile from the housekeeper on the state of his complaints, assured him the medical art could not prolong his life many hours.

"Then damn Mass John and you baith!" cried the furious and intractable patient. "Did ye come here for naething but to tell me that ye canna help me at the pinch? Out wi' them, Jenny — out o' the house! and, Jock, my curse, and the curse of Cromwell, go wi' ye, if ye gie them either fee or bountith, or sae muckle as a black pair o' cheverons!"[1]

The clergyman and doctor made a speedy retreat out of the apartment, while Dumbiedikes fell into one of those transports of violent and profane language, which had procured him the surname of Damn-me-dikes. "Bring me the brandy bottle, Jenny, ye b——," he cried, with a voice in which passion contended with pain. "I can die as I have lived, without fashing ony o' them. But there 's ae thing," he said, sinking his voice — "there 's ae fearful thing hings about my heart, and an anker of brandy winna wash it away. — The Deanses at Woodend! — I sequestrated them in the dear years, and now they are to flit, they 'll starve — and that Beersheba, and that auld trooper's wife and her oe, they 'll starve — they 'll starve! — Look out, Jock; what kind o' night is 't?"

"On-ding o' snaw, father," answered Jock, after having opened the window, and looked out with great composure.

"They 'll perish in the drifts!" said the expiring sinner — "they 'll perish wi' cauld! — but I 'll be het eneugh, gin a' tales be true."

This last observation was made under breath, and in a tone which made the very attorney shudder. He tried his hand at ghostly advice, probably for the first time in his life, and recommended, as an opiate for the agonized conscience of the Laird, reparation of the injuries he had done to these distressed families, which, he observed by the way, the civil law called *restitutio in integrum*. But Mammon was struggling with Remorse for retaining his place in a bosom he had so long possessed; and he partly succeeded, as an old tyrant proves often too strong for his insurgent rebels.

"I canna do 't," he answered, with a voice of

[1] See Note F. *Students.*
See Note G. *Arboriculture.*

[1] *Cheverons* — gloves.

despair. "It would kill me to do't—how can ye bid me pay back siller, when ye ken how I want it? or dispone Beersheba, when it lies sae weel into my ain plaid-nuik? Nature made Dumbiedikes and Beersheba to be ae man's land—She did, by——. Nichil, it wad kill me to part them."

"But ye maun die whether or no, Laird," said Mr Novit; "and maybe ye wad die easier—it's but trying. I'll scroll the disposition in nae time."

"Dinna speak o't, sir," replied Dumbiedikes, "or I'll fling the stoup at your head.—But, Jock, lad, ye see how the warld warstles wi' me on my death-bed—be kind to the puir creatures the Deanses and the Butlers—be kind to them, Jock. Dinna let the warld get a grip o' ye, Jock—but keep the gear thegither! and whate'er ye do, dispone Beersheba at no rate. Let the creatures stay at a moderate mailing, and hae bite and soup; it will maybe be the better wi' your father whare he's gaun, lad."

After these contradictory instructions, the Laird felt his mind so much at ease, that he drank three bumpers of brandy continuously, and "soughed awa," as Jenny expressed it, in an attempt to sing "Deil stick the minister."

His death made a revolution in favour of the distressed families. John Dumbie, now of Dumbiedikes, in his own right, seemed to be close and selfish enough; but wanted the grasping spirit and active mind of his father; and his guardian happened to agree with him in opinion, that his father's dying recommendation should be attended to. The tenants, therefore, were not actually turned out of doors among the snow wreaths, and were allowed wherewith to procure butter-milk and peas-bannocks, which they eat under the full force of the original malediction. The cottage of Deans, called Woodend, was not very distant from that at Beersheba. Formerly there had been little intercourse between the families. Deans was a sturdy Scotsman, with all sort of prejudices against the southern, and the spawn of the southern. Moreover, Deans was, as we have said, a stanch presbyterian, of the most rigid and unbending adherence to what he conceived to be the only possible straight line, as he was wont to express himself, between right-hand heats and extremes, and left-hand defections; and, therefore, he held in high dread and horror all independents, and whomsoever he supposed allied to them.

But, notwithstanding these national prejudices and religious professions, Deans and the widow Butler were placed in such a situation, as naturally and at length created some intimacy between the families. They had shared a common danger and a mutual deliverance. They needed each other's assistance, like a company, who, crossing a mountain stream, are compelled to cling close together, lest the current should be too powerful for any who are not thus supported.

On nearer acquaintance, too, Deans abated some of his prejudices. He found old Mrs Butler, though not thoroughly grounded in the extent and bearing of the real testimony against the defections of the times, had no opinions in favour of the independent party; neither was she an English woman. Therefore, it was to be hoped, that, though she was the widow of an enthusiastic corporal of Cromwell's dragoons, her grandson might be neither schismatic nor anti-national, two qualities concerning which Goodman Deans had as wholesome a terror as against papists and malignants. Above all, (for Douce Davie Deans had his weak side,) he perceived that widow Butler looked up to him with reverence, listened to his advice, and compounded for an occasional fling at the doctrines of her deceased husband, to which, as we have seen, she was by no means warmly attached, in consideration of the valuable counsels which the presbyterian afforded her for the management of her little farm. These usually concluded with, "they may do otherwise in England, neighbour Butler, for aught I ken;" or, "it may be different in foreign parts;" or, "they wha think differently on the great foundation of our covenanted reformation, overturning and mishguggling the government and discipline of the kirk, and breaking down the carved work of our Zion, might be for sawing the craft wi' aits; but I say pease, pease." And as his advice was shrewd and sensible, though conceitedly given, it was received with gratitude, and followed with respect.

The intercourse which took place betwixt the families at Beersheba and Woodend, became strict and intimate, at a very early period, betwixt Reuben Butler, with whom the reader is already in some degree acquainted, and Jeanie Deans, the only child of Douce Davie Deans by his first wife, "that singular Christian woman," as he was wont to express himself, "whose name was savoury to all that knew her for a desirable professor, Christian Menzies in Hochmagirdle." The manner of which intimacy, and the consequences thereof, we now proceed to relate.

CHAPTER IX.

> Reuben and Rachel, though as fond as doves,
> Were yet discreet and cautious in their loves,
> Nor would attend to Cupid's wild commands,
> Till cool reflection bade them join their hands.
> When both were poor, they thought it argued ill
> Of hasty love to make them poorer still.
>
> CRABBE'S *Parish Register.*

WHILE widow Butler and widower Deans struggled with poverty, and the hard and steril soil of those "parts and portions" of the lands of Dumbiedikes which it was their lot to occupy, it became gradually apparent that Deans was to gain the strife, and his ally in the conflict was to lose it. The former was a man, and not much past the prime of life—Mrs Butler a woman, and declined into the vale of years. This, indeed, ought in time to have been balanced by the circumstance, that Reuben was growing up to assist his grandmother's labours, and that Jeanie Deans, as a girl, could be only supposed to add to her father's burdens. But Douce Davie Deans knew better things, and so schooled and trained the young minion, as he called her, that from the time she could walk, upwards, she was daily employed in some task or other suitable to her age and capacity; a circumstance which, added to her father's daily instructions and lectures, tended to give her mind, even when a child, a grave, serious, firm, and reflecting cast. An uncommonly strong and healthy temperament, free from all nervous affection and every other irregularity, which, attacking the body in its more noble functions, so often influences the mind, tended greatly to esta-

blish this fortitude, simplicity, and decision of character.

On the other hand, Reuben was weak in constitution, and, though not timid in temper, might be safely pronounced anxious, doubtful, and apprehensive. He partook of the temperament of his mother, who had died of a consumption in early age. He was a pale, thin, feeble, sickly boy, and somewhat lame, from an accident in early youth. He was, besides, the child of a doting grandmother, whose too solicitous attention to him soon taught him a sort of diffidence in himself, with a disposition to overrate his own importance, which is one of the very worst consequences that children deduce from over-indulgence.

Still, however, the two children clung to each other's society, not more from habit than from taste. They herded together the handful of sheep, with the two or three cows, which their parents turned out rather to seek food than actually to feed upon the unenclosed common of Dumbiedikes. It was there that the two urchins might be seen seated beneath a blooming bush of whin, their little faces laid close together under the shadow of the same plaid drawn over both their heads, while the landscape around was embrowned by an overshadowing cloud, big with the shower which had driven the children to shelter. On other occasions they went together to school, the boy receiving that encouragement and example from his companion, in crossing the little brooks which intersected their path, and encountering cattle, dogs, and other perils, upon their journey, which the male sex in such cases usually consider it as their prerogative to extend to the weaker. But when, seated on the benches of the school-house, they began to con their lessons together, Reuben, who was as much superior to Jeanie Deans in acuteness of intellect, as inferior to her in firmness of constitution, and in that insensibility to fatigue and danger which depends on the conformation of the nerves, was able fully to requite the kindness and countenance with which, in other circumstances, she used to regard him. He was decidedly the best scholar at the little parish school; and so gentle was his temper and disposition, that he was rather admired than envied by the little mob who occupied the noisy mansion, although he was the declared favourite of the master. Several girls, in particular, (for in Scotland they are taught with the boys,) longed to be kind to, and comfort the sickly lad, who was so much cleverer than his companions. The character of Reuben Butler was so calculated as to offer scope both for their sympathy and their admiration, the feelings, perhaps, through which the female sex (the more deserving part of them at least) is more easily attached.

But Reuben, naturally reserved and distant, improved none of these advantages; and only became more attached to Jeanie Deans, as the enthusiastic approbation of his master assured him of fair prospects in future life, and awakened his ambition. In the meantime, every advance that Reuben made in learning (and, considering his opportunities, they were uncommonly great) rendered him less capable of attending to the domestic duties of his grandmother's farm. While studying the *pons asinorum* in Euclid, he suffered every *cuddie* upon the common to trespass upon a large field of pease belonging to the Laird, and nothing but the active exertions of Jeanie Deans, with her little dog Dustiefoot, could have saved great loss and consequent punishment. Similar miscarriages marked his progress in his classical studies. He read Virgil's Georgics till he did not know bear from barley; and had nearly destroyed the crofts of Beersheba, while attempting to cultivate them according to the practice of Columella and Cato the Censor.

These blunders occasioned grief to his granddame, and disconcerted the good opinion which her neighbour, Davie Deans, had for some time entertained of Reuben.

"I see naething ye can make of that silly callant, neighbour Butler," said he to the old lady, "unless ye train him to the wark o' the ministry. And ne'er was their mair need of poorfu' preachers than e'en now in these cauld Gallio days, when men's hearts are hardened like the nether millstone, till they come to regard none of these things. It 's evident this puir callant of yours will never be able to do an usefu' day's wark, unless it be as an ambassador from our Master; and I will make it my business to procure a licence when he is fit for the same, trusting he will be a shaft cleanly polished, and meet to be used in the body of the kirk; and that he shall not turn again, like the sow, to wallow in the mire of heretical extremes and defections, but shall have the wings of a dove, though he hath lain among the pots."

The poor widow gulped down the affront to her husband's principles, implied in this caution, and hastened to take Butler from the High School, and encourage him in the pursuit of mathematics and divinity, the only physics and ethics that chanced to be in fashion at the time.

Jeanie Deans was now compelled to part from the companion of her labour, her study, and her pastime, and it was with more than childish feeling that both children regarded the separation. But they were young, and hope was high, and they separated like those who hope to meet again at a more auspicious hour.

While Reuben Butler was acquiring at the University of St Andrews the knowledge necessary for a clergyman, and macerating his body with the privations which were necessary in seeking food for his mind, his grand-dame became daily less able to struggle with her little farm, and was at length obliged to throw it up to the new Laird of Dumbiedikes. That great personage was no absolute Jew, and did not cheat her in making the bargain more than was tolerable. He even gave her permission to tenant the house in which she had lived with her husband, as long as it should be "tenantable;" only he protested against paying for a farthing of repairs, any benevolence which he possessed being of the passive, but by no means of the active mood.

In the meanwhile, from superior shrewdness, skill, and other circumstances, some of them purely accidental, Davie Deans gained a footing in the world, the possession of some wealth, the reputation of more, and a growing disposition to preserve and increase his store; for which, when he thought upon it seriously, he was inclined to blame himself. From his knowledge in agriculture, as it was then practised, he became a sort of favourite with the Laird, who had no great pleasure

either in active sports or in society, and was wont to end his daily saunter by calling at the cottage of Woodend.

Being himself a man of slow ideas and confused utterance, Dumbiedikes used to sit or stand for half an hour with an old laced hat of his father's upon his head, and an empty tobacco-pipe in his mouth, with his eyes following Jeanie Deans, or "the lassie," as he called her, through the course of her daily domestic labour; while her father, after exhausting the subject of bestial, of ploughs, and of harrows, often took an opportunity of going full-sail into controversial subjects, to which discussions the dignitary listened with much seeming patience, but without making any reply, or, indeed, as most people thought, without understanding a single word of what the orator was saying. Deans, indeed, denied this stoutly, as an insult at once to his own talents for expounding hidden truths, of which he was a little vain, and to the Laird's capacity of understanding them. He said, "Dumbiedikes was nane of these flashy gentles, wi' lace on their skirts and swords at their tails, that were rather for riding on horseback to hell than ganging barefooted to heaven. He wasna like his father —nae profane company-keeper—nae swearer—nae drinker—nae frequenter of play-house, or music-house, or dancing-house — nae Sabbath breaker—nae imposer of aiths, or bonds, or denier of liberty to the flock.—He clave to the warld, and the warld's gear, a wee ower muckle, but then there was some breathing of a gale upon his spirit," &c. &c. All this honest Davie said and believed.

It is not to be supposed, that, by a father and a man of sense and observation, the constant direction of the Laird's eyes towards Jeanie was altogether unnoticed. This circumstance, however, made a much greater impression upon another member of his family, a second helpmate, to wit, whom he had chosen to take to his bosom ten years after the death of his first. Some people were of opinion, that Douce Davie had been rather surprised into this step, for in general, he was no friend to marriages or giving in marriage, and seemed rather to regard that state of society as a necessary evil,—a thing lawful, and to be tolerated in the imperfect state of our nature, but which clipped the wings with which we ought to soar upwards, and tethered the soul to its mansion of clay, and the creature-comforts of wife and bairns. His own practice, however, had in this material point varied from his principles, since, as we have seen, he twice knitted for himself this dangerous and ensnaring entanglement.

Rebecca, his spouse, had by no means the same horror of matrimony, and as she made marriages in imagination for every neighbour round, she failed not to indicate a match betwixt Dumbiedikes and her step-daughter Jeanie. The goodman used regularly to frown and pshaw whenever this topic was touched upon, but usually ended by taking his bonnet and walking out of the house to conceal a certain gleam of satisfaction, which, at such a suggestion, involuntarily diffused itself over his austere features.

The more youthful part of my readers may naturally ask, whether Jeanie Deans was deserving of this mute attention of the Laird of Dumbiedikes; and the historian, with due regard to veracity, is compelled to answer, that her personal attractions were of no uncommon description. She was short, and rather too stoutly made for her size, had grey eyes, light coloured hair, a round good-humoured face, much tanned with the sun, and her only peculiar charm was an air of inexpressible serenity, which a good conscience, kind feelings, contented temper, and the regular discharge of all her duties, spread over her features. There was nothing, it may be supposed, very appalling in the form or manners of this rustic heroine; yet, whether from sheepish bashfulness, or from want of decision and imperfect knowledge of his own mind on the subject, the Laird of Dumbiedikes, with his old laced hat and empty tobacco-pipe, came and enjoyed the beatific vision of Jeanie Deans day after day, week after week, year after year, without proposing to accomplish any of the prophecies of the step-mother.

This good lady began to grow doubly impatient on the subject, when, after having been some years married, she herself presented Douce Davie with another daughter, who was named Euphemia, by corruption, Effie. It was then that Rebecca began to turn impatient with the slow pace at which the Laird's wooing proceeded, judiciously arguing, that, as Lady Dumbiedikes would have but little occasion for tocher, the principal part of her gudeman's substance would naturally descend to the child by the second marriage. Other step-dames have tried less laudable means for clearing the way to the succession of their own children; but Rebecca, to do her justice, only sought little Effie's advantage through the promotion, or which must have generally been accounted such, of her elder sister. She therefore tried every female art within the compass of her simple skill, to bring the Laird to a point; but had the mortification to perceive that her efforts, like those of an unskilful angler, only scared the trout she meant to catch. Upon one occasion, in particular, when she joked with the Laird on the propriety of giving a mistress to the house of Dumbiedikes, he was so effectually startled, that neither laced hat, tobacco-pipe, nor the intelligent proprietor of these moveables, visited Woodend for a fortnight. Rebecca was therefore compelled to leave the Laird to proceed at his own snail's pace, convinced, by experience, of the grave-digger's aphorism, that your dull ass will not mend his pace for beating.

Reuben, in the meantime, pursued his studies at the university, supplying his wants by teaching the younger lads the knowledge he himself acquired, and thus at once gaining the means of maintaining himself at the seat of learning, and fixing in his mind the elements of what he had already obtained. In this manner, as is usual among the poorer students of divinity at Scottish universities, he contrived not only to maintain himself according to his simple wants, but even to send considerable assistance to his sole remaining parent, a sacred duty, of which the Scotch are seldom negligent. His progress in knowledge of a general kind, as well as in the studies proper to his profession, was very considerable, but was little remarked, owing to the retired modesty of his disposition, which in no respect qualified him to set off his learning to the best advantage. And thus, had Butler been a man given to make complaints, he had his tale to tell, like others, of unjust preferences, bad luck.

and hard usage. On these subjects, however, he was habitually silent, perhaps from modesty, perhaps from a touch of pride, or perhaps from a conjunction of both.

He obtained his licence as a preacher of the gospel, with some compliments from the presbytery by whom it was bestowed; but this did not lead to any preferment, and he found it necessary to make the cottage at Beersheba his residence for some months, with no other income than was afforded by the precarious occupation of teaching in one or other of the neighbouring families. After having greeted his aged grandmother, his first visit was to Woodend, where he was received by Jeanie with warm cordiality, arising from recollections which had never been dismissed from her mind, by Rebecca with good-humoured hospitality, and by old Deans in a mode peculiar to himself.

Highly as Douce Davie honoured the clergy, it was not upon each individual of the cloth that he bestowed his approbation; and, a little jealous, perhaps, at seeing his youthful acquaintance erected into the dignity of a teacher and preacher, he instantly attacked him upon various points of controversy, in order to discover whether he might not have fallen into some of the snares, defections, and desertions of the time. Butler was not only a man of stanch presbyterian principles, but was also willing to avoid giving pain to his old friend by disputing upon points of little importance; and therefore he might have hoped to have come like refined gold out of the furnace of Davie's interrogatories. But the result on the mind of that strict investigator was not altogether so favourable as might have been hoped and anticipated. Old Judith Butler, who had hobbled that evening as far as Woodend, in order to enjoy the congratulations of her neighbours upon Reuben's return, and upon his high attainments, of which she was herself not a little proud, was somewhat mortified to find that her old friend Deans did not enter into the subject with the warmth she expected. At first, indeed, he seemed rather silent than dissatisfied; and it was not till Judith had essayed the subject more than once that it led to the following dialogue.

"Aweel, neibor Deans, I thought ye wad hae been glad to see Reuben amang us again, poor fellow."

"I *am* glad, Mrs Butler," was the neighbour's concise answer.

"Since he has lost his grandfather and his father, (praised be Him that giveth and taketh!) I ken nae friend he has in the world that's been sae like a father to him as the sell o' ye, neibor Deans."

"God is the only father of the fatherless," said Deans, touching his bonnet and looking upwards. "Give honour where it is due, gudewife, and not to an unworthy instrument."

"Aweel, that's your way o' turning it, and nae doubt ye ken best; but I hae kend ye, Davie, send a forpit o' meal to Beersheba when there wasna a bow left in the meal-ark at Woodend; ay, and I hae kend ye——"

"Gudewife," said Davie, interrupting her, "these are but idle tales to tell me; fit for naething but to puff up our inward man wi' our ain vain acts. I stude beside blessed Alexander Peden, when I heard him call the death and testimony of our happy martyrs but draps of blude and scarts of ink in respect of fitting discharge of our duty; and what suld I think of ony thing the ike of me can do?"

"Weel, neibor Deans, ye ken best; but I maun say that, I am sure you are glad to see my bairn again—the halt's gane now, unless he has to walk ower mony miles at a stretch; and he has a wee bit colour in his cheek, that glads my auld een to see it; and he has as decent a black coat as the minister: and——"

"I am very heartily glad he is weel and thriving," said Mr Deans, with a gravity that seemed intended to cut short the subject; but a woman who is bent upon a point is not easily pushed aside from it.

"And," continued Mrs Butler, "he can wag his head in a pulpit now, neibor Deans, think but of that—my ain oe—and a'body maun sit still and listen to him, as if he were the Paip of Rome."

"The what?—the who?—woman!" said Deans, with a sternness far beyond his usual gravity, as soon as these offensive words had struck upon the tympanum of his ear.

"Eh, guide us!" said the poor woman; "I had forgot what an ill will ye had aye at the Paip, and sae had my puir gudeman, Stephen Butler. Mony an afternoon he wad sit and take up his testimony again the Paip, and again baptizing of bairns, and the like."

"Woman!" reiterated Deans, "either speak about what ye ken something o', or be silent; I say that independency is a foul heresy, and anabaptism a damnable and deceiving error, whilk suld be rooted out of the land wi' the fire o' the spiritual, and the sword o' the civil magistrate."

"Weel, weel, neibor, I'll no say that ye mayna be right," answered the submissive Judith. "I am sure ye are right about the sawing and the mawing, the shearing and the leading, and what for suld ye no be right about kirkwark, too?—But concerning my oe, Reuben Butler——"

"Reuben Butler, gudewife," said David with solemnity, "is a lad I wish heartily weel to, even as if he were mine ain son—but I doubt there will be outs and ins in the track of his walk. I muckle fear his gifts will get the heels of his grace. He has ower muckle human wit and learning, and thinks as muckle about the form of the bicker as he does about the healsomeness of the food—he maun broider the marriage-garment with lace and passments, or it's no gude eneugh for him. And it's like he's something proud o' his human gifts and learning, whilk enables him to dress up his doctrine in that fine airy dress. But," added he, at seeing the old woman's uneasiness at his discourse, "affliction may gie him a jagg, and let the wind out o' him, as out o' a cow that's eaten wet clover, and the lad may do weel, and be a burning and a shining light; and I trust it will be yours to see, and his to feel it, and that soon."

Widow Butler was obliged to retire, unable to make any thing more of her neighbour, whose discourse, though she did not comprehend it, filled her with undefined apprehensions on her grandson's account, and greatly depressed the joy with which she had welcomed him on his return. And it must not be concealed, in justice to Mr Deans's discernment, that Butler, in their conference, had made a greater display of his

learning than the occasion called for, or than was likely to be acceptable to the old man, who, accustomed to consider himself as a person preeminently entitled to dictate upon theological subjects of controversy, felt rather humbled and mortified when learned authorities were placed in array against him. In fact, Butler had not escaped the tinge of pedantry which naturally flowed from his education, and was apt, on many occasions, to make parade of his knowledge, when there was no need of such vanity.

Jeanie Deans, however, found no fault with this display of learning, but, on the contrary, admired it; perhaps on the same score that her sex are said to admire men of courage, on account of their own deficiency in that qualification. The circumstances of their families threw the young people constantly together; their old intimacy was renewed, though upon a footing better adapted to their age; and it became at length understood betwixt them, that their union should be deferred no longer than until Butler should obtain some steady means of support, however humble. This, however, was not a matter speedily to be accomplished. Plan after plan was formed, and plan after plan failed. The good-humoured cheek of Jeanie lost the first flush of juvenile freshness; Reuben's brow assumed the gravity of manhood, yet the means of obtaining a settlement seemed remote as ever. Fortunately for the lovers, their passion was of no ardent or enthusiastic cast; and a sense of duty on both sides induced them to bear, with patient fortitude, the protracted interval which divided them from each other.

In the meanwhile, time did not roll on without effecting his usual changes. The widow of Stephen Butler, so long the prop of the family of Beersheba, was gathered to her fathers; and Rebecca, the careful spouse of our friend Davie Deans, was also summoned from her plans of matrimonial and domestic economy. The morning after her death, Reuben Butler went to offer his mite of consolation to his old friend and benefactor. He witnessed, on this occasion, a remarkable struggle betwixt the force of natural affection, and the religious stoicism, which the sufferer thought it was incumbent upon him to maintain under each earthly dispensation, whether of weal or wo.

On his arrival at the cottage, Jeanie, with her eyes overflowing with tears, pointed to the little orchard, "in which," she whispered with broken accents, "my poor father has been since his misfortune." Somewhat alarmed at this account, Butler entered the orchard, and advanced slowly towards his old friend, who, seated in a small rude arbour, appeared to be sunk in the extremity of his affliction. He lifted his eyes somewhat sternly as Butler approached, as if offended at the interruption; but as the young man hesitated whether he ought to retreat or advance, he arose, and came forward to meet him, with a self-possessed, and even dignified air.

"Young man," said the sufferer, "lay it not to heart, though the righteous perish and the merciful are removed, seeing, it may well be said, that they are taken away from the evils to come. Wo to me, were I to shed a tear for the wife of my bosom, when I might weep rivers of water for this afflicted Church, cursed as it is with carnal seekers, and with the dead of heart."

"I am happy," said Butler, "that you can forget your private affliction in your regard for public duty."

"Forget, Reuben?" said poor Deans, putting his handkerchief to his eyes,—"She 's not to be forgotten on this side of time; but He that gives the wound can send the ointment. I declare there have been times during this night when my meditation has been so wrapt, that I knew not of my heavy loss. It has been with me as with the worthy John Semple, called Carspharn John,[1] upon a like trial, —I have been this night on the banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there."

Notwithstanding the assumed fortitude of Deans, which he conceived to be the discharge of a great Christian duty, he had too good a heart not to suffer deeply under this heavy loss. Woodend became altogether distasteful to him; and as he had obtained both substance and experience by his management of that little farm, he resolved to employ them as a dairy-farmer, or cow-feeder, as they are called in Scotland. The situation he chose for his new settlement was at a place called Saint Leonard's Crags, lying betwixt Edinburgh and the mountain called Arthur's Seat, and adjoining to the extensive sheep pasture still named the King's Park, from its having been formerly dedicated to the preservation of the royal game. Here he rented a small lonely house, about half a mile distant from the nearest point of the city, but the site of which, with all the adjacent ground, is now occupied by the buildings which form the south-eastern suburb. An extensive pasture-ground adjoining, which Deans rented from the keeper of the Royal Park, enabled him to feed his milk-cows; and the unceasing industry and activity of Jeanie, his eldest daughter, were exerted in making the most of their produce.

She had now less frequent opportunities of seeing Reuben, who had been obliged, after various disappointments, to accept the subordinate situation of assistant in a parochial school of some eminence, at three or four miles' distance from the city. Here he distinguished himself, and became acquainted with several respectable burgesses, who, on account of health, or other reasons, chose that their children should commence their education in this little village. His prospects were thus gradually brightening, and upon each visit which he paid at Saint Leonard's he had an opportunity of gliding a hint to this purpose into Jeanie's ear. These visits were necessarily very rare, on account of the demands which the duties of the school made upon Butler's time. Nor did he dare to make them even altogether so frequent as these avocations would permit. Deans received him with civility indeed, and even with kindness; but Reuben, as is usual in such cases, imagined that he read his purpose in his eyes, and was afraid too premature an explanation on the subject would draw down his positive disapproval. Upon the whole, therefore, he judged it prudent to call at Saint Leonard's just so frequently as old acquaintance and neighbourhood seemed to authorize, and no oftener. There was another person who was more regular in his visits.

When Davie Deans intimated to the Laird of Dumbiedikes his purpose of "quitting wi' the land and house at Woodend," the Laird stared and said

[1] See Note H. *Carspharn John*

nothing. He made his usual visits at the usual hour without remark, until the day before the term, when, observing the bustle of moving furniture already commenced, the great east-country *awmrie* dragged out of its nook, and standing with its shoulder to the company, like an awkward booby about to leave the room, the Laird again stared mightily, and was heard to ejaculate, "Hegh, sirs!" Even after the day of departure was past and gone, the Laird of Dumbiedikes, at his usual hour, which was that at which David Deans was wont to "loose the pleugh," presented himself before the closed door of the cottage at Woodend, and seemed as much astonished at finding it shut against his approach as if it was not exactly what he had to expect. On this occasion he was heard to ejaculate, "Gude guide us!" which, by those who knew him, was considered as a very unusual mark of emotion. From that moment forward, Dumbiedikes became an altered man, and the regularity of his movements, hitherto so exemplary, was as totally disconcerted as those of a boy's watch when he has broken the main-spring. Like the index of the said watch, did Dumbiedikes spin round the whole bounds of his little property, which may be likened unto the dial of the time-piece, with unwonted velocity. There was not a cottage into which he did not enter, nor scarce a maiden on whom he did not stare. But so it was, that although there were better farm-houses on the land than Woodend, and certainly much prettier girls than Jeanie Deans, yet it did somehow befall that the blank in the Laird's time was not so pleasantly filled up as it had been. There was no seat accommodated him so well as the "bunker" at Woodend, and no face he loved so much to gaze on as Jeanie Deans's. So, after spinning round and round his little orbit, and then remaining stationary for a week, it seems to have occurred to him, that he was not pinned down to circulate on a pivot, like the hands of the watch, but possessed the power of shifting his central point, and extending his circle if he thought proper. To realize which privilege of change of place, he bought a pony from a Highland drover, and with its assistance and company stepped, or rather stumbled, as far as Saint Leonard's Crags.

Jeanie Deans, though so much accustomed to the Laird's staring that she was sometimes scarce conscious of his presence, had nevertheless some occasional fears lest he should call in the organ of speech to back those expressions of admiration which he bestowed on her through his eyes. Should this happen, farewell, she thought, to all chance of an union with Butler. For her father, however stout-hearted and independent in civil and religious principles, was not without that respect for the laird of the land, so deeply imprinted on the Scottish tenantry of the period. Moreover, if he did not positively dislike Butler, yet his fund of carnal learning was often the object of sarcasms on David's part, which were perhaps founded in jealousy, and which certainly indicated no partiality for the party against whom they were lanched. And, lastly, the match with Dumbiedikes would have presented irresistible charms to one who used to complain that he felt himself apt to take "ower grit an armfu' o' the warld." So that, upon the whole, the Laird's diurnal visits were disagreeable to Jeanie from apprehension of future consequences, and it served much to console her, upon removing from the spot where she was bred and born, that she had seen the last of Dumbiedikes, his laced hat, and tobacco-pipe. The poor girl no more expected he could muster courage to follow her to Saint Leonard's Crags, than that any of her apple-trees or cabbages which she had left rooted in the "yard" at Woodend, would spontaneously, and unaided, have undertaken the same journey. It was, therefore, with much more surprise than pleasure that, on the sixth day after their removal to Saint Leonard's, she beheld Dumbiedikes arrive, laced hat, tobacco-pipe, and all, and, with the self-same greeting of "How's a' wi' ye, Jeanie?—Whare's the gudeman?" assume as nearly as he could the same position in the cottage at Saint Leonard's which he had so long and so regularly occupied at Woodend. He was no sooner, however, seated, than with an unusual exertion of his powers of conversation, he added, "Jeanie—I say, Jeanie, woman"—here he extended his hand towards her shoulder with all the fingers spread out as if to clutch it, but in so bashful and awkward a manner, that when she whisked herself beyond its reach, the paw remained suspended in the air with the palm open, like the claw of a heraldic griffin—"Jeanie," continued the swain, in this moment of inspiration,—"I say, Jeanie, it's a braw day out-by, and the roads are no that ill for boot-hose."

"The deil's in the daidling body," muttered Jeanie between her teeth; "wha wad hae thought o' his daikering out this length?" And she afterwards confessed that she threw a little of this ungracious sentiment into her accent and manner; for her father being abroad, and the "body," as she irreverently termed the landed proprietor, "looking unco gleg and canty, she didna ken what he might be coming out wi' next."

Her frowns, however, acted as a complete sedative, and the Laird relapsed from that day into his former taciturn habits, visiting the cowfeeder's cottage three or four times every week, when the weather permitted, with apparently no other purpose than to stare at Jeanie Deans, while Douce Davie poured forth his eloquence upon the controversies and testimonies of the day.

CHAPTER X.

> Her air, her manners, all who saw admired,
> Courteous, though coy, and gentle, though retired;
> The joy of youth and health her eyes display'd,
> And ease of heart her every look convey'd.
>
> CRABBE.

THE visits of the Laird thus again sunk into matters of ordinary course, from which nothing was to be expected or apprehended. If a lover could have gained a fair one as a snake is said to fascinate a bird, by pertinaciously gazing on her with great stupid greenish eyes, which began now to be occasionally aided by spectacles, unquestionably Dumbiedikes would have been the person to perform the feat. But the art of fascination seems among the *artes perditæ*, and I cannot learn that this most pertinacious of starers produced any effect by his attentions beyond an occasional yawn.

In the meanwhile, the object of his gaze was gradually attaining the verge of youth, and approaching to what is called in females the middle

age, which is impolitely held to begin a few years earlier with their more fragile sex than with men. Many people would have been of opinion, that the Laird would have done better to have transferred his glances to an object possessed of far superior charms to Jeanie's, even when Jeanie's were in their bloom, who began now to be distinguished by all who visited the cottage at St Leonard's Crags.

Effie Deans, under the tender and affectionate care of her sister, had now shot up into a beautiful and blooming girl. Her Grecian-shaped head was profusely rich in waving ringlets of brown hair, which, confined by a blue snood of silk, and shading a laughing Hebe countenance, seemed the picture of health, pleasure, and contentment. Her brown russet short-gown set off a shape, which time, perhaps, might be expected to render too robust, the frequent objection to Scottish beauty, but which, in her present early age, was slender and taper, with that graceful and easy sweep of outline which at once indicates health and beautiful proportion of parts.

These growing charms, in all their juvenile profusion, had no power to shake the steadfast mind, or divert the fixed gaze, of the constant Laird of Dumbiedikes. But there was scarce another eye that could behold this living picture of health and beauty, without pausing on it with pleasure. The traveller stopped his weary horse on the eve of entering the city which was the end of his journey, to gaze at the sylph-like form that tripped by him, with her milk-pail poised on her head, bearing herself so erect, and stepping so light and free under her burden, that it seemed rather an ornament than an encumbrance. The lads of the neighbouring suburb, who held their evening rendezvous for putting the stone, casting the hammer, playing at long bowls, and other athletic exercises, watched the motions of Effie Deans, and contended with each other which should have the good fortune to attract her attention. Even the rigid Presbyterians of her father's persuasion, who held each indulgence of the eye and sense to be a snare at least, if not a crime, were surprised into a moment's delight while gazing on a creature so exquisite, — instantly checked by a sigh, reproaching at once their own weakness, and mourning that a creature so fair should share in the common and hereditary guilt and imperfection of our nature. She was currently entitled the Lily of St Leonard's, a name which she deserved as much by her guileless purity of thought, speech, and action, as by her uncommon loveliness of face and person.

Yet there were points in Effie's character, which gave rise not only to strange doubt and anxiety on the part of Douce David Deans, whose ideas were rigid, as may easily be supposed, upon the subject of youthful amusements, but even of serious apprehension to her more indulgent sister. The children of the Scotch of the inferior classes are usually spoiled by the early indulgence of their parents; how, wherefore, and to what degree, the lively and instructive narrative of the amiable and accomplished authoress of "Glenburnie"[1] has saved me and all future scribblers the trouble of recording. Effie had had a double share of this inconsiderate and misjudged kindness. Even the strictness of her father's principles could not condemn the sports of infancy and childhood; and to the good old man, his younger daughter, the child of his old age, seemed a child for some years after she attained the years of womanhood, was still called the "bit lassie," and "little Effie," and was permitted to run up and down uncontrolled, unless upon the Sabbath, or at the times of family worship. Her sister, with all the love and care of a mother, could not be supposed to possess the same authoritative influence; and that which she had hitherto exercised became gradually limited and diminished as Effie's advancing years entitled her, in her own conceit at least, to the right of independence and free agency. With all the innocence and goodness of disposition, therefore, which we have described, the Lily of St Leonard's possessed a little fund of self-conceit and obstinacy, and some warmth and irritability of temper, partly natural perhaps, but certainly much increased by the unrestrained freedom of her childhood. Her character will be best illustrated by a cottage evening scene.

The careful father was absent in his well-stocked byre, foddering those useful and patient animals on whose produce his living depended, and the summer evening was beginning to close in, when Jeanie Deans began to be very anxious for the appearance of her sister, and to fear that she would not reach home before her father returned from the labour of the evening, when it was his custom to have "family exercise," and when she knew that Effie's absence would give him the most serious displeasure. These apprehensions hung heavier upon her mind, because, for several preceding evenings, Effie had disappeared about the same time, and her stay, at first so brief as scarce to be noticed, had been gradually protracted to half an hour, and an hour, and on the present occasion had considerably exceeded even this last limit. And now, Jeanie stood at the door, with her hand before her eyes to avoid the rays of the level sun, and looked alternately along the various tracks which led towards their dwelling, to see if she could descry the nymph-like form of her sister. There was a wall and a stile which separated the royal domain, or King's Park, as it is called, from the public road; to this pass she frequently directed her attention, when she saw two persons appear there somewhat suddenly, as if they had walked close by the side of the wall to screen themselves from observation. One of them, a man, drew back hastily; the other, a female, crossed the stile, and advanced towards her — It was Effie. She met her sister with that affected liveliness of manner, which, in her rank, and sometimes in those above it, females occasionally assume to hide surprise or confusion; and she carolled as she came —

> "The elfin knight sate on the brae,
> The broom grows bonny, the broom grows fair;
> And by there came lilting a lady so gay,
> And we daurna gang down to the broom nae mair."

"Whisht, Effie," said her sister; "our father's coming out o' the byre." — The damsel stinted in her song. — "Whare hae ye been sae late at e'en?"

"It's no late, lass," answered Effie.

"It's chappit eight on every clock o' the town, and the sun's gaun down ahint the Corstorphine hills — Whare can ye hae been sae late?"

"Nae gate," answered Effie.

"And wha was that parted wi' you at the stile?"

"Naebody," replied Effie, once more.

[1] Mrs Elizabeth Hamilton, now no more.—*Editor.*

"Nae gate?—Naebody?—I wish it may be a right gate, and a right body, that keeps folk out sae late at e'en, Effie."

"What needs ye be aye speering then at folk?" retorted Effie. "I 'm sure, if ye 'll ask nae questions, I 'll tell ye nae lees. I never ask what brings the Laird of Dumbiedikes glowering here like a wull-cat, (only his een 's greener, and no sae gleg,) day after day, till we are a' like to gaunt our chafts aff."

"Because ye ken very weel he comes to see our father," said Jeanie, in answer to this pert remark.

"And Dominie Butler—Does he come to see our father, that 's sae taen wi' his Latin words?" said Effie, delighted to find that, by carrying the war into the enemy's country, she could divert the threatened attack upon herself, and with the petulance of youth she pursued her triumph over her prudent elder sister. She looked at her with a sly air, in which there was something like irony, as she chanted, in a low but marked tone, a scrap of an old Scotch song—

> "Through the kirkyard
> I met wi' the Laird,
> The silly puir body he said me nae harm;
> But just ere 'twas dark,
> I met wi' the clerk——"

Here the songstress stopped, looked full at her sister, and, observing the tear gather in her eyes, she suddenly flung her arms round her neck, and kissed them away. Jeanie, though hurt and displeased, was unable to resist the caresses of this untaught child of nature, whose good and evil seemed to flow rather from impulse than from reflection. But as she returned the sisterly kiss, in token of perfect reconciliation, she could not suppress the gentle reproof—"Effie, if ye will learn fule sangs, ye might make a kinder use of them."

"And so I might, Jeanie," continued the girl, clinging to her sister's neck; "and I wish I had never learned ane o' them—and I wish we had never come here—and I wish my tongue had been blistered or I had vexed ye."

"Never mind that, Effie," replied the affectionate sister; "I canna be muckle vexed wi' ony thing ye say to me—but O dinna vex our father!"

"I will not—I will not," replied Effie; "and if there were as mony dances the morn's night as there are merry dancers in the north firmament on a frosty e'en, I winna budge an inch to gang near ane o' them."

"Dance!" echoed Jeanie Deans in astonishment. "O, Effie, what could take ye to a dance?"

It is very possible, that, in the communicative mood into which the Lily of St Leonard's was now surprised, she might have given her sister her unreserved confidence, and saved me the pain of telling a melancholy tale; but at the moment the word dance was uttered, it reached the ear of old David Deans, who had turned the corner of the house, and came upon his daughters ere they were aware of his presence. The word *prelate*, or even the word *pope*, could hardly have produced so appalling an effect upon David's ear; for, of all exercises, that of dancing, which he termed a voluntary and regular fit of distraction, he deemed most destructive of serious thoughts, and the readiest inlet to all sort of licentiousness; and he accounted the encouraging, and even permitting, assemblies or meetings, whether among those of high or low degree, for this fantastic and absurd purpose, or for that of dramatic representations, as one of the most flagrant proofs of defection and causes of wrath. The pronouncing of the word *dance* by his own daughters, and at his own door, now drove him beyond the verge of patience. "Dance!" he exclaimed. "Dance!—dance, said ye? I daur ye, limmers that ye are, to name sic a word at my door-cheek! It 's a dissolute profane pastime, practised by the Israelites only at their base and brutal worship of the Golden Calf at Bethel, and by the unhappy lass wha danced aff the head of John the Baptist, upon whilk chapter I will exercise this night for your farther instruction, since ye need it sae muckle, nothing doubting that she has cause to rue the day, lang or this time, that e'er she suld hae shook a limb on sic an errand. Better for her to hae been born a cripple, and carried frae door to door, like auld Bessie Bowie, begging bawbees, than to be a king's daughter, fiddling and flinging the gate she did. I hae often wondered that ony ane that ever bent a knee for the right purpose, should ever daur to crook a hough to fyke and fling at piper's wind and fiddler's squealing. And I bless God, (with that singular worthy, Peter Walker the packman at Bristo-Port,[1]) that ordered my lot in my dancing days, so that fear of my head and throat, dread of bloody rope and swift bullet, and trenchant swords and pain of boots and thumkins, cauld and hunger, wetness and weariness, stopped the lightness of my head, and the wantonness of my feet. And now, if I hear ye, quean lassies, sae muckle as name dancing, or think there 's sic a thing in this warld as flinging to fiddler's sounds and piper's springs, as sure as my father's spirit is with the just, ye shall be no more either charge or concern of mine! Gang in, then—gang in, then, hinnies," he added, in a softer tone, for the tears of both daughters, but especially those of Effie, began to flow very fast,—"Gang in, dears, and we 'll seek grace to preserve us frae all manner of profane folly, whilk causeth to sin, and promoteth the kingdom of darkness, warring with the kingdom of light."

The objurgation of David Deans, however well meant, was unhappily timed. It created a division of feelings in Effie's bosom, and deterred her from her intended confidence in her sister. "She wad haud me nae better than the dirt below her feet," said Effie to herself, "were I to confess I hae danced wi' him four times on the green down by, and ance at Maggie Macqueen's; and she 'll maybe hing it ower my head that she 'll tell my father, and then she wad be mistress and mair. But I 'll no gang back there again. I 'm resolved I 'll no gang back. I 'll lay in a leaf of my Bible,[2] and that 's very near as if I had made an aith, that I winna gang back." And she kept her vow for a week, during which she was unusually cross and fretful, blemishes which had never before been observed in her temper, except during a moment of contradiction.

There was something in all this so mysterious as considerably to alarm the prudent and affectionate Jeanie, the more so as she judged it unkind to her

[1] See Note I. *Peter Walker.*

[2] This custom, of making a mark by folding a leaf in the party's Bible, when a solemn resolution is formed, is still held to be, in some sense, an appeal to Heaven for his or her sincerity.

sister to mention to their father grounds of anxiety which might arise from her own imagination. Besides, her respect for the good old man did not prevent her from being aware that he was both hot-tempered and positive, and she sometimes suspected that he carried his dislike to youthful amusements beyond the verge that religion and reason demanded. Jeanie had sense enough to see that a sudden and severe curb upon her sister's hitherto unrestrained freedom might be rather productive of harm than good, and that Effie, in the headstrong wilfulness of youth, was likely to make what might be over-strained in her father's precepts an excuse to herself for neglecting them altogether. In the higher classes, a damsel, however giddy, is still under the dominion of etiquette, and subject to the surveillance of mammas and chaperons; but the country girl, who snatches her moment of gaiety during the intervals of labour, is under no such guardianship or restraint, and her amusement becomes so much the more hazardous. Jeanie saw all this with much distress of mind, when a circumstance occurred which appeared calculated to relieve her anxiety.

Mrs Saddletree, with whom our readers have already been made acquainted, chanced to be a distant relation of Douce David Deans, and as she was a woman orderly in her life and conversation, and, moreover, of good substance, a sort of acquaintance was formally kept up between the families. Now, this careful dame, about a year and a half before our story commences, chanced to need, in the line of her profession, a better sort of servant, or rather shop-woman. "Mr Saddletree," she said, "was never in the shop when he could get his nose within the Parliament House, and it was an awkward thing for a woman-body to be standing among bundles o' barkened leather her lane, selling saddles and bridles; and she had cast her eyes upon her far-awa cousin Effie Deans, as just the very sort of lassie she would want to keep her in countenance on such occasions."

In this proposal there was much that pleased old David, — there was bed, board, and bountith — it was a decent situation — the lassie would be under Mrs Saddletree's eye, who had an upright walk, and lived close by the Tolbooth Kirk, in which might still be heard the comforting doctrines of one of those few ministers of the Kirk of Scotland who had not bent the knee unto Baal, according to David's expression, or become accessory to the course of national defections, — union, toleration, patronages, and a bundle of prelatical Erastian oaths which had been imposed on the church since the Revolution, and particularly in the reign of "the late woman," (as he called Queen Anne,) the last of that unhappy race of Stewarts. In the good man's security concerning the soundness of the theological doctrine which his daughter was to hear, he was nothing disturbed on account of the snares of a different kind, to which a creature so beautiful, young, and wilful, might be exposed in the centre of a populous and corrupted city. The fact is, that he thought with so much horror on all approaches to irregularities of the nature most to be dreaded in such cases, that he would as soon have suspected and guarded against Effie's being induced to become guilty of the crime of murder. He only regretted that she should live under the same roof with such a worldly-wise man as Bartoline Saddletree, whom David never suspected as being an ass as he was, but considered as one really endowed with all the legal knowledge to which he made pretension, and only liked him the worse for possessing it. The lawyers, especially those amongst them who sate as ruling elders in the General Assembly of the Kirk, had been forward in promoting the measures of patronage, of the abjuration oath, and others, which, in the opinion of David Deans, were a breaking down of the carved work of the sanctuary, and an intrusion upon the liberties of the kirk. Upon the dangers of listening to the doctrines of a legalized formalist, such as Saddletree, David gave his daughter many lectures; so much so, that he had time to touch but slightly on the dangers of chambering, company-keeping, and promiscuous dancing, to which, at her time of life, most people would have thought Effie more exposed, than to the risk of theoretical error in her religious faith.

Jeanie parted from her sister, with a mixed feeling of regret, and apprehension, and hope. She could not be so confident concerning Effie's prudence as her father, for she had observed her more narrowly, had more sympathy with her feelings, and could better estimate the temptations to which she was exposed. On the other hand, Mrs Saddletree was an observing, shrewd, notable woman, entitled to exercise over Effie the full authority of a mistress, and likely to do so strictly, yet with kindness. Her removal to Saddletree's, it was most probable, would also serve to break off some idle acquaintances, which Jeanie suspected her sister to have formed in the neighbouring suburb. Upon the whole, then, she viewed her departure from Saint Leonard's with pleasure, and it was not until the very moment of their parting for the first time in their lives, that she felt the full force of sisterly sorrow. While they repeatedly kissed each other's cheeks and wrung each other's hands, Jeanie took that moment of affectionate sympathy, to press upon her sister the necessity of the utmost caution in her conduct while residing in Edinburgh. Effie listened, without once raising her large dark eyelashes, from which the drops fell so fast as almost to resemble a fountain. At the conclusion she sobbed again, kissed her sister, promised to recollect all the good counsel she had given her, and they parted.

During the first weeks, Effie was all that her kinswoman expected, and even more. But with time there came a relaxation of that early zeal which she manifested in Mrs Saddletree's service. To borrow once again from the poet, who so correctly and beautifully describes living manners, —

> "Something there was, — what, none presumed to say, —
> Clouds lightly passing on a summer's day;
> Whispers and hints, which went from ear to ear,
> And mix'd reports no judge on earth could clear."

During this interval, Mrs Saddletree was sometimes displeased by Effie's lingering when she was sent upon errands about the shop business, and sometimes by a little degree of impatience which she manifested at being rebuked on such occasions. But she good-naturedly allowed, that the first was very natural to a girl to whom every thing in Edinburgh was new, and the other was only the petulance of a spoiled child, when subjected to the yoke of domestic discipline for the first time. Attention and submission could not be learned at once — Holy-Rood was not built in a day — use would make perfect.

It seemed as if the considerate old lady had pre-

taged truly. Ere many months had passed, Effie became almost wedded to her duties, though she no longer discharged them with the laughing cheek and light step, which at first had attracted every customer. Her mistress sometimes observed her in tears, but they were signs of secret sorrow, which she concealed as often as she saw them attract notice. Time wore on, her cheek grew pale, and her step heavy. The cause of these changes could not have escaped the matronly eye of Mrs Saddletree, but she was chiefly confined by indisposition to her bedroom for a considerable time during the latter part of Effie's service. This interval was marked by symptoms of anguish almost amounting to despair. The utmost efforts of the poor girl to command her fits of hysterical agony were often totally unavailing, and the mistakes which she made in the shop the while were so numerous and so provoking, that Bartoline Saddletree, who, during his wife's illness, was obliged to take closer charge of the business than consisted with his study of the weightier matters of the law, lost all patience with the girl, who, in his law Latin, and without much respect to gender, he declared ought to be cognosced by inquest of a jury, as *fatuus, furiosus*, and *naturaliter idiota*. Neighbours, also, and fellow-servants, remarked with malicious curiosity or degrading pity, the disfigured shape, loose dress, and pale cheeks, of the once beautiful and still interesting girl. But to no one would she grant her confidence, answering all taunts with bitter sarcasm, and all serious expostulation with sullen denial, or with floods of tears.

At length, when Mrs Saddletree's recovery was likely to permit her wonted attention to the regulation of her household, Effie Deans, as if unwilling to face an investigation made by the authority of her mistress, asked permission of Bartoline to go home for a week or two, assigning indisposition, and the wish of trying the benefit of repose and the change of air, as the motives of her request. Sharp-eyed as a lynx (or conceiving himself to be so) in the nice sharp quillits of legal discussion, Bartoline was as dull at drawing inferences from the occurrences of common life as any Dutch professor of mathematics. He suffered Effie to depart without much suspicion, and without any inquiry.

It was afterwards found that a period of a week intervened betwixt her leaving her master's house and arriving at St Leonard's. She made her appearance before her sister in a state rather resembling the spectre than the living substance of the gay and beautiful girl, who had left her father's cottage for the first time scarce seventeen months before. The lingering illness of her mistress had, for the last few months, given her a plea for confining herself entirely to the dusky precincts of the shop in the Lawnmarket, and Jeanie was so much occupied, during the same period, with the concerns of her father's household, that she had rarely found leisure for a walk into the city, and a brief and hurried visit to her sister. The young women, therefore, had scarcely seen each other for several months, nor had a single scandalous surmise reached the ears of the secluded inhabitants of the cottage at St Leonard's. Jeanie, therefore, terrified to death at her sister's appearance, at first overwhelmed her with inquiries, to which the unfortunate young woman returned for a time incoherent and rambling answers, and finally fell into a hysterical fit. Rendered too certain of her sister's misfortune, Jeanie had now the dreadful alternative of communicating her ruin to her father, or of endeavouring to conceal it from him. To all questions concerning the name or rank of her seducer, and the fate of the being to whom her fall had given birth, Effie remained mute as the grave, to which she seemed hastening; and indeed the least allusion to either seemed to drive her to distraction. Her sister, in distress and in despair, was about to repair to Mrs Saddletree to consult her experience, and at the same time to obtain what lights she could upon this most unhappy affair, when she was saved that trouble by a new stroke of fate, which seemed to carry misfortune to the uttermost.

David Deans had been alarmed at the state of health in which his daughter had returned to her paternal residence; but Jeanie had contrived to divert him from particular and specific inquiry. It was, therefore, like a clap of thunder to the poor old man, when, just as the hour of noon had brought the visit of the Laird of Dumbiedikes as usual, other and sterner, as well as most unexpected guests, arrived at the cottage of St Leonard's. These were the officers of justice, with a warrant of justiciary to search for and apprehend Euphemia, or Effie, Deans, accused of the crime of child-murder. The stunning weight of a blow so totally unexpected bore down the old man, who had in his early youth resisted the brow of military and civil tyranny, though backed with swords and guns, tortures and gibbets. He fell extended and senseless upon his own hearth; and the men, happy to escape from the scene of his awakening, raised, with rude humanity, the object of their warrant from her bed, and placed her in a coach, which they had brought with them. The hasty remedies which Jeanie had applied to bring back her father's senses were scarce begun to operate, when the noise of the wheels in motion recalled her attention to her miserable sister. To run shrieking after the carriage was the first vain effort of her distraction, but she was stopped by one or two female neighbours, assembled by the extraordinary appearance of a coach in that sequestered place, who almost forced her back to her father's house. The deep and sympathetic affliction of these poor people, by whom the little family at St Leonard's were held in high regard, filled the house with lamentation. Even Dumbiedikes was moved from his wonted apathy, and, groping for his purse as he spoke, ejaculated, "Jeanie, woman! —Jeanie, woman! dinna greet—it's sad wark, but siller will help it;" and he drew out his purse as he spoke.

The old man had now raised himself from the ground, and, looking about him as if he missed something, seemed gradually to recover the sense of his wretchedness. "Where," he said, with a voice that made the roof ring, "where is the vile harlot, that has disgraced the blood of an honest man?—Where is she, that has no place among us, but has come foul with her sins, like the Evil One, among the children of God?—Where is she, Jeanie?—Bring her before me, that I may kill her with a word and a look!"

All hastened around him with their appropriate sources of consolation—the Laird with his purse, Jeanie with burnt feathers and strong waters, and the women with their exhortations. "O neighbour —O Mr Deans, it's a sair trial, doubtless—but

think of the Rock of Ages, neighbour—think of the promise!"

"And I do think of it, neighbours—and I bless God that I can think of it, even in the wrack and ruin of a' that's nearest and dearest to me—But to be the father of a cast-away—a profligate—a bloody Zipporah—a mere murderess!—O, how will the wicked exult in the high places of their wickedness!—the prelatists, and the latitudinarians, and the hand-waled murderers, whose hands are hard as horn wi' hauding the slaughter-weapons—they will push out the lip, and say that we are even such as themselves. Sair, sair I am grieved, neighbours, for the poor cast-away—for the child of mine old age—but sairer for the stumbling-block and scandal it will be to all tender and honest souls!"

"Davie—winna siller do't?" insinuated the Laird, still proffering his green purse, which was full of guineas.

"I tell ye, Dumbiedikes," said Deans, "that if telling down my haill substance could hae saved her frae this black snare, I wad hae walked out wi' naething but my bonnet and my staff to beg an awmous for God's sake, and ca'd mysell an happy man—But if a dollar, or a plack, or the nineteenth part of a boddle, wad save her open guilt and open shame frae open punishment, that purchase wad David Deans never make!—Na, na; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, life for life, blood for blood—it's the law of man, and it's the law of God.—Leave me, sirs—leave me—I maun warstle wi' this trial in privacy and on my knees."

Jeanie, now in some degree restored to the power of thought, joined in the same request. The next day found the father and daughter still in the depth of affliction, but the father sternly supporting his load of ill through a proud sense of religious duty, and the daughter anxiously suppressing her own feelings to avoid again awakening his. Thus was it with the afflicted family until the morning after Porteous's death, a period at which we are now arrived.

CHAPTER XI.

> Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
> The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent
> When we have chid the hasty-footed time
> For parting us—Oh! and is all forgot?
> *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

We have been a long while in conducting Butler to the door of the cottage at St Leonard's; yet the space which we have occupied in the preceding narrative does not exceed in length that which he actually spent on Salisbury Crags on the morning which succeeded the execution done upon Porteous by the rioters. For this delay he had his own motives. He wished to collect his thoughts, strangely agitated as they were, first by the melancholy news of Effie Deans's situation, and afterwards by the frightful scene which he had witnessed. In the situation also in which he stood with respect to Jeanie and her father, some ceremony, at least some choice of fitting time and season, was necessary to wait upon them. Eight in the morning was then the ordinary hour for breakfast, and he resolved that it should arrive before he made his appearance in their cottage.

Never did hours pass so heavily. Butler shifted his place and enlarged his circle to while away the time, and heard the huge bell of St Giles's toll each successive hour in swelling tones, which were instantly attested by those of the other steeples in succession. He had heard seven struck in this manner, when he began to think he might venture to approach nearer to St Leonard's, from which he was still a mile distant. Accordingly he descended from his lofty station as low as the bottom of the valley which divides Salisbury Crags from those small rocks which take their name from Saint Leonard. It is, as many of my readers may know, a deep, wild, grassy valley, scattered with huge rocks and fragments which have descended from the cliffs and steep ascent to the east.

This sequestered dell, as well as other places of the open pasturage of the King's Park, was, about this time, often the resort of the gallants of the time who had affairs of honour to discuss with the sword. Duels were then very common in Scotland, for the gentry were at once idle, haughty, fierce, divided by faction, and addicted to intemperance, so that there lacked neither provocation, nor inclination to resent it when given; and the sword, which was part of every gentleman's dress, was the only weapon used for the decision of such differences. When, therefore, Butler observed a young man, skulking, apparently to avoid observation, among the scattered rocks at some distance from the footpath, he was naturally led to suppose that he had sought this lonely spot upon that evil errand. He was so strongly impressed with this, that, notwithstanding his own distress of mind, he could not, according to his sense of duty as a clergyman, pass this person without speaking to him. There are times, thought he to himself, when the slightest interference may avert a great calamity—when a word spoken in season may do more for prevention than the eloquence of Tully could do for remedying evil—And for my own griefs, be they as they may, I shall feel them the lighter, if they divert me not from the prosecution of my duty.

Thus thinking and feeling, he quitted the ordinary path, and advanced nearer the object he had noticed. The man at first directed his course towards the hill, in order, as it appeared, to avoid him; but when he saw that Butler seemed disposed to follow him, he adjusted his hat fiercely, turned round, and came forward, as if to meet and defy scrutiny.

Butler had an opportunity of accurately studying his features as they advanced slowly to meet each other. The stranger seemed about twenty-five years old. His dress was of a kind which could hardly be said to indicate his rank with certainty, for it was such as young gentlemen sometimes wore while on active exercise in the morning, and which, therefore, was imitated by those of the inferior ranks, as young clerks and tradesmen, because its cheapness rendered it attainable, while it approached more nearly to the apparel of youths of fashion than any other which the manners of the times permitted them to wear. If his air and manner could be trusted, however, this person seemed rather to be dressed under than above his rank; for his carriage was bold and somewhat supercilious, his step easy and free, his manner daring and unconstrained. His stature was of the middle size, or rather above it, his limbs well-proportioned, yet not so strong as to infer the reproach of clumsiness

His features were uncommonly handsome, and all about him would have been interesting and prepossessing, but for that indescribable expression which habitual dissipation gives to the countenance, joined with a certain audacity in look and manner, of that kind which is often assumed as a mask for confusion and apprehension.

Butler and the stranger met — surveyed each other — when, as the latter, slightly touching his hat, was about to pass by him, Butler, while he returned the salutation, observed, "A fine morning, sir — You are on the hill early."

"I have business here," said the young man, in a tone meant to repress farther inquiry.

"I do not doubt it, sir," said Butler. "I trust you will forgive my hoping that it is of a lawful kind?"

"Sir," said the other, with marked surprise, "I never forgive impertinence, nor can I conceive what title you have to hope any thing about what no way concerns you."

"I am a soldier, sir," said Butler, "and have a charge to arrest evil-doers in the name of my Master."

"A soldier!" said the young man, stepping back, and fiercely laying his hand on his sword — "A soldier, and arrest me! Did you reckon what your life was worth, before you took the commission upon you?"

"You mistake me, sir," said Butler gravely: "neither my warfare nor my warrant are of this world. I am a preacher of the gospel, and have power, in my Master's name, to command the peace upon earth and good-will towards men, which was proclaimed with the gospel."

"A minister!" said the stranger, carelessly, and with an expression approaching to scorn. "I know the gentlemen of your cloth in Scotland claim a strange right of intermeddling with men's private affairs. But I have been abroad, and know better than to be priest-ridden."

"Sir, if it be true that any of my cloth, or, it might be more decently said, of my calling, interfere with men's private affairs, for the gratification either of idle curiosity, or for worse motives, you cannot have learned a better lesson abroad than to contemn such practices. But, in my Master's work, I am called to be busy in season and out of season; and, conscious as I am of a pure motive, it were better for me to incur your contempt for speaking, than the correction of my own conscience for being silent."

"In the name of the devil!" said the young man impatiently, "say what you have to say, then; though whom you take me for, or what earthly concern you have with me, a stranger to you, or with my actions and motives, of which you can know nothing, I cannot conjecture for an instant."

"You are about," said Butler, "to violate one of your country's wisest laws — you are about, which is much more dreadful, to violate a law, which God himself has implanted within our nature, and written, as it were, in the table of our hearts, to which every thrill of our nerves is responsive."

"And what is the law you speak of?" said the stranger, in a hollow and somewhat disturbed accent.

"Thou shalt do no MURDER," said Butler, with a deep and solemn voice.

The young man visibly started, and looked considerably appalled. Butler perceived he had made a favourable impression, and resolved to follow it up. "Think," he said, "young man," laying his hand kindly upon the stranger's shoulder, "what an awful alternative you voluntarily choose for yourself, to kill or be killed. Think what it is to rush uncalled into the presence of an offended Deity, your heart fermenting with evil passions, your hand hot from the steel you had been urging, with your best skill and malice, against the breast of a fellow-creature. Or, suppose yourself the scarce less wretched survivor, with the guilt of Cain, the first murderer, in your heart, with his stamp upon your brow — that stamp, which struck all who gazed on him with unutterable horror, and by which the murderer is made manifest to all who look upon him. Think——"

The stranger gradually withdrew himself from under the hand of his monitor; and, pulling his hat over his brows, thus interrupted him. "Your meaning, sir, I dare say, is excellent, but you are throwing your advice away. I am not in this place with violent intentions against any one. I may be bad enough — you priests say all men are so — but I am here for the purpose of saving life, not of taking it away. If you wish to spend your time rather in doing a good action than in talking about you know not what, I will give you an opportunity. Do you see yonder crag to the right, over which appears the chimney of a lone house? Go thither, inquire for one Jeanie Deans, the daughter of the goodman; let her know that he she wots of remained here from daybreak till this hour, expecting to see her, and that he can abide no longer. Tell her, she *must* meet me at the Hunter's Bog to-night, as the moon rises behind St Anthony's Hill, or that she will make a desperate man of me."

"Who, or what are you," replied Butler, exceedingly and most unpleasantly surprised, "who charge me with such an errand?"

"I am the devil!"——answered the young man hastily.

Butler stepped instinctively back, and commended himself internally to Heaven; for, though a wise and strong-minded man, he was neither wiser nor more strong-minded than those of his age and education, with whom, to disbelieve witchcraft or spectres, was held an undeniable proof of atheism.

The stranger went on without observing his emotion. "Yes! call me Apollyon, Abaddon, whatever name you shall choose, as a clergyman acquainted with the upper and lower circles of spiritual denomination, to call me by, you shall not find an appellation more odious to him that bears it, than is mine own."

This sentence was spoken with the bitterness of self-upbraiding, and a contortion of visage absolutely demoniacal. Butler, though a man brave by principle, if not by constitution, was overawed; for intensity of mental distress has in it a sort of sublimity which repels and overawes all men, but especially those of kind and sympathetic dispositions. The stranger turned abruptly from Butler as he spoke, but instantly returned, and, coming up to him closely and boldly, said, in a fierce, determined tone, "I have told you who and what I am — who, and what are you? What is your name?"

"Butler," answered the person to whom this

abrupt question was addressed, surprised into answering it by the sudden and fierce manner of the querist—"Reuben Butler, a preacher of the gospel."

At this answer, the stranger again plucked more deep over his brows the hat which he had thrown back in his former agitation. "Butler!" he repeated,—"the assistant of the schoolmaster at Libberton?"

"The same," answered Butler, composedly.

The stranger covered his face with his hand, as if on sudden reflection, and then turned away, but stopped when he had walked a few paces; and seeing Butler follow him with his eyes, called out in a stern yet suppressed tone, just as if he had exactly calculated that his accents should not be heard a yard beyond the spot on which Butler stood. "Go your way, and do mine errand. Do not look after me. I will neither descend through the bowels of these rocks, nor vanish in a flash of fire; and yet the eye that seeks to trace my motions shall have reason to curse it was ever shrouded by eyelid or eyelash. Begone, and look not behind you. Tell Jeanie Deans, that when the moon rises I shall expect to meet her at Nicol Muschat's Cairn, beneath Saint Anthony's Chapel."

As he uttered these words, he turned and took the road against the hill, with a haste that seemed as peremptory as his tone of authority.

Dreading he knew not what of additional misery to a lot which seemed little capable of receiving augmentation, and desperate at the idea that any living man should dare to send so extraordinary a request, couched in terms so imperious, to the half-betrothed object of his early and only affection, Butler strode hastily towards the cottage, in order to ascertain how far this daring and rude gallant was actually entitled to press on Jeanie Deans a request, which no prudent, and scarce any modest young woman, was likely to comply with.

Butler was by nature neither jealous nor superstitious; yet the feelings which lead to those moods of the mind were rooted in his heart, as a portion derived from the common stock of humanity. It was maddening to think that a profligate gallant, such as the manner and tone of the stranger evinced him to be, should have it in his power to command forth his future bride and plighted true love, at a place so improper, and an hour so unseasonable Yet the tone in which the stranger spoke had nothing of the soft half-breathed voice proper to the seducer who solicits an assignation; it was bold, fierce, and imperative, and had less of love in it than of menace and intimidation.

The suggestions of superstition seemed more plausible, had Butler's mind been very accessible to them. Was this indeed the Roaring Lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour? This was a question which pressed itself on Butler's mind with an earnestness that cannot be conceived by those who live in the present day. The fiery eye, the abrupt demeanour, the occasionally harsh, yet studiously subdued tone of voice,—the features, handsome, but now clouded with pride, now disturbed by suspicion, now inflamed with passion—those dark hazel eyes which he sometimes shaded with his cap, as if he were averse to have them seen while they were occupied with keenly observing the motions and bearing of others—those eyes that were now turbid with melancholy, now gleaming with scorn, and now sparkling with fury—was it the passions of a mere mortal they expressed, or the emotions of a fiend, who seeks, and seeks in vain, to conceal his fiendish designs under the borrowed mask of manly beauty? The whole partook of the mien, language, and port of the ruined archangel; and, imperfectly as we have been able to describe it, the effect of the interview upon Butler's nerves, shaken as they were at the time by the horrors of the preceding night, were greater than his understanding warranted, or his pride cared to submit to. The very place where he had met this singular person was desecrated, as it were, and unhallowed, owing to many violent deaths, both in duels and by suicide, which had in former times taken place there; and the place which he had named as a rendezvous at so late an hour, was held in general to be accursed, from a frightful and cruel murder which had been there committed by the wretch from whom the place took its name, upon the person of his own wife.[1] It was in such places, according to the belief of that period, (when the laws against witchcraft were still in fresh observance, and had even lately been acted upon,) that evil spirits had power to make themselves visible to human eyes, and to practise upon the feelings and senses of mankind. Suspicions, founded on such circumstances, rushed on Butler's mind, unprepared as it was, by any previous course of reasoning, to deny that which all of his time, country and profession, believed; but common sense rejected these vain ideas as inconsistent, if not with possibility, at least with the general rules by which the universe is governed,—a deviation from which, as Butler well argued with himself, ought not to be admitted as probable, upon any but the plainest and most incontrovertible evidence. An earthly lover, however, or a young man, who, from whatever cause, had the right of exercising such summary and unceremonious authority over the object of his long-settled, and apparently sincerely returned affection, was an object scarce less appalling to his mind, than those which superstition suggested.

His limbs exhausted with fatigue, his mind harassed with anxiety, and with painful doubts and recollections, Butler dragged himself up the ascent from the valley to St Leonard's crags, and presented himself at the door of Deans's habitation, with feelings much akin to the miserable reflections and fears of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER XII.

Then she stretch'd out her lily hand,
And for to do her best;
"Hae back thy faith and troth, Willie,
God gie thy soul good rest!"
Old Ballad.

"Come in," answered the low and sweet-toned voice he loved best to hear, as Butler tapped at the door of the cottage. He lifted the latch, and found himself under the roof of affliction. Jeanie was unable to trust herself with more than one glance towards her lover, whom she now met under circumstances so agonizing to her feelings,

[1] See Note K. *Muschat's Cairn*

and at the same time so humbling to her honest pride. It is well known, that much, both of what is good and bad in the Scottish national character, arises out of the intimacy of their family connections. "To be come of honest folk," that is, of people who have borne a fair and unstained reputation, is an advantage as highly prized among the lower Scotch, as the emphatic counterpart, "to be of a good family," is valued among their gentry. The worth and respectability of one member of a peasant's family is always accounted by themselves and others, not only a matter of honest pride, but a guarantee for the good conduct of the whole. On the contrary, such a melancholy stain as was now flung on one of the children of Deans, extended its disgrace to all connected with him, and Jeanie felt herself lowered at once, in her own eyes, and in those of her lover. It was in vain that she repressed this feeling, as far subordinate and too selfish to be mingled with her sorrow for her sister's calamity. Nature prevailed; and while she shed tears for her sister's distress and danger, there mingled with them bitter drops of grief for her own degradation.

As Butler entered, the old man was seated by the fire with his well-worn pocket Bible in his hands, the companion of the wanderings and dangers of his youth, and bequeathed to him on the scaffold by one of those, who, in the year 1686, sealed their enthusiastic principles with their blood. The sun sent its rays through a small window at the old man's back, and, "shining motty through the reek," to use the expression of a bard of that time and country, illumined the grey hairs of the old man, and the sacred page which he studied. His features, far from handsome, and rather harsh and severe, had yet from their expression of habitual gravity, and contempt for earthly things, an expression of stoical dignity amidst their sternness. He boasted, in no small degree, the attributes which Southey ascribes to the ancient Scandinavians, whom he terms "firm to inflict, and stubborn to endure." The whole formed a picture, of which the lights might have been given by Rembrandt, but the outline would have required the force and vigour of Michael Angelo.

Deans lifted his eye as Butler entered, and instantly withdrew it, as from an object which gave him at once surprise and sudden pain. He had assumed such high ground with this carnal-witted scholar, as he had in his pride termed Butler, that to meet him of all men, under feelings of humiliation, aggravated his misfortune, and was a consummation like that of the dying chief in the old ballad—"Earl Percy sees my fall!"

Deans raised the Bible with his left hand, so as partly to screen his face, and putting back his right as far as he could, held it towards Butler in that position, at the same time turning his body from him, as if to prevent his seeing the working of his countenance. Butler clasped the extended hand which had supported his orphan infancy, wept over it, and in vain endeavoured to say more than the words—"God comfort you—God comfort you!"

"He will—he doth, my friend," said Deans, assuming firmness as he discovered the agitation of his guest; "he doth, now, and he will yet more in his own gude time. I have been ower proud of my sufferings in a gude cause, Reuben, and now I am to be tried with those whilk will turn my pride and glory into a reproach and a hissing. How muckle better I hae thought mysell than them that lay saft, fed sweet, and drank deep, when I was in the moss-haggs and moors, wi' precious Donald Cameron, and worthy Mr Blackadder, called Guess-again; and how proud I was o' being made a spectacle to men and angels, having stood on their pillory at the Canongate afore I was fifteen years old, for the cause of a National Covenant! To think, Reuben, that I, wha hae been sae honoured and exalted in my youth, nay, when I was but a hafflins callant, and that hae borne testimony again the defections o' the times yearly, monthly, daily, hourly, minutely, striving and testifying with uplifted hand and voice, crying aloud, and sparing not, against all great national snares, as the nation-wasting and church-sinking abomination of union, toleration, and patronage, imposed by the last woman of that unhappy race of Stewarts; also against the infringements and invasions of the just powers of eldership, whereanent I uttered my paper, called, a 'Cry of an Howl in the Desert,' printed at the Bow-head, and sold by all flying stationers in town and country—and *now*——"

Here he paused. It may well be supposed that Butler, though not absolutely coinciding in all the good old man's ideas about church government, had too much consideration and humanity to interrupt him, while he reckoned up with conscious pride his sufferings, and the constancy of his testimony. On the contrary, when he paused under the influence of the bitter recollections of the moment, Butler instantly threw in his mite of encouragement.

"You have been well known, my old and revered friend, a true and tried follower of the Cross; one who, as Saint Jerome hath it, '*per infamiam et bonam famam grassari ad immortalitatem*,' which may be freely rendered, 'who rusheth on to immortal life, through bad report and good report.' You have been one of those to whom the tender and fearful souls cry during the midnight solitude—'Watchman, what of the night?—Watchman, what of the night?'—And, assuredly, this heavy dispensation, as it comes not without divine permission, so it comes not without its special commission and use."

"I do receive it as such," said poor Deans, returning the grasp of Butler's hand; "and if I have not been taught to read the Scripture in any other tongue but my native Scottish," (even in his distress Butler's Latin quotation had not escaped his notice,) "I have, nevertheless, so learned them, that I trust to bear even this crook in my lot with submission. But, oh! Reuben Butler, the kirk, of whilk, though unworthy, I have yet been thought a polished shaft, and meet to be a pillar, holding, from my youth upward, the place of ruling elder—what will the lightsome and profane think of the guide that cannot keep his own family from stumbling? How will they take up their song and their reproach, when they see that the children of professors are liable to as foul backsliding as the offspring of Belial! But I will bear my cross with the comfort, that whatever shewed like goodness in me or mine, was but like the light that shines frae

creeping insects, on the brae-side, in a dark night —it kythes bright to the ee, because all is dark around it; but when the morn comes on the mountains, it is but a puir crawling kail-worm after a'. And sae it shews, wi' ony rag of human righteousness, or formal law-work, that we may pit round us to cover our shame."

As he pronounced these words, the door again opened, and Mr Bartoline Saddletree entered, his three-pointed hat set far back on his head, with a silk handkerchief beneath it, to keep it in that cool position, his gold-headed cane in his hand, and his whole deportment that of a wealthy burgher, who might one day look to have a share in the magistracy, if not actually to hold the curule chair itself.

Rochefoucault, who has torn the veil from so many foul gangrenes of the human heart, says, we find something not altogether unpleasant to us in the misfortunes of our best friends. Mr Saddletree would have been very angry had any one told him that he felt pleasure in the disaster of poor Effie Deans, and the disgrace of her family; and yet there is great question whether the gratification of playing the person of importance, inquiring, investigating, and laying down the law on the whole affair, did not offer, to say the least, full consolation for the pain which pure sympathy gave him on account of his wife's kinswoman. He had now got a piece of real judicial business by the end, instead of being obliged, as was his common case, to intrude his opinion where it was neither wished nor wanted; and felt as happy in the exchange as a boy when he gets his first new watch, which actually goes when wound up, and has real hands and a true dial-plate. But besides this subject for legal disquisition, Bartoline's brains were also overloaded with the affair of Porteous, his violent death, and all its probable consequences to the city and community. It was what the French call *l'embarras des richesses*, the confusion arising from too much mental wealth. He walked in with a consciousness of double importance, full fraught with the superiority of one who possesses more information than the company into which he enters, and who feels a right to discharge his learning on them without mercy. "Good-morning, Mr Deans, —good-morrow to you, Mr Butler,—I was not aware that you were acquainted with Mr Deans."

Butler made some slight answer; his reasons may be readily imagined for not making his connection with the family, which, in his eyes, had something of tender mystery, a frequent subject of conversation with indifferent persons, such as Saddletree.

The worthy burgher, in the plenitude of self-importance, now sate down upon a chair, wiped his brow, collected his breath, and made the first experiment of the resolved pith of his lungs, in a deep and dignified sigh, resembling a groan in sound and intonation—"Awfu' times these, neighbour Deans, awfu' times!"

"Sinfu', shamefu', heaven-daring times," answered Deans, in a lower and more subdued tone.

"For my part," continued Saddletree, swelling with importance, "what between the distress of my friends, and my poor auld country, ony wit that ever I had may be said to have abandoned me, sae that I sometimes think myself as ignorant as if I were *inter rustices*. Here when I arise in the morning, wi' my mind just arranged touching what's to be done in puir Effie's misfortune, and hae gotten the haill statute at my finger-ends, the mob maun get up and string Jock Porteous to a dyester's beam, and ding a' thing out of my head again."

Deeply as he was distressed with his own domestic calamity, Deans could not help expressing some interest in the news. Saddletree immediately entered on details of the insurrection and its consequences, while Butler took the occasion to seek some private conversation with Jeanie Deans. She gave him the opportunity he sought, by leaving the room, as if in prosecution of some part of her morning labour. Butler followed her in a few minutes, leaving Deans so closely engaged by his busy visiter, that there was little chance of his observing their absence.

The scene of their interview was an outer apartment, where Jeanie was used to busy herself in arranging the productions of her dairy. When Butler found an opportunity of stealing after her into this place, he found her silent, dejected, and ready to burst into tears. Instead of the active industry with which she had been accustomed, even while in the act of speaking, to employ her hands in some useful branch of household business, she was seated listless in a corner, sinking apparently under the weight of her own thoughts. Yet the instant he entered, she dried her eyes, and, with the simplicity and openness of her character, immediately entered on conversation.

"I am glad you have come in, Mr Butler," said she, "for — for — for I wished to tell ye, that all maun be ended between you and me — it 's best for baith our sakes."

"Ended!" said Butler, in surprise; "and for what should it be ended? — I grant this is a heavy dispensation, but it lies neither at your door nor mine — it's an evil of God's sending, and it must be borne; but it cannot break plighted troth, Jeanie, while they that plighted their word wish to keep it."

"But, Reuben," said the young woman, looking at him affectionately, "I 'ken weel that ye think mair of me than yourself; and, Reuben, I can only in requital think mair of your weal than of my ain. Ye are a man of spotless name, bred to God's ministry, and a' men say that ye will some day rise high in the kirk, though poverty keep ye doun e'en now. Poverty is a bad back-friend, Reuben, and that ye ken ower weel; but ill-fame is a waur ane, and that is a truth ye sall never learn through my means."

"What do you mean?" said Butler, eagerly and impatiently; "or how do you connect your sister's guilt, if guilt there be, which, I trust in God, may yet be disproved, with our engagement? — how can that affect you or me?"

"How can you ask me that, Mr Butler? Will this stain, d'ye think, ever be forgotten, as lang as our heads are abune the grund? Will it not stick to us, and to our bairns, and to their very bairns' bairns? To hae been the child of an honest man, might hae been saying something for me and mine; but to be the sister of a —— O my God!" — With this exclamation her resolution failed, and she burst into a passionate fit of tears.

The lover used every effort to induce her to compose herself, and at length succeeded; but she only

resumed her composure to express herself with the same positiveness as before. "No, Reuben, I 'll bring disgrace hame to nae man's hearth; my ain distresses I can bear, and I maun bear, but there is nae occasion for buckling them on other folk's shouthers. I will bear my load alone — the back is made for the burden."

A lover is by charter wayward and suspicious; and Jeanie's readiness to renounce their engagement, under pretence of zeal for his peace of mind and respectability of character, seemed to poor Butler to form a portentous combination with the commission of the stranger he had met with that morning. His voice faltered as he asked, "whether nothing but a sense of her sister's present distress occasioned her to talk in that manner?"

"And what else can do sae?" she replied with simplicity. "Is it not ten long years since we spoke together in this way?"

"Ten years!" said Butler. "It 's a long time — sufficient perhaps for a woman to weary ——"

"To weary of her auld gown," said Jeanie, "and to wish for a new ane if she likes to be brave, but not long enough to weary of a friend — The eye may wish change, but the heart never."

"Never!" said Reuben, — "that's a bold promise."

"But not more bauld than true," said Jeanie, with the same quiet simplicity which attended her manner in joy and grief, in ordinary affairs, and in those which most interested her feelings.

Butler paused, and looking at her fixedly — "I am charged," he said, "with a message to you, Jeanie."

"Indeed! From whom? Or what can ony ane have to say to me?"

"It is from a stranger," said Butler, affecting to speak with an indifference which his voice belied — "A young man whom I met this morning in the Park."

"Mercy!" said Jeanie, eagerly; "and what did he say?"

"That he did not see you at the hour he expected, but required you should meet him alone at Muschat's Cairn this night, so soon as the moon rises."

"Tell him," said Jeanie, hastily, "I shall certainly come."

"May I ask," said Butler, his suspicions increasing at the ready alacrity of the answer, "who this man is to whom you are so willing to give the meeting at a place and hour so uncommon?"

"Folk maun do muckle they have little will to do, in this world," replied Jeanie.

"Granted," said her lover; "but what compels you to this? — who is this person? What I saw of him was not very favourable—who, or what is he?"

"I do not know!" replied Jeanie, composedly.

"You do not know!" said Butler, stepping impatiently through the apartment — "You purpose to meet a young man whom you do not know, at such a time, and in a place so lonely — you say you are compelled to do this — and yet you say you do not know the person who exercises such an influence over you! — Jeanie, what am I to think of this?"

"Think only, Reuben, that I speak truth, as if I were to answer at the last day. — I do not ken this man — I do not even ken that I ever saw him; and yet I must give him the meeting he asks — there 's life and death upon it."

"Will you not tell your father, or take him with you?" said Butler.

"I cannot," said Jeanie; "I have no permission."

"Will you let *me* go with you? I will wait in the Park till nightfall, and join you when you set out."

"It is impossible," said Jeanie; "there maunna be mortal creature within hearing of our conference."

"Have you considered well the nature of what you are going to do? — the time — the place — an unknown and suspicious character? — Why, if he had asked to see you in this house, your father sitting in the next room, and within call, at such an hour, you should have refused to see him."

"My weird maun be fulfilled, Mr Butler; my life and my safety are in God's hands, but I 'll not spare to risk either of them on the errand I am gaun to do."

"Then, Jeanie," said Butler, much displeased, "we must indeed break short off, and bid farewell. When there can be no confidence betwixt a man and his plighted wife on such a momentous topic, it is a sign that she has no longer the regard for him that makes their engagement safe and suitable."

Jeanie looked at him and sighed. "I thought," she said, "that I had brought myself to bear this parting — but — but — I did not ken that we were to part in unkindness. But I am a woman and you are a man — it may be different wi' you — if your mind is made easier by thinking sae hardly of me, I would not ask you to think otherwise."

"You are," said Butler, "what you have always been — wiser, better, and less selfish in your native feelings, than I can be, with all the helps philosophy can give to a Christian. — But why — why will you persevere in an undertaking so desperate? Why will you not let me be your assistant — your protector, or at least your adviser?"

"Just because I cannot, and I dare not," answered Jeanie. — "But hark, what's that? Surely my father is no weel?"

In fact, the voices in the next room became obstreperously loud of a sudden, the cause of which vociferation it is necessary to explain before we go farther.

When Jeanie and Butler retired, Mr Saddletree entered upon the business which chiefly interested the family. In the commencement of their conversation he found old Deans, who, in his usual state of mind, was no granter of propositions, so much subdued by a deep sense of his daughter's danger and disgrace, that he heard without replying to, or perhaps without understanding, one or two learned disquisitions on the nature of the crime imputed to her charge, and on the steps which ought to be taken in consequence. His only answer at each pause was, "I am no misdoubting that you wuss us weel — your wife's our far-awa cousin."

Encouraged by these symptoms of acquiescence, Saddletree, who, as an amateur of the law, had a supreme deference for all constituted authorities, again recurred to his other topic of interest, the murder, namely, of Porteous, and pronounced a severe censure on the parties concerned.

"These are kittle times — kittle times, Mr Deans, when the people take the power of life and death out of the hands of the rightful magistrate into their ain rough grip. I am of opinion, and so I

believe will Mr Crossmyloof and the Privy-Council, that this rising in effeir of war, to take away the life of a reprieved man, will prove little better than perduellion."

"If I hadna that on my mind whilk is ill to bear, Mr Saddletree," said Deans, "I wad make bold to dispute that point wi' you."

"How could ye dispute what's plain law, man?" said Saddletree, somewhat contemptuously; "there's no a callant that e'er carried a pock wi' a process in't, but will tell you that perduellion is the warst and maist virulent kind of treason, being an open convocating of the king's lieges against his authority, (mair especially in arms, and by touk of drum, to baith whilk accessories my een and lugs bore witness,) and muckle warse than lese-majesty, or the concealment of a treasonable purpose — It winna bear a dispute, neighbour."

"But it will, though," retorted Douce Davie Deans; "I tell ye it will bear a dispute — I never like your cauld, legal, formal doctrines, neighbour Saddletree. I haud unco little by the Parliament House, since the awfu' downfall of the hopes of honest folk that followed the Revolution."

"But what wad ye hae had, Mr Deans?" said Saddletree, impatiently; "didna ye get baith liberty and conscience made fast, and settled by tailzie on you and your heirs for ever?"

"Mr Saddletree," retorted Deans, "I ken ye are one of those that are wise after the manner of this world, and that ye haud your part, and cast in your portion, wi' the lang-heads and lang-gowns, and keep with the smart witty-pated lawyers of this our land — Weary on the dark and dolefu' cast that they hae gien this unhappy kingdom, when their black hands of defection were clasped in the red hands of our sworn murtherers: when those who had numbered the towers of our Zion, and marked the bulwarks of Reformation, saw their hope turn into a snare, and their rejoicing into weeping."

"I canna understand this, neighbour," answered Saddletree. "I am an honest presbyterian of the Kirk of Scotland, and stand by her and the General Assembly, and the due administration of justice by the fifteen Lords o' Session and the five Lords o' Justiciary."

"Out upon ye, Mr Saddletree!" exclaimed David, who, in an opportunity of giving his testimony on the offences and backslidings of the land, forgot for a moment his own domestic calamity — "out upon your General Assembly, and the back of my hand to your Court o' Session! — What is the tane but a waefu' bunch o' cauldrife professors and ministers, that sate bien and warm when the persecuted remnant were warstling wi' hunger, and cauld, and fear of death, and danger of fire and sword, upon wet brae-sides, peat-haggs, and flow-mosses, and that now creep out of their holes, like blue-bottle flees in a blink of sunshine, to take the pu'pits and places of better folk — of them that witnessed, and testified, and fought, and endured pit, prison-house, and transportation beyond seas? — A bonny bike there's o' them! — And for your Court o' Session ——"

"Ye may say what ye will o' the General Assembly," said Saddletree, interrupting him, "and let them clear them that kens them; but as for the Lords o' Session, forby that they are my next-door neighbours, I would have ye ken, for your ain regulation, that to raise scandal anent them, whilk is termed to *murmur* again them, is a crime *sui generis* — *sui generis*, Mr Deans — ken ye what that amounts to?"

"I ken little o' the language of Antichrist," said Deans; "and I care less than little what carnal courts may call the speeches of honest men. And as to murmur again them, it's what a' the folk that loses their pleas, and nine-tenths o' them that win them, will be gay sure to be guilty in. Sae I wad hae ye ken that I haud a' your gleg-tongued advocates, that sell their knowledge for pieces of silver — and your worldly-wise judges, that will gie three days of hearing in presence to a debate about the peeling of an ingan, and no ae half-hour to the gospel testimony — as legalists and formalists, countenancing, by sentences, and quirks, and cunning terms of law, the late begun courses of national defections — union, toleration, patronages, and Yerastian prelatic oaths. As for the soul and body-killing Court o' Justiciary ——"

The habit of considering his life as dedicated to bear testimony in behalf of what he deemed the suffering and deserted cause of true religion, had swept honest David along with it thus far; but with the mention of the criminal court, the recollection of the disastrous condition of his daughter rushed at once on his mind; he stopped short in the midst of his triumphant declamation, pressed his hands against his forehead, and remained silent.

Saddletree was somewhat moved, but apparently not so much so as to induce him to relinquish the privilege of prosing in his turn, afforded him by David's sudden silence. "Nae doubt, neighbour," he said, "it's a sair thing to hae to do wi' courts of law, unless it be to improve ane's knowledge and practique, by waiting on as a hearer; and touching this unhappy affair of Effie — ye'll hae seen the dittay, doubtless?" He dragged out of his pocket a bundle of papers, and began to turn them over. "This is no it — this is the information of Mungo Marsport, of that ilk, against Captain Lackland, for coming on his lands of Marsport with hawks, hounds, lying-dogs, nets, guns, cross-bows, hagbuts of found, or other engines more or less for destruction of game, sic as red-deer, fallow-deer, capper-cailzies, grey-fowl, moor-fowl, paitricks, herons, and sic like; he the said defender not being ane qualified person, in terms of the statute sixteen hundred and twenty-ane; that is, not having ane plough-gate of land. Now, the defences proponed say, that *non constat* at this present what is a plough-gate of land, whilk uncertainty is sufficient to elide the conclusions of the libel. But then the answers to the defences, (they are signed by Mr Crossmyloof, but Mr Younglad drew them,) they propone, that it signifies naething, *in hoc statu*, what or how muckle a plough-gate of land may be, in respect the defender has nae lands whatsoe'er, less or mair. 'Sae grant a plough-gate'" (here Saddletree read from the paper in his hand) "'to be less than the nineteenth part of a guse's grass,' — (I trow Mr Crossmyloof put in that — I ken his style,) — 'of a guse's grass, what the better will the defender be, seeing he hasna a divot-cast of land in Scotland? — *Advocatus* for Lackland duplies, that *nihil interest de possessione*, the pursuer must put his case under the statute' — (now, this is worth your notice, neighbour,) — 'and must shew, *formaliter et specialiter*, as well as *generaliter*, what is the qualification that defender Lackland does *not*

possess — let him tell me what a plough-gate of land is, and I'll tell him if I have one or no. Surely the pursuer is bound to understand his own libel, and his own statute that he founds upon. *Titius* pursues *Mævius* for recovery of ane *black* horse lent to Mævius — surely he shall have judgment; but if Titius pursue Mævius for ane *scarlet* or *crimson* horse, doubtless he shall be bound to shew that there is sic ane animal *in rerum natura*. No man can be bound to plead to nonsense — that is to say, to a charge which cannot be explained or understood,' — (he 's wrang there — the better the pleadings the fewer understand them,) — 'and so the reference unto this undefined and unintelligible measure of land is, as if a penalty was inflicted by statute for any man who suld hunt or hawk, or use lying-dogs, and wearing a sky-blue pair of breeches, without having' —— But I am wearying you, Mr Deans, we 'll pass to your ain business, — though this case of Marsport against Lackland has made an unco din in the Outer-house. Weel, here 's the dittay against puir Effie: 'Whereas it is humbly meant and shewn to us,' &c. (they are words of mere style,) 'that whereas, by the laws of this and every other well-regulated realm, the murder of any one, more especially of an infant child, is a crime of ane high nature, and severely punishable: And whereas, without prejudice to the foresaid generality, it was, by ane act made in the second session of the First Parliament of our most High and Dread Sovereigns William and Mary, especially enacted, that ane woman who shall have concealed her condition, and shall not be able to shew that she hath called for help at the birth, in case that the child shall be found dead or amissing, shall be deemed and held guilty of the murder thereof; and the said facts of concealment and pregnancy being found proven or confessed, shall sustain the pains of law accordingly; yet, nevertheless, you, Effie, or Euphemia Deans'" ——

"Read no farther!" said Deans, raising his head up; "I would rather ye thrust a sword into my heart than read a word farther!"

"Weel, neighbour," said Saddletree, "I thought it wad hae comforted ye to ken the best and the warst o't. But the question is, what 's to be dune?"

"Nothing," answered Deans firmly, "but to abide the dispensation that the Lord sees meet to send us. Oh, if it had been His will to take the grey head to rest before this awful visitation on my house and name! But His will be done. I can say that yet, though I can say little mair."

"But, neighbour," said Saddletree, "ye 'll retain advocates for the puir lassie? it 's a thing maun needs be thought of."

"If there was ae man of them," answered Deans, "that held fast his integrity — but I ken them weel, they are a' carnal, crafty, and warld-hunting self-seekers, Yerastians, and Arminians, every ane o' them."

"Hout tout, neighbour, ye maunna take the warld at it 's word," said Saddletree; "the very deil is no sae ill as he 's ca'd; and I ken mair than ae advocate that may be said to hae some integrity as weel as their neighbours; that is, after a sort o' fashion o' their ain."

"It is indeed but a fashion of integrity that ye will find amang them," replied David Deans, "and a fashion of wisdom, and fashion of carnal learning — gazing, glancing-glasses they are, fit only to fling the glaiks in folk's een, wi' their pawky policy, and earthly ingine, their flights and refinements, and periods of eloquence, frae heathen emperors and popish canons. They canna, in that daft trash ye were reading to me, sae muckle as ca' men that are sae ill-starred as to be amang their hands, by ony name o' the dispensation o' grace, but maun new baptize them by the names of the accursed Titus, wha was made the instrument of burning the holy Temple, and other sic like heathens."

"It 's Tishius," interrupted Saddletree, "and no Titus. Mr Crossmyloof cares as little about Titus or the Latin as ye do. — But it 's a case of necessity — she maun hae counsel. Now, I could speak to Mr Crossmyloof — he 's weel kend for a round-spun Presbyterian, and a ruling elder to boot."

"He 's a rank Yerastian," replied Deans; "one of the public and polititious warldly-wise men that stude up to prevent ane general owning of the cause in the day of power."

"What say ye to the auld Laird of Cuffabout?" said Saddletree; "he whiles thumps the dust out of a case gey and weel."

"He? the fause loon!" answered Deans — "he was in his bandaliers to hae joined the ungracious Highlanders in 1715, an they had ever had the luck to cross the Firth."

"Weel, Arniston? there 's a clever chield for ye!" said Bartoline, triumphantly.

"Ay, to bring popish medals in till their very library from that schismatic woman in the north, the Duchess of Gordon."

"Weel, weel, but somebody ye maun hae — What think ye o' Kittlepunt?"

"He 's an Arminian."

"Woodsetter?"

"He 's, I doubt, a Cocceian."

"Auld Whilliewhaw?"

"He 's ony thing ye like."

"Young Næmmo?"

"He 's naething at a'."

"Ye 're ill to please, neighbour," said Saddletree: "I hae run ower the pick o' them for you, ye maun e'en choose for yoursell; but bethink ye that in the multitude of counsellors there 's safety. — What say ye to try young Mackenyie? he has a' his uncle's Practiques at the tongue's end."

"What, sir, wad ye speak to me," exclaimed the sturdy presbyterian in excessive wrath, "about a man that has the blood of the saints at his fingers' ends? Didna his eme die and gang to his place wi' the name of the Bluidy Mackenyie? and winna he be kend by that name sae lang as there 's a Scots tongue to speak the word? If the life of the dear bairn that 's under a suffering dispensation, and Jeanie's, and my ain, and a' mankind's, depended on my asking sic a slave o' Satan to speak a word for me or them, they should a' gae down the water thegither for Davie Deans!"

It was the exalted tone in which he spoke this last sentence that broke up the conversation between Butler and Jeanie, and brought them both "ben the house," to use the language of the country. Here they found the poor old man half frantic between grief, and zealous ire against Saddletree's proposed measures, his cheek inflamed, his hand clenched, and his voice raised, while the tear in his eye, and the occasional quiver of his accents, shewed that his utmost efforts were inadequate to shaking off the consciousness of his misery. Butler, appre-

hensive of the consequences of his agitation to an aged and feeble frame, ventured to utter to him a recommendation to patience.

"I *am* patient," returned the old man sternly,—"more patient than any one who is alive to the woful backslidings of a miserable time can be patient; and in so much, that I need neither sectarians, nor sons, nor grandsons of sectarians, to instruct my grey hairs how to bear my cross."

"But, sir," continued Butler, taking no offence at the slur cast on his grandfather's faith, "we must use human means. When you call in a physician, you would not, I suppose, question him on the nature of his religious principles!"

"Wad I *no?*" answered David—"But I wad, though; and if he didna satisfy me that he had a right sense of the right-hand and left-hand defections of the day, not a goutte of his physic should gang through my father's son."

It is a dangerous thing to trust to an illustration. Butler had done so and miscarried; but, like a gallant soldier when his musket misses fire, he stood his ground, and charged with the bayonet.—"This is too rigid an interpretation of your duty, sir. The sun shines, and the rain descends, on the just and unjust, and they are placed together in life in circumstances which frequently render intercourse between them indispensable, perhaps that the evil may have an opportunity of being converted by the good, and perhaps, also, that the righteous might, among other trials, be subjected to that of occasional converse with the profane."

"Ye 're a silly callant, Reuben," answered Deans, "with your bits of argument. Can a man touch pitch and not be defiled? Or what think ye of the brave and worthy champions of the Covenant, that wadna sae muckle as hear a minister speak, be his gifts and graces as they would, that hadna witnessed against the enormities of the day? Nae lawyer shall ever speak for me and mine that hasna concurred in the testimony of the scattered, yet lovely remnant, which abode in the clifts of the rocks."

So saying, and as if fatigued, both with the arguments and presence of his guests, the old man arose, and seeming to bid them adieu with a motion of his head and hand, went to shut himself up in his sleeping apartment.

"It 's thrawing his daughter's life awa," said Saddletree to Butler, "to hear him speak in that daft gate. Where will he ever get a Cameronian advocate? Or wha ever heard of a lawyer's suffering either for ae religion or another? The lassie's life is clean flung awa."

During the latter part of this debate, Dumbiedikes had arrived at the door, dismounted, hung the pony's bridle on the usual hook, and sunk down on his ordinary settle. His eyes, with more than their usual animation, followed first one speaker, then another, till he caught the melancholy sense of the whole from Saddletree's last words. He rose from his seat, stumped slowly across the room, and, coming close up to Saddletree's ear, said, in a tremulous, anxious voice, "Will—will siller do naething for them, Mr Saddletree?"

"Umph!" said Saddletree, looking grave,—"siller will certainly do it in the Parliament House, if ony thing *can* do it; but whare 's the siller to come frae? Mr Deans, ye see, will do naething; and though Mrs Saddletree 's their far-awa friend, and right good weel-wisher, and is weel disposed to assist, yet she wadna like to stand to be bound *singuli in solidum* to such an expensive wark. An ilka friend wad bear a share o' the burden, something might be dune—ilka ane to be liable for their ain input—I wadna like to see the case fa' through without being pled—it wadna be creditable, for a' that daft whig body says."

"I 'll—I will—yes," (assuming fortitude,) "I will be answerable," said Dumbiedikes, "for a score of punds sterling."—And he was silent, staring in astonishment at finding himself capable of such unwonted resolution and excessive generosity.

"God Almighty bless ye, Laird!" said Jeanie, in a transport of gratitude.

"Ye may ca' the twenty punds thretty," said Dumbiedikes, looking bashfully away from her, and towards Saddletree.

"That will do bravely," said Saddletree, rubbing his hands; "and ye sall hae a' my skill and knowledge to gar the siller gang far—I 'll tape it out weel—I ken how to gar the birkies tak short fees, and be glad o' them too—it 's only garring them trow ye hae twa or three cases of importance coming on, and they 'll work cheap to get custom. Let me alane for whillywhaing an advocate:—it 's nae sin to get as muckle frae them for our siller as we can—after a', it 's but the wind o' their mouth—it costs them naething; whereas, in my wretched occupation of a saddler, horse-milliner, and harness-maker, we are out unconscionable sums just for barkened hides and leather."

"Can I be of no use?" said Butler. "My means, alas! are only worth the black coat I wear; but I am young—I owe much to the family—Can I do nothing?"

"Ye can help to collect evidence, sir," said Saddletree; "if we could but find ony ane to say she had gien the least hint o' her condition, she wad be brought aff wi' a wat finger—Mr Crossmyloof tell'd me sae. The crown, says he, canna be craved to prove a positive—was 't a positive or a negative they couldna be ca'd to prove?—it was the tane or the tither o' them, I am sure, and it maksna muckle matter whilk. Wherefore, says he, the libel maun be redargued by the panel proving her defences. And it canna be done otherwise."

"But the fact, sir," argued Butler, "the fact that this poor girl has borne a child; surely the crown lawyers must prove that?" said Butler.

Saddletree paused a moment, while the visage of Dumbiedikes, which traversed, as if it had been placed on a pivot, from the one spokesman to the other, assumed a more blithe expression.

"Ye—ye—ye—es," said Saddletree, after some grave hesitation; "unquestionably that is a thing to be proved, as the court will more fully declare by an interlocutor of relevancy in common form; but I fancy that job's done already, for she has confessed her guilt."

"Confessed the murder?" exclaimed Jeanie, with a scream that made them all start.

"No, I didna say that," replied Bartoline. "But she confessed bearing the babe."

"And what became of it, then?" said Jeanie, "for not a word could I get from her but bitter sighs and tears."

"She says it was taken away from her by the woman in whose house it was born, and who assisted her at the time."

"And who was that woman?" said Butler. "Surely by her means the truth might be discovered.—Who was she? I will fly to her directly."

"I wish," said Dumbiedikes, "I were as young and as supple as you, and had the gift of the gab as weel."

"Who is she?" again reiterated Butler impatiently.—"Who could that woman be?"

"Ay, wha kens that but hersell," said Saddletree; "she deponed farther, and declined to answer that interrogatory."

"Then to herself will I instantly go," said Butler; "farewell, Jeanie;" then coming close up to her—"Take no *rash steps* till you hear from me. Farewell!" and he immediately left the cottage.

"I wad gang too," said the landed proprietor, in an anxious, jealous, and repining tone, "but my powny winna for the life o' me gang ony other road than just frae Dumbiedikes to this house-end, and sae straight back again."

"Ye 'll do better for them," said Saddletree, as they left the house together, "by sending me the thretty punds."

"Thretty punds!" hesitated Dumbiedikes, who was now out of the reach of those eyes which had inflamed his generosity; "I only said *twenty* punds."

"Ay; but," said Saddletree, "that was under protestation to add and eik; and so ye craved leave to amend your libel, and made it thretty."

"Did I? I dinna mind that I did," answered Dumbiedikes. "But whatever I said I 'll stand to." Then bestriding his steed with some difficulty, he added, "Dinna ye think poor Jeanie's een wi' the tears in them glanced like lamour beads, Mr Saddletree?"

"I kenna muckle about women's een, Laird," replied the insensible Bartoline; "and I care just as little. I wuss I were as weel free o' their tongues; though few wives," he added, recollecting the necessity of keeping up his character for domestic rule, "are under better command than mine, Laird. I allow neither perduellion nor lese-majesty against my sovereign authority."

The Laird saw nothing so important in this observation as to call for a rejoinder, and when they had exchanged a mute salutation, they parted in peace upon their different errands.

CHAPTER XIII.

I 'll warrant that fellow from drowning, were the ship no stronger than a nut-shell.—*The Tempest.*

Butler felt neither fatigue nor want of refreshment, although, from the mode in which he had spent the night, he might well have been overcome with either. But in the earnestness with which he hastened to the assistance of the sister of Jeanie Deans, he forgot both.

In his first progress he walked with so rapid a pace as almost approached to running, when he was surprised to hear behind him a call upon his name, contending with an asthmatic cough, and half-drowned amid the resounding trot of a Highland pony. He looked behind, and saw the Laird of Dumbiedikes making after him with what speed he might, for it happened fortunately for the Laird's purpose of conversing with Butler, that his own road homeward was for about two hundred yards the same with that which led by the nearest way to the city. Butler stopped when he heard himself thus summoned, internally wishing no good to the panting equestrian who thus retarded his journey.

"Uh! uh! uh!" ejaculated Dumbiedikes, as he checked the hobbling pace of the pony by our friend Butler. "Uh! uh! it 's a hard-set willyard beast this o' mine." He had in fact just overtaken the object of his chase at the very point beyond which it would have been absolutely impossible for him to have continued the pursuit, since there Butler's road parted from that leading to Dumbiedikes, and no means of influence or compulsion which the rider could possibly have used towards his Bucephalus could have induced the Celtic obstinacy of Rory Bean (such was the pony's name) to have diverged a yard from the path that conducted him to his own paddock.

Even when he had recovered from the shortness of breath occasioned by a trot much more rapid than Rory or he were accustomed to, the high purpose of Dumbiedikes seemed to stick as it were in his throat, and impede his utterance, so that Butler stood for nearly three minutes ere he could utter a syllable; and when he did find voice, it was only to say, after one or two efforts, "Uh! uh! uhm! I say, Mr—Mr Butler, it 's a braw day for the ha'rst."

"Fine day, indeed," said Butler. "I wish you good-morning, sir."

"Stay—stay a bit," rejoined Dumbiedikes; "that was no what I had gotten to say."

"Then, pray be quick, and let me have your commands," rejoined Butler; "I crave your pardon, but I am in haste, and *Tempus nemini*—you know the proverb."

Dumbiedikes did not know the proverb, nor did he even take the trouble to endeavour to look as if he did, as others in his place might have done. He was concentrating all his intellects for one grand proposition, and could not afford any detachment to defend outposts. "I say, Mr Butler," said he, "ken ye if Mr Saddletree 's a great lawyer?"

"I have no person's word for it but his own," answered Butler, dryly; "but undoubtedly he best understands his own qualities."

"Umph!" replied the taciturn Dumbiedikes, in a tone which seemed to say, "Mr Butler, I take your meaning." "In that case," he pursued, "I 'll employ my ain man o' business, Nichil Novit, (auld Nichil's son, and amaist as gleg as his father,) to agent Effie's plea."

And having thus displayed more sagacity than Butler expected from him, he courteously touched his gold-laced cocked hat, and by a punch on the ribs, conveyed to Rory Bean, it was his rider's pleasure that he should forthwith proceed homewards; a hint which the quadruped obeyed with that degree of alacrity with which men and animals interpret and obey suggestions that entirely correspond with their own inclinations.

Butler resumed his pace, not without a momentary revival of that jealousy, which the honest Laird's attention to the family of Deans had at different times excited in his bosom. But he was too generous long to nurse any feeling, which was allied to selfishness. "He is," said Butler to himself, "rich in what I want; why should I feel vexed

that he has the heart to dedicate some of his pelf to render them services, which I can only form the empty wish of executing? In God's name, let us each do what we can. May she be but happy!—saved from the misery and disgrace that seems impending—Let me but find the means of preventing the fearful experiment of this evening, and farewell to other thoughts, though my heart-strings break in parting with them!"

He redoubled his pace, and soon stood before the door of the Tolbooth, or rather before the entrance where the door had formerly been placed. His interview with the mysterious stranger, the message to Jeanie, his agitating conversation with her on the subject of breaking off their mutual engagements, and the interesting scene with old Deans, had so entirely occupied his mind as to drown even recollection of the tragical event which he had witnessed the preceding evening. His attention was not recalled to it by the groups who stood scattered on the street in conversation, which they hushed when strangers approached, or by the bustling search of the agents of the city police, supported by small parties of the military, or by the appearance of the Guard-House, before which were treble sentinels, or, finally, by the subdued and intimidated looks of the lower orders of society, who, conscious that they were liable to suspicion, if they were not guilty of accession to a riot likely to be strictly inquired into, glided about with an humble and dismayed aspect, like men whose spirits being exhausted in the revel and the dangers of a desperate debauch over night, are nerve-shaken, timorous, and unenterprising on the succeeding day.

None of these symptoms of alarm and trepidation struck Butler, whose mind was occupied with a different, and to him still more interesting subject, until he stood before the entrance to the prison, and saw it defended by a double file of grenadiers, instead of bolts and bars. Their "Stand, stand!" the blackened appearance of the doorless gate-way, and the winding staircase and apartments of the Tolbooth, now open to the public eye, recalled the whole proceedings of the eventful night. Upon his requesting to speak with Effie Deans, the same tall, thin, silver-haired turnkey, whom he had seen on the preceding evening, made his appearance.

"I think," he replied to Butler's request of admission, with true Scottish indirectness, "ye will be the same lad that was for in to see her yestreen?"

Butler admitted he was the same person.

"And I am thinking," pursued the turnkey, "that ye speered at me when we locked up, and if we locked up earlier on account of Porteous?"

"Very likely I might make some such observation," said Butler; "but the question now is, can I see Effie Deans?"

"I dinna ken—gang in by, and up the turnpike stair, and turn till the ward on the left hand."

The old man followed close behind him, with his keys in his hand, not forgetting even that huge one which had once opened and shut the outward gate of his dominions, though at present it was but an idle and useless burden. No sooner had Butler entered the room to which he was directed, than the experienced hand of the warder selected the proper key, and locked it on the outside. At first Butler conceived this manœuvre was only an effect of the man's habitual and official caution and jealousy. But when he heard the hoarse command, "Turn out the guard!" and immediately afterwards heard the clash of a sentinel's arms, as he was posted at the door of his apartment, he again called out to the turnkey, "My good friend, I have business of some consequence with Effie Deans, and I beg to see her as soon as possible." No answer was returned. "If it be against your rules to admit me," repeated Butler, in a still louder tone, "to see the prisoner, I beg you will tell me so, and let me go about my business.—*Fugit irrevocabile tempus!*" muttered he to himself.

"If ye had business to do, ye suld hae dune it before ye cam here," replied the man of keys from the outside; "ye 'll find it 's easier wunnin in than wunnin out here—there 's sma' likelihood o' another Porteous-mob coming to rabble us again—the law will haud her ain now, neighbour, and that ye 'll find to your cost."

"What do you mean by that, sir?" retorted Butler. "You must mistake me for some other person. My name is Reuben Butler, preacher of the gospel."

"I ken that weel eneugh," said the turnkey.

"Well, then, if you know me, I have a right to know from you in return, what warrant you have for detaining me; that, I know, is the right of every British subject."

"Warrant!" said the jailor,—"the warrant 's awa to Libberton wi' twa sheriff officers seeking ye. If ye had staid at hame, as honest men should do, ye wad hae seen the warrant; but if ye come to be incarcerated of your ain accord, wha can help it, my jo?"

"So I cannot see Effie Deans, then," said Butler; "and you are determined not to let me out?"

"Troth will I no, neighbour," answered the old man, doggedly; "as for Effie Deans, ye 'll hae eneuch ado to mind your ain business, and let her mind hers; and for letting you out, that maun be as the magistrate will determine. And fare ye weel for a bit, for I maun see Deacon Sawyers put on ane or twa o' the doors that your quiet folk broke down yesternight, Mr Butler."

There was something in this exquisitely provoking, but there was also something darkly alarming. To be imprisoned, even on a false accusation, has something in it disagreeable and menacing even to men of more constitutional courage than Butler had to boast; for although he had much of that resolution which arises from a sense of duty and an honourable desire to discharge it, yet, as his imagination was lively, and his frame of body delicate, he was far from possessing that cool insensibility to danger which is the happy portion of men of stronger health, more firm nerves, and less acute sensibility. An indistinct idea of peril, which he could neither understand nor ward off, seemed to float before his eyes. He tried to think over the events of the preceding night, in hopes of discovering some means of explaining or vindicating his conduct for appearing among the mob, since it immediately occurred to him that his detention must be founded on that circumstance. And it was with anxiety that he found he could not recollect to have been under the observation of any disinterested witness in the attempts that he made from time to time to expostulate with the rioters, and to prevail on them to release him. The distress of Deans's family, the dangerous rendezvous which Jeanie had

formed, and which he could not now hope to interrupt, had also their share in his unpleasant reflections. Yet impatient as he was to receive an eclaircissement upon the cause of his confinement, and if possible to obtain his liberty, he was affected with a trepidation which seemed no good omen; when, after remaining an hour in this solitary apartment, he received a summons to attend the sitting magistrate. He was conducted from prison strongly guarded by a party of soldiers, with a parade of precaution, that, however ill-timed and unnecessary, is generally displayed *after* an event, which such precaution, if used in time, might have prevented.

He was introduced into the Council Chamber, as the place is called where the magistrates hold their sittings, and which was then at a little distance from the prison. One or two of the senators of the city were present, and seemed about to engage in the examination of an individual who was brought forward to the foot of the long green-covered table round which the council usually assembled. "Is that the preacher?" said one of the magistrates, as the city officer in attendance introduced Butler. The man answered in the affirmative. "Let him sit down there for an instant; we will finish this man's business very briefly."

"Shall we remove Mr Butler," queried the assistant.

"It is not necessary — Let him remain where he is."

Butler accordingly sate down on a bench at the bottom of the apartment, attended by one of his keepers.

It was a large room, partially and imperfectly lighted; but by chance, or the skill of the architect, who might happen to remember the advantage which might occasionally be derived from such an arrangement, one window was so placed as to throw a strong light at the foot of the table at which prisoners were usually posted for examination, while the upper end, where the examinants sate, was thrown into shadow. Butler's eyes were instantly fixed on the person whose examination was at present proceeding, in the idea that he might recognize some one of the conspirators of the former night. But though the features of this man were sufficiently marked and striking, he could not recollect that he had ever seen them before.

The complexion of this person was dark, and his age somewhat advanced. He wore his own hair, combed smooth down, and cut very short. It was jet black, slightly curled by nature, and already mottled with grey. The man's face expressed rather knavery than vice, and a disposition to sharpness, cunning, and roguery, more than the traces of stormy and indulged passions. His sharp, quick black eyes, acute features, ready sardonic smile, promptitude, and effrontery, gave him altogether what is called among the vulgar, a *knowing* look, which generally implies a tendency to knavery. At a fair or market, you could not for a moment have doubted that he was a horse-jockey, intimate with all the tricks of his trade; yet had you met him on a moor, you would not have apprehended any violence from him. His dress was also that of a horse-dealer — a close-buttoned jockey-coat, or wrap-rascal, as it was then termed, with huge metal buttons, coarse blue upper stockings, called boot hose, because supplying the place of boots, and a slouched hat. He only wanted a loaded whip under his arm and a spur upon one heel, to complete the dress of the character he seemed to represent.

"Your name is James Ratcliffe?" said the magistrate.

"Ay — always wi' your honour's leave."

"That is to say, you could find me another name if I did not like that one?"

"Twenty to pick and choose upon, always with your honour's leave," resumed the respondent.

"But James Ratcliffe is your present name? — what is your trade?"

"I canna just say, distinctly, that I have what ye wad ca' preceesely a trade."

"But," repeated the magistrate, "what are your means of living — your occupation?"

"Hout tout — your honour, wi' your leave, kens that as weel as I do," replied the examined.

"No matter, I want to hear you describe it," said the examinant.

"Me describe! — and to your honour! — far be it from Jemmie Ratcliffe," responded the prisoner.

"Come, sir, no trifling — I insist on an answer."

"Weel, sir," replied the declarant, "I maun make a clean breast, for ye see, wi' your leave, I am looking for favour — Describe my occupation, quo' ye? — troth it will be ill to do that, in a feasible way, in a place like this — but what is 't again that the aught command says?"

"Thou shalt not steal," answered the magistrate.

"Are you sure o' that?" replied the accused. — "Troth, then, my occupation, and that command, are sair at odds, for I read it, thou *shalt* steal; and that makes an unco difference, though there 's but a wee bit word left out."

"To cut the matter short, Ratcliffe, you have been a most notorious thief," said the examinant.

"I believe Highlands and Lowlands ken that, sir, forby England and Holland," replied Ratcliffe, with the greatest composure and effrontery.

"And what d' ye think the end of your calling will be?" said the magistrate.

"I could have gien a braw guess yesterday — but I dinna ken sae weel the day," answered the prisoner.

"And what would you have said would have been your end, had you been asked the question yesterday?"

"Just the gallows," replied Ratcliffe, with the same composure.

"You are a daring rascal, sir," said the magistrate; "and how dare you hope times are mended with you to-day?"

"Dear, your honour," answered Ratcliffe, "there 's muckle difference between lying in prison under sentence of death, and staying there of ane's ain proper accord, when it would have cost a man naething to get up and rin awa — what was to hinder me from stepping out quietly, when the rabble walked awa wi' Jock Porteous yestreen? — and does your honour really think I staid on purpose to be hanged?"

"I do not know what you may have proposed to yourself; but I know," said the magistrate, "what the law proposes for you, and that is, to hang you next Wednesday eight days."

"Na, na, your honour," said Ratcliffe firmly, "craving your honour's pardon, I 'll ne'er believe that till I see it. I have kend the Law this mony a year, and mony a thrawart job I hae had wi' her

first and last; but the auld jaud is no sae ill as that comes to—I aye fand her bark waur than her bite."

"And if you do not expect the gallows, to which you are condemned, (for the fourth time to my knowledge,) may I beg the favour to know," said the magistrate, "what it is that you *do* expect, in consideration of your not having taken your flight with the rest of the jail-birds, which I will admit was a line of conduct little to have been expected?"

"I would never have thought for a moment of staying in that auld gousty toom house," answered Ratcliffe, "but that use and wont had just gien me a fancy to the place, and I 'm just expecting a bit post in 't."

"A post!" exclaimed the magistrate; "a whipping-post, I suppose, you mean?"

"Na, na, sir, I had nae thoughts o' a whuppin-post. After having been four times doomed to hang by the neck till I was dead, I think I am far beyond being whuppit."

"Then, in Heaven's name, what *did* you expect?"

"Just the post of under-turnkey, for I understand there 's a vacancy," said the prisoner; "I wadna think of asking the lockman's[1] place ower his head; it wadna suit me sae weel as ither folk, for I never could put a beast out o' the way, much less deal wi' a man."

"That 's something in your favour," said the magistrate, making exactly the inference to which Ratcliffe was desirous to lead him, though he mantled his art with an affectation of oddity. "But," continued the magistrate, "how do you think you can be trusted with a charge in the prison, when you have broken at your own hand half the jails in Scotland?"

"Wi' your honour's leave," said Ratcliffe, "if I kend sae weel how to wun out mysell, it 's like I wad be a' the better a hand to keep other folk in. I think they wad ken their business weel that held me in when I wanted to be out, or wan out when I wanted to haud them in."

The remark seemed to strike the magistrate, but he made no farther immediate observation, only desired Ratcliffe to be removed.

When this daring and yet sly freebooter was out of hearing, the magistrate asked the city-clerk, "what he thought of the fellow's assurance?"

"It 's no for me to say, sir," replied the clerk; "but if James Ratcliffe be inclined to turn to good, there is not a man e'er came within the ports of the burgh could be of sae muckle use to the Good Town in the thief and lock-up line of business. I 'll speak to Mr Sharpitlaw about him."

Upon Ratcliffe's retreat, Butler was placed at the table for examination. The magistrate conducted his inquiry civilly, but yet in a manner which gave him to understand that he laboured under strong suspicion. With a frankness which at once became his calling and character, Butler avowed his involuntary presence at the murder of Porteous, and, at the request of the magistrate, entered into a minute detail of the circumstances which attended that unhappy affair. All the particulars, such as we have narrated, were taken minutely down by the clerk from Butler's dictation.

When the narrative was concluded, the cross-examination commenced, which it is a painful task even for the most candid witness to undergo, since a story, especially if connected with agitating and alarming incidents, can scarce be so clearly and distinctly told, but that some ambiguity and doubt may be thrown upon it by a string of successive and minute interrogatories.

The magistrate commenced by observing, that Butler had said his object was to return to the village of Libberton, but that he was interrupted by the mob at the West Port. "Is the West Port your usual way of leaving town when you go to Libberton?" said the magistrate, with a sneer.

"No, certainly," answered Butler, with the haste of a man anxious to vindicate the accuracy of his evidence; "but I chanced to be nearer that port than any other, and the hour of shutting the gates was on the point of striking."

"That was unlucky," said the magistrate, dryly. "Pray, being, as you say, under coercion and fear of the lawless multitude, and compelled to accompany them through scenes disagreeable to all men of humanity, and more especially irreconcileable to the profession of a minister, did you not attempt to struggle, resist, or escape from their violence?"

Butler replied, "that their numbers prevented him from attempting resistance, and their vigilance from effecting his escape."

"That was unlucky," again repeated the magistrate, in the same dry inacquiescent tone of voice and manner. He proceeded with decency and politeness, but with a stiffness which argued his continued suspicion, to ask many questions concerning the behaviour of the mob, the manners and dress of the ringleaders; and when he conceived that the caution of Butler, if he was deceiving him, must be lulled asleep, the magistrate suddenly and artfully returned to former parts of his declaration, and required a new recapitulation of the circumstances, to the minutest and most trivial point, which attended each part of the melancholy scene. No confusion or contradiction, however, occurred, that could countenance the suspicion which he seemed to have adopted against Butler. At length the train of his interrogatories reached Madge Wildfire, at whose name the magistrate and town-clerk exchanged significant glances. If the fate of the Good Town had depended on her careful magistrate's knowing the features and dress of this personage, his inquiries could not have been more particular. But Butler could say almost nothing of this person's features, which were disguised apparently with red paint and soot, like an Indian going to battle, besides the projecting shade of a curch, or coif, which muffled the hair of the supposed female. He declared that he thought he could not know this Madge Wildfire, if placed before him in a different dress, but that he believed he might recognize her voice.

The magistrate requested him again to state by what gate he left the city.

"By the Cowgate Port," replied Butler.

"Was that the nearest road to Libberton?"

"No," answered Butler, with embarrassment; "but it was the nearest way to extricate myself from the mob."

The clerk and magistrate again exchanged glances.

"Is the Cowgate Port a nearer way to Libberton from the Grassmarket than Bristo Port?"

[1] See Note L. *Hangman, or Lockman.*

"No," replied Butler; "but I had to visit a friend."

"Indeed!" said the interrogator—"You were in a hurry to tell the sight you had witnessed, I suppose?"

"Indeed I was not," replied Butler; "nor did I speak on the subject the whole time I was at Saint Leonard's Crags."

"Which road did you take to Saint Leonard's Crags?"

"By the foot of Salisbury Crags," was the reply.

"Indeed!—you seem partial to circuitous routes," again said the magistrate. "Whom did you see after you left the city?"

One by one he obtained a description of every one of the groups who had passed Butler, as already noticed, their number, demeanour, and appearance; and, at length, came to the circumstance of the mysterious stranger in the King's Park. On this subject Butler would fain have remained silent. But the magistrate had no sooner got a slight hint concerning the incident, than he seemed bent to possess himself of the most minute particulars.

"Look ye, Mr Butler," said he, "you are a young man, and bear an excellent character; so much I will myself testify in your favour. But we are aware there has been, at times, a sort of bastard and fiery zeal in some of your order, and those, men irreproachable in other points, which has led them into doing and countenancing great irregularities, by which the peace of the country is liable to be shaken.—I will deal plainly with you. I am not at all satisfied with this story, of your setting out again and again to seek your dwelling by two several roads, which were both circuitous. And, to be frank, no one whom we have examined on this unhappy affair could trace in your appearance any thing like your acting under compulsion. Moreover, the waiters at the Cowgate Port observed something like the trepidation of guilt in your conduct, and declare that you were the first to command them to open the gate, in a tone of authority, as if still presiding over the guards and outposts of the rabble, who had besieged them the whole night."

"God forgive them!" said Butler; "I only asked free passage for myself; they must have much misunderstood, if they did not wilfully misrepresent me."

"Well, Mr Butler," resumed the magistrate, "I am inclined to judge the best and hope the best, as I am sure I wish the best; but you must be frank with me, if you wish to secure my good opinion, and lessen the risk of inconvenience to yourself. You have allowed you saw another individual in your passage through the King's Park to Saint Leonard's Crags—I must know every word which passed betwixt you."

Thus closely pressed, Butler, who had no reason for concealing what passed at that meeting, unless because Jeanie Deans was concerned in it, thought it best to tell the whole truth from beginning to end.

"Do you suppose," said the magistrate, pausing, "that the young woman will accept an invitation so mysterious?"

"I fear she will," replied Butler.

"Why do you use the word *fear* it?" said the magistrate.

"Because I am apprehensive for her safety, in meeting, at such a time and place, one who had something of the manner of a desperado, and whose message was of a character so inexplicable."

"Her safety shall be cared for," said the magistrate. "Mr Butler, I am concerned I cannot immediately discharge you from confinement, but I hope you will not be long detained.—Remove Mr Butler, and let him be provided with decent accommodation in all respects."

He was conducted back to the prison accordingly; but, in the food offered to him, as well as in the apartment in which he was lodged, the recommendation of the magistrate was strictly attended to.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dark and eerie was the night,
And lonely was the way,
As Janet, wi' her green mantell,
To Miles' Cross she did gae.
Old Ballad.

Leaving Butler to all the uncomfortable thoughts attached to his new situation, among which the most predominant was his feeling that he was, by his confinement, deprived of all possibility of assisting the family at Saint Leonard's in their greatest need, we return to Jeanie Deans, who had seen him depart, without an opportunity of farther explanation, in all that agony of mind with which the female heart bids adieu to the complicated sensations so well described by Coleridge,—

Hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng;
And gentle wishes long subdued—
Subdued and cherish'd long.

It is not the firmest heart (and Jeanie, under her russet rokelay, had one that would not have disgraced Cato's daughter) that can most easily bid adieu to these soft and mingled emotions. She wept for a few minutes bitterly, and without attempting to refrain from this indulgence of passion. But a moment's recollection induced her to check herself for a grief selfish and proper to her own affections, while her father and sister were plunged into such deep and irretrievable affliction. She drew from her pocket the letter which had been that morning flung into her apartment through an open window, and the contents of which were as singular as the expression was violent and energetic. "If she would save a human being from the most damning guilt, and all its desperate consequences,—if she desired the life and honour of her sister to be saved from the bloody fangs of an unjust law,—if she desired not to forfeit peace of mind here, and happiness hereafter," such was the frantic style of the conjuration, "she was entreated to give a sure, secret, and solitary meeting to the writer. She alone could rescue him," so ran the letter, "and he only could rescue her." He was in such circumstances, the billet farther informed her, that an attempt to bring any witness of their conference, or even to mention to her father, or any other person whatsoever, the letter which requested it, would inevitably prevent its taking place, and ensure the destruction of her sister. The letter concluded with incoherent but violent protestations, that in obeying this summons she had nothing to fear personally.

The message delivered to her by Butler from the stranger in the Park tallied exactly with the contents of the letter, but assigned a later hour and a different place of meeting. Apparently the writer of the letter had been compelled to let Butler so far into his confidence, for the sake of announcing this change to Jeanie. She was more than once on the point of producing the billet, in vindication of herself from her lover's half-hinted suspicions. But there is something in stooping to justification which the pride of innocence does not at all times willingly submit to; besides that the threats contained in the letter, in case of her betraying the secret, hung heavy on her heart. It is probable, however, that had they remained longer together, she might have taken the resolution to submit the whole matter to Butler, and be guided by him as to the line of conduct which she should adopt. And when, by the sudden interruption of their conference, she lost the opportunity of doing so, she felt as if she had been unjust to a friend, whose advice might have been highly useful, and whose attachment deserved her full and unreserved confidence.

To have recourse to her father upon this occasion, she considered as highly imprudent. There was no possibility of conjecturing in what light the matter might strike old David, whose manner of acting and thinking in extraordinary circumstances depended upon feelings and principles peculiar to himself, the operation of which could not be calculated upon even by those best acquainted with him. To have requested some female friend to have accompanied her to the place of rendezvous, would perhaps have been the most eligible expedient; but the threats of the writer, that betraying his secret would prevent their meeting (on which her sister's safety was said to depend) from taking place at all, would have deterred her from making such a confidence, even had she known a person in whom she thought it could with safety have been reposed. But she knew none such. Their acquaintance with the cottagers in the vicinity had been very slight, and limited to trifling acts of good neighbourhood. Jeanie knew little of them, and what she knew did not greatly incline her to trust any of them. They were of the order of loquacious good-humoured gossips usually found in their situation of life; and their conversation had at all times few charms for a young woman, to whom nature and the circumstance of a solitary life had given a depth of thought and force of character superior to the frivolous part of her sex, whether in high or low degree.

Left alone and separated from all earthly counsel, she had recourse to a friend and adviser, whose ear is open to the cry of the poorest and most afflicted of his people. She knelt, and prayed with fervent sincerity, that God would please to direct her what course to follow in her arduous and distressing situation. It was the belief of the time and sect to which she belonged, that special answers to prayer, differing little in their character from divine inspiration, were, as they expressed it, "borne in upon their minds" in answer to their earnest petitions in a crisis of difficulty. Without entering into an abstruse point of divinity, one thing is plain; namely, that the person who lays open his doubts and distresses in prayer, with feeling and sincerity, must necessarily, in the act of doing so, purify his mind from the dross of worldly passions and interests, and bring it into that state, when the resolutions adopted are likely to be selected rather from a sense of duty, than from any inferior motive. Jeanie arose from her devotions, with her heart fortified to endure affliction, and encouraged to face difficulties.

"I will meet this unhappy man," she said to herself—"unhappy he must be, since I doubt he has been the cause of poor Effie's misfortune—but I will meet him, be it for good or ill. My mind shall never cast up to me, that, for fear of what might be said or done to myself, I left that undone that might even yet be the rescue of her."

With a mind greatly composed since the adoption of this resolution, she went to attend her father. The old man, firm in the principles of his youth, did not, in outward appearance at least, permit a thought of his family distress to interfere with the stoical reserve of his countenance and manners. He even chid his daughter for having neglected, in the distress of the morning, some trifling domestic duties which fell under her department.

"Why, what meaneth this, Jeanie?" said the old man—"The brown four-year-auld's milk is not seiled yet, nor the bowies put up on the bink. If ye neglect your warldly duties in the day of affliction, what confidence have I that ye mind the greater matters that concern salvation? God knows, our bowies, and our pipkins, and our draps o' milk, and our bits o' bread, are nearer and dearer to us than the bread of life."

Jeanie, not unpleased to hear her father's thoughts thus expand themselves beyond the sphere of his immediate distress, obeyed him, and proceeded to put her household matters in order; while old David moved from place to place about his ordinary employments, scarce shewing, unless by a nervous impatience at remaining long stationary, an occasional convulsive sigh, or twinkle of the eyelid, that he was labouring under the yoke of such bitter affliction.

The hour of noon came on, and the father and child sat down to their homely repast. In his petition for a blessing on the meal, the poor old man added to his supplication, a prayer that the bread eaten in sadness of heart, and the bitter waters of Marah, might be made as nourishing as those which had been poured forth from a full cup and a plentiful basket and store; and having concluded his benediction, and resumed the bonnet which he had laid "reverently aside," he proceeded to exhort his daughter to eat, not by example indeed, but at least by precept.

"The man after God's own heart," he said, "washed and anointed himself, and did eat bread, in order to express his submission under a dispensation of suffering, and it did not become a Christian man or woman so to cling to creature-comforts of wife or bairns,"—(here the words became too great, as it were, for his utterance,)—"as to forget the first duty,—submission to the Divine will."

To add force to his precept, he took a morsel on his plate, but nature proved too strong even for the powerful feelings with which he endeavoured to bridle it. Ashamed of his weakness, he started

up, and ran out of the house, with haste very unlike the deliberation of his usual movements. In less than five minutes he returned, having successfully struggled to recover his ordinary composure of mind and countenance, and affected to colour over his late retreat, by muttering that he thought he heard the "young staig loose in the byre."

He did not again trust himself with the subject of his former conversation, and his daughter was glad to see that he seemed to avoid farther discourse on that agitating topic. The hours glided on, as on they must and do pass, whether winged with joy or laden with affliction. The sun set beyond the dusky eminence of the Castle, and the screen of western hills, and the close of evening summoned David Deans and his daughter to the family duty of the night. It came bitterly upon Jeanie's recollection, how often, when the hour of worship approached, she used to watch the lengthening shadows, and look out from the door of the house, to see if she could spy her sister's return homeward. Alas! this idle and thoughtless waste of time, to what evils had it not finally led? and was she altogether guiltless, who, noticing Effie's turn to idle and light society, had not called in her father's authority to restrain her?—But I acted for the best, she again reflected, and who could have expected such a growth of evil, from one grain of human leaven, in a disposition so kind, and candid, and generous?

As they sate down to the "exercise," as it is called, a chair happened accidentally to stand in the place which Effie usually occupied. David Deans saw his daughter's eyes swim in tears as they were directed towards this object, and pushed it aside, with a gesture of some impatience, as if desirous to destroy every memorial of earthly interest when about to address the Deity. The portion of Scripture was read, the psalm was sung, the prayer was made; and it was remarkable that, in discharging these duties, the old man avoided all passages and expressions, of which Scripture affords so many, that might be considered as applicable to his own domestic misfortune. In doing so it was perhaps his intention to spare the feelings of his daughter, as well as to maintain, in outward show at least, that stoical appearance of patient endurance of all the evil which earth could bring, which was, in his opinion, essential to the character of one who rated all earthly things at their own just estimate of nothingness. When he had finished the duty of the evening, he came up to his daughter, wished her good-night, and, having done so, continued to hold her by the hands for half a minute; then drawing her towards him, kissed her forehead, and ejaculated, "The God of Israel bless you, even with the blessings of the promise, my dear bairn!"

It was not either in the nature or habits of David Deans to seem a fond father; nor was he often observed to experience, or at least to evince, that fulness of the heart which seeks to expand itself in tender expressions or caresses even to those who were dearest to him. On the contrary, he used to censure this as a degree of weakness in several of his neighbours, and particularly in poor widow Butler. It followed, however, from the rarity of such emotions in this self-denied and reserved man, that his children attached to occasional marks of his affection and approbation a degree of high interest and solemnity; well considering them as evidences of feelings which were only expressed when they became too intense for suppression or concealment.

With deep emotion, therefore, did he bestow, and his daughter receive, this benediction and paternal caress. "And you, my dear father," exclaimed Jeanie, when the door had closed upon the venerable old man, "may you have purchased and promised blessings multiplied upon you—upon *you*, who walk in this world as though you were not of the world, and hold all that it can give or take away but as the *midges* that the sun-blink brings out, and the evening wind sweeps away!"

She now made preparation for her night-walk. Her father slept in another part of the dwelling, and, regular in all his habits, seldom or never left his apartment when he had betaken himself to it for the evening. It was therefore easy for her to leave the house unobserved, so soon as the time approached at which she was to keep her appointment. But the step she was about to take had difficulties and terrors in her own eyes, though she had no reason to apprehend her father's interference. Her life had been spent in the quiet, uniform, and regular seclusion of their peaceful and monotonous household. The very hour which some damsels of the present day, as well of her own as of higher degree, would consider as the natural period of commencing an evening of pleasure, brought, in her opinion, awe and solemnity in it; and the resolution she had taken had a strange, daring, and adventurous character, to which she could hardly reconcile herself when the moment approached for putting it into execution. Her hands trembled as she snooded her fair hair beneath the riband, then the only ornament or cover which young unmarried women wore on their head, and as she adjusted the scarlet tartan screen or muffler made of plaid, which the Scottish women wore, much in the fashion of the black silk veils still a part of female dress in the Netherlands. A sense of impropriety as well as of danger pressed upon her, as she lifted the latch of her paternal mansion to leave it on so wild an expedition, and at so late an hour, unprotected, and without the knowledge of her natural guardian.

When she found herself abroad and in the open fields, additional subjects of apprehension crowded upon her. The dim cliffs and scattered rocks, interspersed with green sward, through which she had to pass to the place of appointment, as they glimmered before her in a clear autumn night, recalled to her memory many a deed of violence, which, according to tradition, had been done and suffered among them. In earlier days they had been the haunt of robbers and assassins, the memory of whose crimes are preserved in the various edicts which the council of the city, and even the parliament of Scotland, had passed for dispersing their bands, and ensuring safety to the lieges, so near the precincts of the city. The names of these criminals, and of their atrocities, were still remembered in traditions of the scattered cottages and the neighbouring suburb. In latter times, as we have already noticed, the sequestered and broken character of the ground rendered it a fit theatre for duels and rencontres among the fiery youth of the period. Two or three of these incidents, all

sanguinary, and one of them fatal in its termination, had happened since Deans came to live at Saint Leonard's. His daughter's recollections, therefore, were of blood and horror as she pursued the small scarce-tracked solitary path, every step of which conveyed her to a greater distance from help, and deeper into the ominous seclusion of these unhallowed precincts.

As the moon began to peer forth on the scene with a doubtful, flitting, and solemn light, Jeanie's apprehensions took another turn, too peculiar to her rank and country to remain unnoticed. But to trace its origin will require another chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

——The spirit I have seen
May be the devil. And the devil has power
To assume a pleasing shape.

Hamlet.

Witchcraft and demonology, as we have had already occasion to remark, were at this period believed in by almost all ranks, but more especially among the stricter classes of presbyterians, whose government, when their party were at the head of the state, had been much sullied by their eagerness to inquire into, and persecute these imaginary crimes. Now, in this point of view, also, Saint Leonard's Crags and the adjacent Chase were a dreaded and ill-reputed district. Not only had witches held their meetings there, but even of very late years the enthusiast, or impostor, mentioned in the Pandæmonium of Richard Bovet, Gentleman,[1] had, among the recesses of these romantic cliffs, found his way into the hidden retreats where the fairies revel in the bowels of the earth.

With all these legends Jeanie Deans was too well acquainted, to escape that strong impression which they usually make on the imagination. Indeed, relations of this ghostly kind had been familiar to her from her infancy, for they were the only relief which her father's conversation afforded from controversial argument, or the gloomy history of the strivings and testimonies, escapes, captures, tortures, and executions of those martyrs of the Covenant, with whom it was his chiefest boast to say he had been acquainted. In the recesses of mountains, in caverns, and in morasses, to which these persecuted enthusiasts were so ruthlessly pursued, they conceived they had often to contend with the visible assaults of the Enemy of mankind, as in the cities, and in the cultivated fields, they were exposed to those of the tyrannical government and their soldiery. Such were the terrors which made one of their gifted seers exclaim, when his companion returned to him, after having left him alone in a haunted cavern in Sorn in Galloway, "It is hard living in this world—incarnate devils above the earth, and devils under the earth! Satan has been here since ye went away, but I have dismissed him by resistance; we will be no more troubled with him this night." David Deans believed this, and many other such ghostly encounters and victories, on the faith of the Ansars, or auxiliaries of the banished prophets. This event was beyond David's remembrance. But he used to tell with great awe, yet not without a feeling of proud superiority to his auditors, how he himself had been present at a field-meeting at Crochmade, when the duty of the day was interrupted by the apparition of a tall black man, who, in the act of crossing a ford to join the congregation, lost ground, and was carried down apparently by the force of the stream. All were instantly at work to assist him, but with so little success, that ten or twelve stout men, who had hold of the rope which they had cast in to his aid, were rather in danger to be dragged into the stream, and lose their own lives, than likely to save that of the supposed perishing man. "But famous John Semple of Carspharn," David Deans used to say with exultation, "saw the whaup in the rape.—'Quit the rope,' he cried to us, (for I that was but a callant had a haud o' the rape mysell,) 'it is the Great Enemy! he will burn, but not drown; his design is to disturb the good wark, by raising wonder and confusion in your minds; to put off from your spirits all that ye hae heard and felt.'—Sae we let go the rape," said David, "and he went adown the water screeching and bullering like a Bull of Bashan, as he 's ca'd in Scripture."[2]

Trained in these and similar legends, it was no wonder that Jeanie began to feel an ill-defined apprehension, not merely of the phantoms which might beset her way, but of the quality, nature, and purpose of the being who had thus appointed her a meeting, at a place and hour of horror, and at a time when her mind must be necessarily full of those tempting and ensnaring thoughts of grief and despair, which were supposed to lay sufferers particularly open to the temptations of the Evil One. If such an idea had crossed even Butler's well-informed mind, it was calculated to make a much stronger impression upon hers. Yet firmly believing the possibility of an encounter so terrible to flesh and blood, Jeanie, with a degree of resolution of which we cannot sufficiently estimate the merit, because the incredulity of the age has rendered us strangers to the nature and extent of her feelings, persevered in her determination not to omit an opportunity of doing something towards saving her sister, although, in the attempt to avail herself of it, she might be exposed to dangers so dreadful to her imagination. So, like Christiana in the Pilgrim's Progress, when traversing with a timid yet resolved step the terrors of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, she glided on by rock and stone, "now in glimmer and now in gloom," as her path lay through moonlight or shadow, and endeavoured to overpower the suggestions of fear, sometimes by fixing her mind upon the distressed condition of her sister, and the duty she lay under to afford her aid, should that be in her power; and more frequently by recurring in mental prayer to the protection of that Being to whom night is as noon-day.

Thus drowning at one time her fears by fixing her mind on a subject of overpowering interest, and arguing them down at others by referring herself to the protection of the Deity, she at length approached the place assigned for this mysterious conference.

It was situated in the depth of the valley behind Salisbury Crags, which has for a background the north-western shoulder of the mountain called

[1] See Note M. *The Fairy Boy of Leith.*

[2] See Note N. *Intercourse of the Covenanters with the Invisible World.*

Arthur's Seat, on whose descent still remain the ruins of what was once a chapel, or hermitage, dedicated to St Anthony the Eremite. A better site for such a building could hardly have been selected; for the chapel, situated among the rude and pathless cliffs, lies in a desert, even in the immediate vicinity of a rich, populous, and tumultuous capital: and the hum of the city might mingle with the orisons of the recluses, conveying as little of worldly interest as if it had been the roar of the distant ocean. Beneath the steep ascent on which these ruins are still visible, was, and perhaps is still pointed out, the place where the wretch Nichol Muschat, who has been already mentioned in these pages, had closed a long scene of cruelty towards his unfortunate wife, by murdering her, with circumstances of uncommon barbarity.[1] The execration in which the man's crime was held extended itself to the place where it was perpetrated, which was marked by a small *cairn*, or heap of stones, composed of those which each chance passenger had thrown there in testimony of abhorrence, and on the principle, it would seem, of the ancient British malediction, "May you have a cairn for your burial place!"

As our heroine approached this ominous and unhallowed spot, she paused and looked to the moon, now rising broad in the northwest, and shedding a more distinct light than it had afforded during her walk thither. Eyeing the planet for a moment, she then slowly and fearfully turned her head towards the cairn, from which it was at first averted. She was at first disappointed. Nothing was visible beside the little pile of stones, which shone grey in the moonlight. A multitude of confused suggestions rushed on her mind. Had her correspondent deceived her, and broken his appointment?—was he too tardy at the appointment he had made?—or had some strange turn of fate prevented him from appearing as he proposed?—or, if he were an unearthly being, as her secret apprehensions suggested, was it his object merely to delude her with false hopes, and put her to unnecessary toil and terror, according to the nature, as she had heard, of those wandering demons?—or did he purpose to blast her with the sudden horrors of his presence when she had come close to the place of rendezvous? These anxious reflections did not prevent her approaching to the cairn with a pace that, though slow, was determined.

When she was within two yards of the heap of stones, a figure rose suddenly up from behind it, and Jeanie scarce forbore to scream aloud at what seemed the realization of the most frightful of her anticipations. She constrained herself to silence, however, and, making a dead pause, suffered the figure to open the conversation, which he did, by asking, in a voice which agitation rendered tremulous and hollow, "Are you the sister of that ill-fated young woman?"

"I am—I am the sister of Effie Deans!" exclaimed Jeanie. "And as ever you hope God will hear you at your need, tell me, if you can tell, what can be done to save her!"

"I do *not* hope God will hear me at my need," was the singular answer. "I do not deserve—I do not expect he will." This desperate language he uttered in a tone calmer than that with which he had at first spoken, probably because the shock of first addressing her was what he felt most difficult to overcome. Jeanie remained mute with horror to hear language expressed so utterly foreign to all which she had ever been acquainted with, that it sounded in her ears rather like that of a fiend than of a human being. The stranger pursued his address to her, without seeming to notice her surprise. "You see before you a wretch, predestined to evil here and hereafter."

"For the sake of Heaven, that hears and sees us," said Jeanie, "dinna speak in this desperate fashion! The gospel is sent to the chief of sinners—to the most miserable among the miserable."

"Then should I have my own share therein," said the stranger, "if you call it sinful to have been the destruction of the mother that bore me—of the friend that loved me—of the woman that trusted me—of the innocent child that was born to me. If to have done all this is to be a sinner, and survive it is to be miserable, then am I most guilty and most miserable indeed."

"Then you are the wicked cause of my sister's ruin?" said Jeanie, with a natural touch of indignation expressed in her tone of voice.

"Curse me for it, if you will," said the stranger; "I have well deserved it at your hand."

"It is fitter for me," said Jeanie, "to pray to God to forgive you."

"Do as you will, how you will, or what you will," he replied, with vehemence; "only promise to obey my directions, and save your sister's life."

"I must first know," said Jeanie, "the means you would have me use in her behalf."

"No!—you must first swear—solemnly swear, that you will employ them when I make them known to you."

"Surely, it is needless to swear that I will do all that is lawful to a Christian, to save the life of my sister?"

"I will have no reservation!" thundered the stranger; "lawful or unlawful, Christian or heathen, you shall swear to do my hest, and act by my counsel, or—you little know whose wrath you provoke!"

"I will think on what you have said," said Jeanie, who began to get much alarmed at the frantic vehemence of his manner, and disputed in her own mind, whether she spoke to a maniac, or an apostate spirit incarnate—"I will think on what you say, and let you ken to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" exclaimed the man with a laugh of scorn—"And where will I be to-morrow?—or, where will you be to-night, unless you swear to walk by my counsel?—there was one accursed deed done at this spot before now; and there shall be another to match it, unless you yield up to my guidance body and soul."

As he spoke, he offered a pistol at the unfortunate young woman. She neither fled nor fainted, but sunk on her knees, and asked him to spare her life.

"Is that all you have to say?" said the unmoved ruffian.

"Do not dip your hands in the blood of a defenceless creature that has trusted to you," said Jeanie, still on her knees.

"Is that all you can say for your life?—Have you no promise to give!—Will you destroy your sister, and compel me to shed more blood?"

[1] See Note K. *Muschat's Cairn.*

"I can promise nothing," said Jeanie, "which is unlawful for a Christian."

He cocked the weapon, and held it towards her.

"May God forgive you!" she said, pressing her hands forcibly against her eyes.

"D——n!" muttered the man; and, turning aside from her, he uncocked the pistol, and replaced it in his pocket—"I am a villain," he said, "steeped in guilt and wretchedness, but not wicked enough to do you any harm! I only wished to terrify you into my measures—She hears me not—she is gone!—Great God! what a wretch am I become!"

As he spoke, she recovered herself from an agony which partook of the bitterness of death; and, in a minute or two, through the strong exertion of her natural sense and courage, collected herself sufficiently to understand he intended her no personal injury.

"No!" he repeated; "I would not add to the murder of your sister, and of her child, that of any one belonging to her!—Mad, frantic, as I am, and unrestrained by either fear or mercy, given up to the possession of an evil being, and forsaken by all that is good, I would not hurt you, were the world offered me for a bribe! But, for the sake of all that is dear to you, swear you will follow my counsel. Take this weapon, shoot me through the head, and with your own hand revenge your sister's wrong, only follow the course—the only course, by which her life can be saved."

"Alas! is she innocent or guilty?"

"She is guiltless—guiltless of every thing, but of having trusted a villain!—Yet, had it not been for those that were worse than I am—yes, worse than I am, though I am bad indeed—this misery had not befallen."

"And my sister's child—does it live?" said Jeanie.

"No; it was murdered—the new-born infant was barbarously murdered," he uttered in a low, yet stern and sustained voice;—"but," he added hastily, "not by her knowledge or consent."

"Then, why cannot the guilty be brought to justice, and the innocent freed?"

"Torment me not with questions which can serve no purpose," he sternly replied—"The deed was done by those who are far enough from pursuit, and safe enough from discovery!—No one can save Effie but yourself."

"Wo 's me! how is it in my power?" asked Jeanie, in despondency.

"Hearken to me!—You have sense—you can apprehend my meaning—I will trust you. Your sister is innocent of the crime charged against her——"

"Thank God for that!" said Jeanie.

"Be still and hearken!—The person who assisted her in her illness murdered the child; but it was without the mother's knowledge or consent.—She is therefore guiltless, as guiltless as the unhappy innocent, that but gasped a few minutes in this unhappy world—the better was its hap to be so soon at rest. She is innocent as that infant, and yet she must die—it is impossible to clear her of the law!"

"Cannot the wretches be discovered, and given up to punishment?" said Jeanie.

"Do you think you will persuade those who are hardened in guilt to die to save another!—Is that the reed you would lean to?"

"But you said there was a remedy, again gasped out the terrified young woman.

"There is," answered the stranger, "and it is in your own hands. The blow which the law aims cannot be broken by directly encountering it, but it may be turned aside. You saw your sister during the period preceding the birth of her child—what is so natural as that she should have mentioned her condition to you? The doing so would, as their cant goes, take the case from under the statute, for it removes the quality of concealment. I know their jargon, and have had sad cause to know it; and the quality of concealment is essential to this statutory offence.[1] Nothing is so natural as that Effie should have mentioned her condition to you—think—reflect—I am positive that she did."

"Wo 's me!" said Jeanie, "she never spoke to me on the subject, but grat sorely when I spoke to her about her altered looks, and the change on her spirits."

"You asked her questions on the subject?" he said eagerly. "You *must* remember her answer was, a confession that she had been ruined by a villain—yes, lay a strong emphasis on that—a cruel false villain call it—any other name is unnecessary; and that she bore under her bosom the consequences of his guilt and her folly; and that he had assured her he would provide safely for her approaching illness.—Well he kept his word!" These last words he spoke as it were to himself, and with a violent gesture of self-accusation, and then calmly proceeded, "You will remember all this?—That is all that is necessary to be said."

"But I cannot remember," answered Jeanie, with simplicity, "that which Effie never told me."

"Are you so dull—so very dull of apprehension?" he exclaimed, suddenly grasping her arm, and holding it firm in his hand. "I tell you," (speaking between his teeth, and under his breath, but with great energy,) "you *must* remember that she told you all this, whether she ever said a syllable of it or no. You must repeat this tale, in which there is no falsehood, except in so far as it was not told to you, before these Justices—Justiciary—whatever they call their bloodthirsty court, and save your sister from being murdered, and them from becoming murderers. Do not hesitate—I pledge life and salvation, that in saying what I have said, you will only speak the simple truth."

"But," replied Jeanie, whose judgment was too accurate not to see the sophistry of this argument, "I shall be man-sworn in the very thing in which my testimony is wanted, for it is the concealment for which poor Effie is blamed, and you would make me tell a falsehood anent it."

"I see," he said, "my first suspicions of you were right, and that you will let your sister, innocent, fair, and guiltless, except in trusting a villain, die the death of a murderess, rather than bestow the breath of your mouth and the sound of your voice to save her."

"I wad ware the best blood in my body to keep her skaithless," said Jeanie, weeping in bitter agony, "but I canna change right into wrang, or make that true which is false."

"Foolish, hard-hearted girl," said the stranger, "are you afraid of what they may do to you? I tell you, even the retainers of the law, who course

[1] Note O. *Child Murder*

life as grey-hounds do hares, will rejoice at the escape of a creature so young—so beautiful; that they will not suspect your tale; that, if they did suspect it, they would consider you as deserving, not only of forgiveness, but of praise for your natural affection."

"It is not man I fear," said Jeanie, looking upward; "the God, whose name I must call on to witness the truth of what I say, he will know the falsehood."

"And he will know the motive," said the stranger, eagerly; "he will know that you are doing this —not for lucre of gain, but to save the life of the innocent, and prevent the commission of a worse crime than that which the law seeks to avenge."

"He has given us a law," said Jeanie, "for the lamp of our path; if we stray from it we err against knowledge—I may not do evil, even that good may come out of it. But you—you that ken all this to be true, which I must take on your word, —you that, if I understood what you said e'en now, promised her shelter and protection in her travail, why do not *you* step forward, and bear leal and soothfast evidence in her behalf, as ye may with a clear conscience?"

"To whom do you talk of a clear conscience, woman?" said he, with a sudden fierceness which renewed her terrors,—"to *me*?—I have not known one for many a year. Bear witness in her behalf?—a proper witness, that, even to speak these few words to a woman of so little consequence as yourself, must choose such an hour and such a place as this. When you see owls and bats fly abroad, like larks, in the sunshine, you may expect to see such as I am in the assemblies of men. —Hush—listen to that."

A voice was heard to sing one of those wild and monotonous strains so common in Scotland, and to which the natives of that country chant their old ballads. The sound ceased—then came nearer, and was renewed; the stranger listened attentively, still holding Jeanie by the arm, (as she stood by him in motionless terror,) as if to prevent her interrupting the strain by speaking or stirring. When the sounds were renewed, the words were distinctly audible:

> "When the glede's in the blue cloud,
> The lavrock lies still;
> When the hound 's in the green-wood,
> The hind keeps the hill."

The person who sung kept a strained and powerful voice at its highest pitch, so that it could be heard at a very considerable distance. As the song ceased, they might hear a stifled sound, as of steps and whispers of persons approaching them. The song was again raised, but the tune was changed:

> "O sleep ye sound, Sir James, she said,
> When ye suld rise and ride?
> There 's twenty men, wi' bow and blade,
> Are seeking where ye hide."

"I dare stay no longer," said the stranger; "return home, or remain till they come up—you have nothing to fear—but do not tell you saw me—your sister's fate is in your hands." So saying, he turned from her, and with a swift, yet cautiously noiseless step, plunged into the darkness on the side most remote from the sounds which they heard approaching, and was soon lost to her sight. Jeanie remained by the cairn terrified beyond expression, and uncertain whether she ought to fly homeward with all the speed she could exert, or wait the approach of those who were advancing towards her. This uncertainty detained her so long, that she now distinctly saw two or three figures already so near to her, that a precipitate flight would have been equally fruitless and impolitic.

CHAPTER XVI.

> ——She speaks things in doubt,
> That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
> Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
> The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
> And botch the words up to fit their own thoughts.
> *Hamlet.*

Like the digressive poet Ariosto, I find myself under the necessity of connecting the branches of my story, by taking up the adventures of another of the characters, and bringing them down to the point at which we have left those of Jeanie Deans. It is not, perhaps, the most artificial way of telling a story, but it has the advantage of sparing the necessity of resuming what a knitter (if stocking looms have left such a person in the land) might call our "dropped stitches;" a labour in which the author generally toils much, without getting credit for his pains.

"I could risk a sma' wad," said the clerk to the magistrate, "that this rascal Ratcliffe, if he were insured of his neck's safety, could do more than ony ten of our police-people and constables, to help us to get out of this scrape of Porteous's. He is weel acquent wi' a' the smugglers, thieves, and banditti about Edinburgh; and, indeed, he may be called the father of a' the misdoers in Scotland, for he has passed amang them for these twenty years by the name of Daddie Rat."

"A bonny sort of a scoundrel," replied the magistrate, "to expect a place under the city!"

"Begging your honour's pardon," said the city's procurator-fiscal, upon whom the duties of superintendent of police devolved, "Mr Fairscrieve is perfectly in the right. It is just sic as Ratcliffe that the town needs in my department; an' if sae be that he 's disposed to turn his knowledge to the city service, ye 'll no find a better man.—Ye 'll get nae saints to be searchers for uncustomed goods, or for thieves and sic like;—and your decent sort of men, religious professors, and broken tradesmen, that are put into the like o' sic trust, can do nae gude ava. They are feared for this, and they are scrupulous about that, and they are na free to tell a lie, though it may be for the benefit of the city; and they dinna like to be out at irregular hours, and in a dark cauld night, and they like a clout ower the croun far waur; and sae between the fear o' God, and the fear o' man, and the fear o' getting a sair throat, or sair banes, there 's a dozen o' our city-folk, baith waiters, and officers, and constables, that can find out naething but a wee bit skulduddery for the benefit of the Kirk-treasurer. Jock Porteous, that 's stiff and stark, puir fallow, was worth a dozen o' them; for he never had ony fears, or scruples, or doubts, or conscience, about ony thing your honours bade him."

"He was a gude servant o' the town," said the Bailie, "though he was an ower free-living man. But if you really think this rascal Ratcliffe could

do us ony service in discovering these malefactors, I would insure him life, reward, and promotion. It 's an awsome thing this mischance for the city, Mr Fairscrieve. It will be very ill taen wi' abune stairs. Queen Caroline, God bless her! is a woman —at least I judge sae, and it 's nae treason to speak my mind sae far — and ye maybe ken as weel as I do, for ye hae a housekeeper, though ye arena a married man, that women are wilfu', and downa bide a slight. And it will sound ill in her ears, that sic a confused mistake suld come to pass, and naebody sae muckle as to be put into the Tolbooth about it."

"If ye thought that, sir," said the procurator-fiscal, "we could easily clap into the prison a few blackguards upon suspicion. It will have a gude active look, and I hae aye plenty on my list, that wadna be a hair the waur of a week or twa's imprisonment; and if ye thought it no strictly just, ye could be just the easier wi' them the neist time they did ony thing to deserve it; they arena the sort to be lang o' gieing ye an opportunity to clear scores wi' them on that account."

"I doubt that will hardly do in this case, Mr Sharpitlaw," returned the town-clerk; "they 'll run their letters,[1] and be adrift again, before ye ken where ye are."

"I will speak to the Lord Provost," said the magistrate, "about Ratcliffe's business. Mr Sharpitlaw, you will go with me, and receive instructions—something may be made too out of this story of Butler's and his unknown gentleman — I know no business any man has to swagger about in the King's Park, and call himself the devil, to the terror of honest folks, who dinna care to hear mair about the devil than is said from the pulpit on the Sabbath. I cannot think the preacher himsell wad be heading the mob, though the time has been, they hae been as forward in a bruilzie as their neighbours."

"But these times are lang by," said Mr Sharpitlaw. "In my father's time, there was mair search for silenced ministers about the Bow-head and the Covenant-close, and all the tents of Kedar, as they ca'd the dwellings o' the godly in those days, than there 's now for thieves and vagabonds in the Laigh Calton and the back o' the Canongate. But that time 's weel by, an it bide. And if the Bailie will get me directions and authority from the Provost, I 'll speak wi' Daddie Rat mysell; for I 'm thinking I 'll make mair out o' him than ye 'll do."

Mr Sharpitlaw, being necessarily a man of high trust, was accordingly empowered, in the course of the day, to make such arrangements, as might seem in the emergency most advantageous for the Good Town. He went to the jail accordingly, and saw Ratcliffe in private.

The relative positions of a police-officer and a professed thief bear a different complexion, according to circumstances. The most obvious simile of a hawk pouncing upon his prey is often least applicable. Sometimes the guardian of justice has the air of a cat watching a mouse, and, while he suspends his purpose of springing upon the pilferer, takes care so to calculate his motions that he shall not get beyond his power. Sometimes, more passive still, he uses the art of fascination ascribed to the rattlesnake, and contents himself with glaring on the victim, through all his devious flutterings; certain that his terror, confusion, and disorder of ideas, will bring him into his jaws at last. The interview between Ratcliffe and Sharpitlaw had an aspect different from all these. They sat for five minutes silent, on opposite sides of a small table, and looked fixedly at each other, with a sharp, knowing, and alert cast of countenance, not unmingled with an inclination to laugh, and resembled, more than any thing else, two dogs, who, preparing for a game at romps, are seen to couch down, and remain in that posture for a little time, watching each other's movements, and waiting which shall begin the game.

"So, Mr Ratcliffe," said the officer, conceiving it suited his dignity to speak first, "you give up business, I find?"

"Yes, sir," replied Ratcliffe; "I shall be on that lay nae mair — and I think that will save your folk some trouble, Mr Sharpitlaw?"

"Which Jock Dalgleish" (then finisher of the law in the Scottish metropolis) "wad save them as easily," returned the procurator-fiscal.

"Ay; if I waited in the Tolbooth here to have him fit my cravat — but that 's an idle way o' speaking, Mr Sharpitlaw."

"Why, I suppose you know you are under sentence of death, Mr Ratcliffe?" replied Mr Sharpitlaw.

"Ay, so are a,' as that worthy minister said in the Tolbooth Kirk the day Robertson wan off; but naebody kens when it will be executed. Gude faith, he had better reason to say sae than he dreamed of, before the play was played out that morning!"

"This Robertson," said Sharpitlaw, in a lower and something like a confidential tone, "d'ye ken, Rat — that is, can ye gie us ony inkling where he is to be heard tell o'?"

"Troth, Mr Sharpitlaw, I 'll be frank wi' ye; Robertson is rather a cut abune me—a wild deevil he was, and mony a daft prank he played; but except the Collector's job that Wilson led him into, and some tuilzies about run goods wi' the gaugers and the waiters, he never did ony thing that came near our line o' business."

"Umph! that 's singular, considering the company he kept."

"Fact, upon my honour and credit," said Ratcliffe, gravely. "He keepit out o' our little bits of affairs, and that 's mair than Wilson did; I hae dune business wi' Wilson afore now. But the lad will come on in time; there 's nae fear o' him; naebody will live the life he has led, but what he 'll come to sooner or later."

"Who or what is he, Ratcliffe? you know, I suppose?" said Sharpitlaw.

"He 's better born, I judge, than he cares to let on; he 's been a soldier, and he has been a play-actor, and I watna what he has been or hasna been, for as young as he is, sae that it had daffing and nonsense about it."

"Pretty pranks he has played in his time, I suppose?"

"Ye may say that," said Ratcliffe, with a sardonic smile; "and," (touching his nose,) "a deevil amang the lasses."

"Like enough," said Sharpitlaw. "Weel, Ratcliffe, I 'll no stand niffering wi' ye; ye ken the

[1] A Scottish form of procedure, answering, in some respects, to the English Habeas Corpus.

way that favour 's gotten in my office; ye maun be useful'."

"Certainly, sir, to the best of my power — naething for naething — I ken the rule of the office," said the ex-depredator.

"Now the principal thing in hand e'en now," said the official person, "is this job of Porteous's; an ye can gie us a lift — why, the inner turnkey's office to begin wi', and the captainship in time — ye understand my meaning?"

"Ay, troth do I, sir; a wink 's as gude as a nod to a blind horse; but Jock Porteous's job — Lord help ye! — I was under sentence the haill time. God! but I couldna help laughing when I heard Jock skirling for mercy in the lads's hands! Mony a het skin ye hae gien me, neighbour, thought I, tak ye what 's gaun: time about 's fair play; ye 'll ken now what hanging 's gude for."

"Come, come, this is all nonsense, Rat," said the procurator. "Ye canna creep out at that hole, lad; you must speak to the point — you understand me — if you want favour; gif-gaf makes gude friends, ye ken."

"But how can I speak to the point, as your honour ca's it," said Ratcliffe, demurely, and with an air of great simplicity, "when ye ken I was under sentence, and in the strong room a' the while the job was going on?"

"And how can we turn ye loose on the public again, Daddie Rat, unless ye do or say something to deserve it?"

"Well, then, d—n it!" answered the criminal, "since it maun be sae, I saw Geordie Robertson among the boys that brake the jail; I suppose that will do me some gude?"

"That 's speaking to the purpose, indeed," said the office-bearer; "and now, Rat, where think ye we 'll find him?"

"Deil haet o' me kens," said Ratcliffe; "he 'll no likely gang back to ony o' his auld howffs; he 'll be off the country by this time. He has gude friends some gate or other, for a' the life he 's led; he 's been weel educate."

"He 'll grace the gallows the better," said Mr Sharpitlaw; "a desperate dog, to murder an officer of the city for doing his duty! Wha kens wha 's turn it might be next? — But you saw him plainly?"

"As plainly as I see you."

"How was he dressed?" said Sharpitlaw.

"I couldna weel see; something of a woman's bit mutch on his head; but ye never saw sic a ca'-throw. Ane couldna hae een to a' thing."

"But did he speak to no one?" said Sharpitlaw.

"They were a' speaking and gabbling through other," said Ratcliffe, who was obviously unwilling to carry his evidence farther than he could possibly help.

"This will not do, Ratcliffe," said the procurator; "you must speak *out — out — out*," tapping the table emphatically, as he repeated that impressive monosyllable.

"It 's very hard, sir," said the prisoner; "and but for the under-turnkey's place ——"

"And the reversion of the captaincy — the captaincy of the Tolbooth, man — that is, in case of gude behaviour."

"Ay, ay," said Ratcliffe, "gude behaviour! — there 's the deevil. And then it 's waiting for dead folk's shoon into the bargain."

"But Robertson's head will weigh something," said Sharpitlaw; "something gay and heavy, Rat; the town maun shew cause — that 's right and reason — and then ye'll hae freedom to enjoy your gear honestly."

"I dinna ken," said Ratcliffe; "it 's a queer way of beginning the trade of honesty — but deil ma care. Weel, then, I heard and saw him speak to the wench Effie Deans, that 's up there for child-murder."

"The deil ye did? Rat, this is finding a mare's nest wi' a witness. — And the man that spoke to Butler in the Park, and that was to meet wi' Jeanie Deans at Muschat's Cairn — whew! lay that and that together? As sure as I live he 's been the father of the lassie's wean.'

"There hae been waur guesses than that, I 'm thinking," observed Ratcliffe, turning his quid of tobacco in his cheek, and squirting out the juice. "I heard something a while syne about his drawing up wi' a bonny quean about the Pleasaunts, and that it was a' Wilson could do to keep him frae marrying her."

Here a city officer entered, and told Sharpitlaw that they had the woman in custody whom he had directed them to bring before him.

"It 's little matter now," said he, "the thing is taking another turn; however, George, ye may bring her in."

The officer retired, and introduced, upon his return, a tall, strapping wench of eighteen or twenty, dressed fantastically, in a sort of blue riding-jacket, with tarnished lace, her hair clubbed like that of a man, a Highland bonnet, and a bunch of broken feathers, a riding-skirt (or petticoat) of scarlet camlet, embroidered with tarnished flowers. Her features were coarse and masculine, yet at a little distance, by dint of very bright wild-looking black eyes, an aquiline nose, and a commanding profile, appeared rather handsome. She flourished the switch she held in her hand, dropped a curtsey as low as a lady at a birth-night introduction, recovered herself seemingly according to Touchstone's directions to Audrey, and opened the conversation without waiting till any questions were asked.

"God gie your honour gude-e'en, and mony o' them, bonny Mr Sharpitlaw! — Gude-e'en to ye, Daddie Ratton — they tauld me ye were hanged, man; or did ye get out o' John Dalgleish's hands like half-hangit Maggie Dickson?"

"Whisht, ye daft jaud," said Ratcliffe, "and hear what 's said to ye."

"Wi' a' my heart, Ratton. Great preferment for poor Madge to be brought up the street wi' a grand man, wi' a coat a' passemented wi' worset-lace, to speak wi' provosts, and bailies, and town-clerks, and prokitors, at this time o' day — and the haill town looking at me too — This is honour on earth for anes!"

"Ay, Madge," said Mr Sharpitlaw, in a coaxing tone; "and ye 're dressed out in your braws, I see; these are not your every days' claiths ye have on."

"Deil be in my fingers, then!" said Madge — "Eh, sirs!" (observing Butler come into the apartment,) "there 's a minister in the Tolbooth — wha will ca' it a graceless place now? — I 'se warrant he 's in for the gude auld cause — but it 's be nae cause o' mine," and off she went into a song.

"Hey for cavaliers, ho for cavaliers,
Dub a dub, dub a dub;
Have at old Beelzebub, —
Oliver 's squeaking for fear."

"Did you ever see that mad woman before?" said Sharpitlaw to Butler.

"Not to my knowledge, sir," replied Butler.

"I thought as much," said the procurator-fiscal, looking towards Ratcliffe, who answered his glance with a nod of acquiescence and intelligence.

"But that is Madge Wildfire, as she calls herself," said the man of law to Butler.

"Ay, that I am," said Madge, "and that I have been ever since I was something better — Heigh ho"— (and something like melancholy dwelt on her features for a minute) — "But I canna mind when that was — it was lang syne, at ony rate, and I 'll ne'er fash my thumb about it. —

"I glance like the wildfire through country and town;
I 'm seen on the causeway — I 'm seen on the down;
The lightning that flashes so bright and so free,
Is scarcely so blithe or so bonny as me."

"Haud your tongue, ye skirling limmer!" said the officer, who had acted as master of the ceremonies to this extraordinary performer, and who was rather scandalized at the freedom of her demeanour before a person of Mr Sharpitlaw's importance — "haud your tongue, or I 'se gie ye something to skirl for!"

"Let her alone, George," said Sharpitlaw, "dinna put her out o' tune; I hae some questions to ask her — But first, Mr Butler, take another look of her."

"Do sae, minister — do sae," cried Madge; "I am as weel worth looking at as ony book in your aught. — And I can say the single carritch, and the double carritch, and justification, and effectual calling, and the assembly of divines at Westminster, that is," (she added in a low tone,) "I could say them anes — but it 's lang syne — and ane forgets, ye ken." And poor Madge heaved another deep sigh.

"Weel sir," said Mr Sharpitlaw to Butler, "what think ye now?"

"As I did before," said Butler; "that I never saw the poor demented creature in my life before."

"Then she is not the person whom you said the rioters last night described as Madge Wildfire?"

"Certainly not," said Butler. "They may be near the same height, for they are both tall, but I see little other resemblance."

"Their dress, then, is not alike?" said Sharpitlaw.

"Not in the least," said Butler.

"Madge, my bonny woman," said Sharpitlaw, in the same coaxing manner, "what did ye do wi' your ilka-days' claise yesterday?"

"I dinna mind," said Madge.

"Where was ye yesterday at e'en, Madge?"

"I dinna mind ony thing about yesterday," answered Madge; "ae day is eneugh for ony body to wun ower wi' at a time, and ower muckle sometimes."

"But maybe, Madge, ye wad mind something about it, if I was to gie ye this half-crown?" said Sharpitlaw, taking out the piece of money.

"That might gar me laugh, but it couldna gar me mind."

"But, Madge," continued Sharpitlaw, "were I to send you to the wark-house in Leith Wynd, and gar Jock Dalgleish lay the tawse on your back——"

"That wad gar me greet," said Madge, sobbing, "but it couldna gar me mind, ye ken."

"She is ower far past reasonable folk's motives, sir," said Ratcliffe, "to mind siller or John Dalgleish, or the cat-and-nine-tails either, but I think I could gar her tell us something."

"Try her then, Ratcliffe," said Sharpitlaw, "for I am tired of her crazy pate, and be d—d to her."

"Madge," said Ratcliffe, "hae ye ony joes now?"

"An ony body ask ye, say ye dinna ken. — Set him to be speaking of my joes, auld Daddie Ratton!"

"I dare say, ye hae deil ane?"

"See if I haena then," said Madge, with the toss of the head of affronted beauty — "there's Rob the Ranter, and Will Fleming, and then there 's Geordie Robertson, lad — that 's Gentleman Geordie — what think ye o' that?"

Ratcliffe laughed, and, winking to the procurator-fiscal, pursued the inquiry in his own way. "But, Madge, the lads only like ye when ye hae on your braws — they wadna touch you wi' a pair o' tangs when you are in your auld ilka-day rags."

"Ye 're a leeing auld sorrow then," replied the fair one; "for Gentle Geordie Robertson put my ilka-day's claise on his ain bonny sell yestreen, and gaed a' through the town wi' them; and gawsie and grand he lookit, like ony queen in the land."

"I dinna believe a word o't," said Ratcliffe, with another wink to the procurator. "Thae duds were a' o' the colour o' moonshine in the water, I 'm thinking, Madge — The gown wad be a sky-blue scarlet, I 'se warrant ye?"

"It was nae sic thing," said Madge, whose unretentive memory let out, in the eagerness of contradiction, all that she would have most wished to keep concealed, had her judgment been equal to her inclination. "It was neither scarlet nor sky-blue, but my ain auld brown threshie-coat of a short-gown, and my mother's auld mutch, and my red rokelay — and he gaed me a croun and a kiss for the use o' them, blessing on his bonny face — though it 's been a dear ane to me."

"And where did he change his clothes again, hinnie?" said Sharpitlaw, in his most conciliatory manner.

"The procurator's spoiled a'," observed Ratcliffe, dryly.

And it was even so; for the question, put in so direct a shape, immediately awakened Madge to the propriety of being reserved upon those very topics on which Ratcliffe had indirectly seduced her to become communicative.

"What was 't ye were speering at us, sir?" she resumed, with an appearance of stolidity so speedily assumed, as shewed there was a good deal of knavery mixed with her folly.

"I asked you," said the procurator, "at what hour, and to what place, Robertson brought back your clothes."

"Robertson? — Lord haud a care o' us! what Robertson?"

"Why, the fellow we were speaking of, Gentle Geordie, as you call him."

"Geordie Gentle!" answered Madge, with well feigned amazement — "I dinna ken naebody they ca' Geordie Gentle."

"Come, my jo," said Sharpitlaw, "this will not do; you must tell us what you did with these clothes of yours."

Madge Wildfire made no answer, unless the question may seem connected with the snatch of a song

with which she indulged the embarrassed investigator :—

"What did ye wi' the bridal ring—bridal ring—bridal ring?
What did ye wi' your wedding ring, ye little cutty quean, O?
I gied it till a sodger, a sodger, a sodger,
I gied it till a sodger, an auld true love o' mine O,"

Of all the madwomen who have sung and said, since the days of Hamlet the Dane, if Ophelia be the most affecting, Madge Wildfire was the most provoking.

The procurator-fiscal was in despair. "I 'll take some measures with this d—d Bess of Bedlam," said he, "that shall make her find her tongue."

"Wi' your favour, sir," said Ratcliffe, "better let her mind settle a little—Ye have aye made out something."

"True," said the official person; "a brown short-gown, mutch, red rokelay—that agrees with your Madge Wildfire, Mr Butler?" Butler agreed that it did so. "Yes, there was a sufficient motive for taking this crazy creature's dress and name, while he was about such a job."

"And I am free to say *now*," said Ratcliffe——

"When you see it has come out without you," interrupted Sharpitlaw.

"Just sae, sir," reiterated Ratcliffe. "I am free to say now, since it 's come out otherwise, that these were the clothes I saw Robertson wearing last night in the jail, when he was at the head of the rioters."

"That 's direct evidence," said Sharpitlaw; "stick to that, Rat—I will report favourably of you to the provost, for I have business for you to-night. It wears late; I must home and get a snack, and I 'll be back in the evening. Keep Madge with you, Ratcliffe, and try to get her into a good tune again." So saying, he left the prison.

CHAPTER XVII.

And some they whistled—and some they sang,
And some did loudly say,
Whenever Lord Barnard's horn it blew,
"Away, Musgrave away!"
Ballad of Little Musgrave.

When the man of office returned to the Heart of Mid-Lothian, he resumed his conference with Ratcliffe, of whose experience and assistance he now held himself secure. "You must speak with this wench, Rat—this Effie Deans—you must sift her a wee bit; for as sure as a tether she will ken Robertson's haunts—till her, Rat—till her, without delay."

"Craving your pardon, Mr Sharpitlaw," said the turkney elect, "that 's what I am not free to do."

"Free to do, man? what the deil ails ye now?—I thought we had settled a' that?"

"I dinna ken, sir," said Ratcliffe; "I hae spoken to this Effie—she 's strange to this place and to its ways, and to a' our ways, Mr Sharpitlaw; and she greets, the silly tawpie, and she 's breaking her heart already about this wild chield; and were she the means o' taking him, she wad break it outright."

"She wunna hae time, lad," said Sharpitlaw; "the woodie will hae its ain o' her before that—a woman's heart takes a lang time o' breaking."

"That 's according to the stuff they are made o', sir," replied Ratcliffe—"But to make a lang tale short, I canna undertake the job. It gangs against my conscience."

"*Your* conscience, Rat?" said Sharpitlaw, with a sneer, which the reader will probably think very natural upon the occasion.

"Ou ay, sir," answered Ratcliffe, calmly, "just *my* conscience; a'body has a conscience, though it may be ill wunnin at it. I think mine 's as weel out o' the gate as maist folk's are; and yet it 's just like the noop of my elbow, it whiles gets a bit dirl on a corner."

"Weel, Rat," replied Sharpitlaw, "since ye are nice, I 'll speak to the hussy mysell."

Sharpitlaw, accordingly, caused himself to be introduced into the little dark apartment tenanted by the unfortunate Effie Deans. The poor girl was seated on her little flock-bed, plunged in a deep reverie. Some food stood on the table, of a quality better than is usually supplied to prisoners, but it was untouched. The person under whose care she was more particularly placed, said, "that sometimes she tasted naething from the tae end of the four-and-twenty hours to the t'other, except a drink of water."

Sharpitlaw took a chair, and, commanding the turnkey to retire, he opened the conversation, endeavouring to throw into his tone and countenance as much commiseration as they were capable of expressing, for the one was sharp and harsh, the other sly, acute, and selfish.

"How's a' wi' ye, Effie?—How d'ye find yourself, hinny?"

A deep sigh was the only answer.

"Are the folk civil to ye, Effie?—it 's my duty to inquire."

"Very civil, sir," said Effie, compelling herself to answer, yet hardly knowing what she said.

"And your victuals," continued Sharpitlaw, in the same condoling tone—"do you get what you like?—or is there ony thing you would particularly fancy, as your health seems but silly?"

"It 's a' very weel, sir, I thank ye," said the poor prisoner, in a tone how different from the sportive vivacity of those of the Lily of St Leonard's!—"it 's a' very gude—ower gude for me."

"He must have been a great villain, Effie, who brought you to this pass," said Sharpitlaw.

The remark was dictated partly by a natural feeling, of which even he could not divest himself, though accustomed to practise on the passions of others, and keep a most heedful guard over his own, and partly by his wish to introduce the sort of conversation which might best serve his immediate purpose. Indeed, upon the present occasion, these mixed motives of feeling and cunning harmonized together wonderfully; for, said Sharpitlaw to himself, the greater rogue Robertson is, the more will be the merit of bringing him to justice. "He must have been a great villain, indeed," he again reiterated; "and I wish I had the skelping o' him."

"I may blame mysell mair than him," said Effie; "I was bred up to ken better; but he, poor fellow,"—— (she stopped.)

"Was a thorough blackguard a' his life, I dare say," said Sharpitlaw. "A stranger he was in this country, and a companion of that lawless vagabond, Wilson, I think, Effie?"

"It wad hae been dearly telling him that he had ne'er seen Wilson's face."

"That 's very true that you are saying, Effie," said Sharpitlaw. "Where was 't that Robertson and you were used to howff thegither? Somegate about the Laigh Calton, I am thinking."

The simple and dispirited girl had thus far followed Mr Sharpitlaw's lead, because he had artfully adjusted his observations to the thoughts he was pretty certain must be passing through her own mind, so that her answers became a kind of thinking aloud, a mood into which those who are either constitutionally absent in mind, or are rendered so by the temporary pressure of misfortune, may be easily led by a skilful train of suggestions. But the last observation of the procurator-fiscal was too much of the nature of a direct interrogatory, and it broke the charm accordingly.

"What was it that I was saying?" said Effie, starting up from her reclining posture, seating herself upright, and hastily shading her dishevelled hair back from her wasted, but still beautiful countenance. She fixed her eyes boldly and keenly upon Sharpitlaw;—"You are too much of a gentleman, sir,—too much of an honest man, to take any notice of what a poor creature like me says, that can hardly ca' my senses my ain—God help me!"

"Advantage!—I would be of some advantage to you if I could," said Sharpitlaw, in a soothing tone; "and I ken naething sae likely to serve ye, Effie, as gripping this rascal, Robertson."

"O dinna misca' him, sir, that never misca'd you!—Robertson?—I am sure I had naething to say against ony man o' the name, and naething will I say."

"But if you do not heed your own misfortune, Effie, you should mind what distress he has brought on your family," said the man of law.

"O, Heaven help me!" exclaimed poor Effie—"My poor father—my dear Jeanie—O, that 's sairest to bide of a'! O, sir, if you hae ony kindness—if ye hae ony touch of compassion—for a' the folk I see here are as hard as the wa'-stanes—If ye wad but bid them let my sister Jeanie in the next time she ca's! for when I hear them put her awa frae the door, and canna climb up to that high window to see sae muckle as her gown-tail, it 's like to pit me out o' my judgment." And she looked on him with a face of entreaty so earnest, yet so humble, that she fairly shook the steadfast purpose of his mind.

"You shall see your sister," he began, "if you 'll tell me,"—then interrupting himself, he added, in a more hurried tone,—"no, d—n it, you shall see your sister whether you tell me any thing or no." So saying, he rose up and left the apartment.

When he had rejoined Ratcliffe, he observed, "You are right, Ratton; there 's no making much of that lassie. But ae thing I have cleared—that is, that Robertson has been the father of the bairn, and so I will wager a boddle it will be he that 's to meet wi' Jeanie Deans this night at Muschat's Cairn, and there we 'll nail him, Rat, or my name is not Gideon Sharpitlaw."

"But," said Ratcliffe, perhaps because he was in no hurry to see any thing which was like to be connected with the discovery and apprehension of Robertson, "an that were the case, Mr Butler wad hae kend the man in the King's Park to be the same person wi' him in Madge Wildfire's claise, that headed the mob."

"That makes nae difference, man," replied Sharpitlaw—"the dress, the light, the confusion, maybe a touch o' a blackit cork, or a slake o' paint—hout, Ratton, I have seen ye dress your ainsell, that the deevil ye belang to durstna hae made oath t' ye."

"And that 's true, too," said Ratcliffe.

"And besides, ye donnard carle," continued Sharpitlaw, triumphantly, "the minister *did* say, that he thought he knew something of the features of the birkie that spoke to him in the Park, though he could not charge his memory where or when he had seen them."

"It 's evident, then, your honour will be right," said Ratcliffe.

"Then, Rat, you and I will go with the party oursells this night, and see him in grips, or we are done wi' him."

"I seena muckle use I can be o' to your honour," said Ratcliffe, reluctantly.

"Use?" answered Sharpitlaw—"You can guide the party—you ken the ground. Besides, I do not intend to quit sight o' you, my good friend, till I have him in hand."

"Weel, sir," said Ratcliffe, but in no joyful tone of acquiescence; "Ye maun hae it your ain way—but mind he 's a desperate man."

"We shall have that with us," answered Sharpitlaw, "that will settle him, if it is necessary."

"But, sir," answered Ratcliffe, "I am sure I couldna undertake to guide you to Muschat's Cairn in the night-time; I ken the place, as mony does, in fair day-light, but how to find it by moonshine, amang sae mony crags and stanes, as like to each other as the collier to the deil, is mair than I can tell. I might as soon seek moonshine in water."

"What 's the meaning o' this, Ratcliffe?" said Sharpitlaw, while he fixed his eye on the recusant, with a fatal and ominous expression,—"Have you forgotten that you are still under sentence of death?"

"No, sir," said Ratcliffe, "that 's a thing no easily put out o' memory; and if my presence be judged necessary, nae doubt I maun gang wi' your honour. But I was gaun to tell your honour of ane that has mair skeel o' the gate than me, and that 's e 'en Madge Wildfire."

"The devil she has!—Do you think me as mad as she is, to trust to her guidance on such an occasion?"

"Your honour is the best judge," answered Ratcliffe; "but I ken I can keep her in tune, and garr her haud the straight path—she often sleeps out, or rambles about amang thae hills the haill simmer night, the daft limmer."

"Well, Ratcliffe," replied the procurator-fiscal, "if you think she can guide us the right way—but take heed to what you are about—your life depends on your behaviour."

"It 's a sair judgment on a man," said Ratcliffe, "when he has ance gane sae far wrang as I hae done, that deil a bit he can be honest, try 't whilk way he will."

Such was the reflection of Ratcliffe, when he was left for a few minutes to himself, while the retainer of justice went to procure a proper warrant, and give the necessary directions.

The rising moon saw the whole party free from the walls of the city, and entering upon the open ground. Arthur's Seat, like a couchant lion of immense size—Salisbury Crags, like a huge belt or girdle of granite, were dimly visible. Holding

their path along the southern side of the Canongate, they gained the Abbey of Holyroodhouse, and from thence found their way by step and stile into the King's Park. They were at first four in number — an officer of justice and Sharpitlaw, who were well armed with pistols and cutlasses; Ratcliffe, who was not trusted with weapons, lest he might, peradventure, have used them on the wrong side; and the female. But at the last stile, when they entered the Chase, they were joined by other two officers, whom Sharpitlaw, desirous to secure sufficient force for his purpose, and at the same time to avoid observation, had directed to wait for him at this place. Ratcliffe saw this accession of strength with some disquietude, for he had hitherto thought it likely that Robertson, who was a bold, stout, and active young fellow, might have made his escape from Sharpitlaw and the single officer, by force or agility, without his being implicated in the matter. But the present strength of the followers of justice was overpowering, and the only mode of saving Robertson, (which the old sinner was well disposed to do, providing always he could accomplish his purpose without compromising his own safety,) must be by contriving that he should have some signal of their approach. It was probably with this view that Ratcliffe had requested the addition of Madge to the party, having considerable confidence in her propensity to exert her lungs. Indeed, she had already given them so many specimens of her clamorous loquacity, that Sharpitlaw half determined to send her back with one of the officers, rather than carry forward in his company a person so extremely ill qualified to be a guide in a secret expedition. It seemed, too, as if the open air, the approach to the hills, and the ascent of the moon, supposed to be so portentous over those whose brain is infirm, made her spirits rise in a degree tenfold more loquacious than she had hitherto exhibited. To silence her by fair means seemed impossible; authoritative commands and coaxing entreaties she set alike at defiance, and threats only made her sulky and altogether intractable.

"Is there no one of you," said Sharpitlaw, impatiently, "that knows the way to this accursed place — this Nicol Muschat's Cairn — excepting this mad clavering idiot?"

"Deil ane o' them kens it, except mysell," exclaimed Madge; "how suld they, the pure fule cowards! But I hae sat on the grave frae batfleeing time till cock-crow, and had mony a fine crack wi' Muschat and Ailie Muschat, that are lying sleeping below."

"The devil take your crazy brain," said Sharpitlaw; "will you not allow the men to answer a question?"

The officers obtaining a moment's audience while Ratcliffe diverted Madge's attention, declared that, though they had a general knowledge of the spot, they could not undertake to guide the party to it by the uncertain light of the moon, with such accuracy as to ensure success to their expedition.

"What shall we do, Ratcliffe?" said Sharpitlaw; "if he sees us before we see him, — and that 's what he is certain to do, if we go strolling about, without keeping the straight road, — we may bid gude-day to the job; and I would rather lose one hundred pounds, baith for the credit of the police, and because the Provost says somebody maun be hanged for this job o' Porteous, come o 't what likes."

"I think," said Ratcliffe, "we maun just try Madge; and I 'll see if I can get her keepit in ony better order. And at ony rate, if he suld hear her skirling her auld ends o' sangs, he 's no to ken for that that there 's ony body wi' her."

"That 's true," said Sharpitlaw; "and if he thinks her alone, he 's as like to come towards her as to rin frae her. So set forward — we hae lost ower muckle time already — see to get her to keep the right road."

"And what sort o' house does Nicol Muschat and his wife keep now?" said Ratcliffe to the madwoman, by way of humouring her vein of folly; "they were but thrawn folk lang syne, an a' tales be true."

"Ou, ay, ay, ay — but a 's forgotten now," replied Madge, in the confidential tone of a gossip giving the history of her next-door neighbour — "Ye see, I spoke to them mysell, and tauld them byganes suld be byganes — her throat's sair misguggled and mashackered though; she wears her corpse-sheet drawn weel up to hide it, but that canna hinder the bluid seiping through, ye ken. I wussed her to wash it in St Anthony's Well, and that will cleanse if ony thing can — But they say bluid never bleaches out o' linen claith — Deacon Sanders's new cleansing draps winna do 't — I tried them mysell on a bit rag we hae at hame that was mailed wi' the bluid of a bit skirling wean that was hurt some gate, but out it winna come — Weel, ye 'll say that 's queer; but I will bring it out to St Anthony's blessed Well some braw night just like this, and I 'll cry up Ailie Muschat, and she and I will hae a grand bouking-washing, and bleach our claise in the beams of the bonny Lady Moon, that 's far pleasanter to me than the sun — the sun's ower het, and ken ye, cummers, my brains are het eneugh already. But the moon, and the dew, and the nightwind, they are just like a caller kail-blade laid on my brow; and whiles I think the moon just shines on purpose to pleasure me, when naebody sees her but mysell."

This raving discourse she continued with prodigious volubility, walking on at a great pace, and dragging Ratcliffe along with her, while he endeavoured, in appearance at least, if not in reality, to induce her to moderate her voice.

All at once, she stopped short upon the top of a little hillock, gazed upward fixedly, and said not one word for the space of five minutes. "What the devil is the matter with her now?" said Sharpitlaw to Ratcliffe — "Can you not get her forward?"

"Ye maun just take a grain o' patience wi' her, sir," said Ratcliffe. "She 'll no gae a foot faster than she likes hersell."

"D — n her," said Sharpitlaw, "I 'll take care she has her time in Bedlam or Bridewell, or both, for she 's both mad and mischievous."

In the meanwhile, Madge, who had looked very pensive when she first stopped, suddenly burst into a vehement fit of laughter, then paused and sighed bitterly, — then was seized with a second fit of laughter, — then, fixing her eyes on the moon, lifted up her voice and sung, —

> "Good even, good fair moon, good even to thee;
> I prithee, dear moon, now shew to me
> The form and the features, the speech and degree,
> Of the man that true lover of mine shall be."

"But I need not ask that of the bonny Lady Moon — I ken that weel eneugh mysell — *true*-love though

he wasna—But naebody shall sae that I ever tauld a word about the matter—But whiles I wish the bairn had lived—Weel, God guide us, there 's a heaven aboon us a',"—(here she sighed bitterly,) "and a bonny moon, and sterns in it forby" (and here she laughed once more.)

"Are we to stand here all night?" said Sharpitlaw, very impatiently. "Drag her forward."

"Ay, sir," said Ratcliffe, "if we kend whilk way to drag her, that would settle it at ance.—Come, Madge, hinny," addressing her, "we 'll no be in time to see Nicol and his wife, unless ye shew us the road."

"In troth and that I will, Ratton," said she, seizing him by the arm, and resuming her route with huge strides, considering it was a female who took them. "And I 'll tell ye, Ratton, blithe will Nicol Muschat be to see ye, for he says he kens weel there isna sic a villain out o' hell as ye are, and he wad be ravished to hae a crack wi' you—like to like, ye ken—it 's a proverb never fails—and ye are baith a pair o' the deevil's peats, I trow—hard to ken whilk deserves the hettest corner o' his ingle-side."

Ratcliffe was conscience-struck, and could not forbear making an involuntary protest against this classification. "I never shed blood," he replied.

"But ye hae sauld it, Ratton—ye hae sauld blood mony a time. Folk kill wi' the tongue as weel as wi' the hand—wi' the word as weel as wi' the gulley!—

> 'It is the bonny butcher lad.
> That wears the sleeves of blue,
> He sells the flesh on Saturday,
> On Friday that he slew.'"

"And what is that I am doing now?" thought Ratcliffe. "But I 'll hae nae wyte of Robertson's young bluid, if I can help it;" then speaking apart to Madge, he asked her, "Whether she did not remember ony o' her auld sangs?"

"Mony a dainty ane," said Madge; "and blithely can I sing them, for lightsome sangs make merry gate." And she sang,—

> "When the glede's in the blue cloud,
> The lavrock lies still;
> When the hound's in the green-wood,
> The hind keeps the hill."

"Silence her cursed noise, if you should throttle her," said Sharpitlaw; "I see somebody yonder.—Keep close, my boys, and creep round the shoulder of the height. George Poinder, stay you with Ratcliffe and that mad yelling bitch; and you other two, come with me round under the shadow of the brae."

And he crept forward with the stealthy pace of an Indian savage, who leads his band to surprise an unsuspecting party of some hostile tribe. Ratcliffe saw them glide off, avoiding the moonlight, and keeping as much in the shade as possible. "Robertson's done up," said he to himself; "thae young lads are aye sae thoughtless. What deevil could he hae to say to Jeanie Deans, or to ony woman on earth, that he suld gang awa and get his neck raxed for her? And this mad quean, after cracking like a pen-gun, and skirling like a pea-hen for the haill night, behoves just to hae hadden her tongue when her clavers might have done some gude! But it 's aye the way wi' women; if they ever haud their tongues ava', ye may swear it 's for mischief. I wish I could set her on again without this blood-sucker kenning what I am doing. But he 's as gleg as MacKeachan's elshin, that ran through sax plies of bendleather and half an inch into the king's heel."

He then began to hum, but in a very low and suppressed tone, the first stanza of a favourite ballad of Wildfire's, the words of which bore some distant analogy with the situation of Robertson, trusting that the power of association would not fail to bring the rest to her mind:

> "There 's a bloodhound ranging Tinwald wood,
> There 's harness glancing sheen;
> There 's a maiden sits on Tinwald brae,
> And she sings loud between."

Madge had no sooner received the catch-word, than she vindicated Ratcliffe's sagacity by setting off at score with the song:

> "O sleep ye sound, Sir James, she said,
> When ye suld rise and ride?
> There 's twenty men, wi' bow and blade,
> Are seeking where ye hide."

Though Ratcliffe was at a considerable distance from the spot called Muschat's Cairn, yet his eyes, practised like those of a cat to penetrate darkness, could mark that Robertson had caught the alarm. George Poinder, less keen of sight, or less attentive, was not aware of his flight any more than Sharpitlaw and his assistants, whose view, though they were considerably nearer to the cairn, was intercepted by the broken nature of the ground under which they were screening themselves. At length, however, after the interval of five or six minutes, they also perceived that Robertson had fled, and rushed hastily towards the place, while Sharpitlaw called out aloud, in the harshest tones of a voice which resembled a saw-mill at work, "Chase, lads—chase—haud the brae—I see him on the edge of the hill!" Then hollowing back to the rear-guard of his detachment, he issued his farther orders: "Ratcliffe, come here, and detain the woman—George, run and kepp the stile at the Duke's Walk—Ratcliffe, come here directly—but first knock out that mad bitch's brains!"

"Ye had better rin for it, Madge," said Ratcliffe, "for it 's ill dealing wi' an angry man."

Madge Wildfire was not so absolutely void of common sense as not to understand this innuendo; and while Ratcliffe, in seemingly anxious haste of obedience, hastened to the spot where Sharpitlaw waited to deliver up Jeanie Deans to his custody, she fled with all the despatch she could exert in an opposite direction. Thus the whole party were separated, and in rapid motion of flight or pursuit, excepting Ratcliffe and Jeanie, whom, although making no attempt to escape, he held fast by the cloak, and who remained standing by Muschat's Cairn.

CHAPTER XVIII.

> You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling.
>
> *Measure for Measure.*

Jeanie Deans,—for here our story unites itself with that part of the narrative which broke off at the end of the fifteenth chapter,—while she waited, in terror and amazement, the hasty advance of three or four men towards her, was yet

more startled at their suddenly breaking asunder, and giving chase in different directions to the late object of her terror, who became at that moment, though she could not well assign a reasonable cause, rather the cause of her interest. One of the party (it was Sharpitlaw) came straight up to her, and saying, "Your name is Jeanie Deans, and you are my prisoner," immediately added, "but if you will tell me which way he ran I will let you go."

"I dinna ken, sir," was all the poor girl could utter; and, indeed, it is the phrase which rises most readily to the lips of any person in her rank, as the readiest reply to any embarrassing question.

"But," said Sharpitlaw, "ye *ken* wha it was ye were speaking wi', my leddy, on the hill side, and midnight sae near; ye surely ken *that*, my bonny woman?"

"I dinna ken, sir," again iterated Jeanie, who really did not comprehend in her terror the nature of the questions which were so hastily put to her in this moment of surprise.

"We will try to mend your memory by and by, hinny," said Sharpitlaw, and shouted, as we have already told the reader, to Ratcliffe, to come up and take charge of her, while he himself directed the chase after Robertson, which he still hoped might be successful. As Ratcliffe approached, Sharpitlaw pushed the young woman towards him with some rudeness, and betaking himself to the more important object of his quest, began to scale crags and scramble up steep banks, with an agility of which his profession and his general gravity of demeanour would previously have argued him incapable. In a few minutes there was no one within sight, and only a distant halloo from one of the pursuers to the other, faintly heard on the side of the hill, argued that there was any one within hearing. Jeanie Deans was left in the clear moonlight, standing under the guard of a person of whom she knew nothing, and, what was worse, concerning whom, as the reader is well aware, she could have learned nothing that would not have increased her terror.

When all in the distance was silent, Ratcliffe for the first time addressed her, and it was in that cold sarcastic indifferent tone familiar to habitual depravity, whose crimes are instigated by custom rather than by passion. "This is a braw night for ye, dearie," he said, attempting to pass his arm across her shoulder, "to be on the green hill wi' your jo." Jeanie extricated herself from his grasp, but did not make any reply. "I think lads and lasses," continued the ruffian, "dinna meet at Muschat's Cairn at midnight to crack nuts," and he again attempted to take hold of her.

"If ye are an officer of justice, sir," said Jeanie, again eluding his attempt to seize her, "ye deserve to have your coat stripped from your back."

"Very true, hinny," said he, succeeding forcibly in his attempt to get hold of her, "but suppose I should strip your cloak off first?"

"Ye are more a man, I am sure, than to hurt me, sir," said Jeanie; "for God's sake have pity on a half-distracted creature!"

"Come, come," said Ratcliffe, "you're a good looking wench, and should not be cross-grained. I was going to be an honest man—but the devil has this very day flung first a lawyer, and then a woman, in my gate. I'll tell you what, Jeanie, they are out on the hill-side—if you'll be guided by me, I'll carry you to a wee bit corner in the Pleasance, that I ken o' in an auld wife's, that a' the prokitors o' Scotland wot naething o', and we'll send Robertson word to meet us in Yorkshire, for there is a set o' braw lads about the mid-land counties, that I hae dune business wi' before now, and sae we'll leave Mr Sharpitlaw to whistle on his thumb."

It was fortunate for Jeanie, in an emergency like the present, that she possessed presence of mind and courage, so soon as the first hurry of surprise had enabled her to rally her recollection. She saw the risk she was in from a ruffian, who not only was such by profession, but had that evening been stupifying, by means of strong liquors, the internal aversion which he felt at the business on which Sharpitlaw had resolved to employ him.

"Dinna speak sae loud," said she, in a low voice, "he 's up yonder."

"Who?—Robertson!" said Ratcliffe, eagerly.

"Ay," replied Jeanie; "up yonder;" and she pointed to the ruins of the hermitage and chapel.

"By G—d, then," said Ratcliffe, "I'll make my ain of him, either one way or other—wait for me here."

But no sooner had he set off, as fast as he could run, towards the chapel, than Jeanie started in an opposite direction, over high and low, on the nearest path homeward. Her juvenile exercise as a herdswoman had put "life and mettle" in her heels, and never had she followed Dustiefoot, when the cows were in the corn, with half so much speed as she now cleared the distance betwixt Muschat's Cairn and her father's cottage at Saint Leonard's. To lift the latch—to enter—to shut, bolt, and double bolt the door—to draw against it a heavy article of furniture, (which she could not have moved in a moment of less energy,) so as to make yet farther provision against violence, was almost the work of a moment, yet done with such silence as equalled the celerity.

Her next anxiety was upon her father's account, and she drew silently to the door of his apartment, in order to satisfy herself whether he had been disturbed by her return. He was awake,—probably had slept but little; but the constant presence of his own sorrows, the distance of his apartment from the outer-door of the house, and the precautions which Jeanie had taken to conceal her departure and return, had prevented him from being sensible of either. He was engaged in his devotions, and Jeanie could distinctly hear him use these words: "And for the other child thou hast given me to be a comfort and stay to my old age, may her days be long in the land, according to the promise thou hast given to those who shall honour father and mother; may all her purchased and promised blessings be multiplied upon her; keep her in the watches of the night, and in the uprising of the morning, that all in this land may know that thou hast not utterly hid thy face from those that seek thee in truth and in sincerity." He was silent, but probably continued his petition in the strong fervency of mental devotion.

His daughter retired to her apartment, comforted, that while she was exposed to danger, her head had been covered by the prayers of the just as by an helmet, and under the strong confidence, that while she walked worthy of the protection of

Heaven, she would experience its countenance. It was in that moment that a vague idea first darted across her mind, that something might yet be achieved for her sister's safety, conscious as she now was of her innocence of the unnatural murder with which she stood charged. It came, as she described it, on her mind, like a sun-blink on a stormy sea; and although it instantly vanished, yet she felt a degree of composure which she had not experienced for many days, and could not help being strongly persuaded that, by some means or other, she would be called upon, and directed, to work out her sister's deliverance. She went to bed, not forgetting her usual devotions, the more fervently made on account of her late deliverance, and she slept soundly in spite of her agitation.

We must return to Ratcliffe, who had started, like a greyhound from the slips when the sportsman cries halloo, as soon as Jeanie had pointed to the ruins. Whether he meant to aid Robertson's escape, or to assist his pursuers, may be very doubtful; perhaps he did not himself know, but had resolved to be guided by circumstances. He had no opportunity, however, of doing either; for he had no sooner surmounted the steep ascent, and entered under the broken arches of the ruins, than a pistol was presented at his head, and a harsh voice commanded him, in the king's name, to surrender himself prisoner. "Mr Sharpitlaw!" said Ratcliffe, surprised, "is this your honour?"

"Is it only you, and be d—d to you?" answered the fiscal, still more disappointed—"what made you leave the woman?"

"She told me she saw Robertson go into the ruins, so I made what haste I could to cleek the callant."

"It's all over now," said Sharpitlaw; "we shall see no more of him to-night; but he shall hide himself in a bean-hool, if he remains on Scottish ground without my finding him. Call back the people, Ratcliffe."

Ratcliffe hollowed to the dispersed officers, who willingly obeyed the signal; for probably there was no individual among them who would have been much desirous of a rencontre hand to hand, and at a distance from his comrades, with such an active and desperate fellow as Robertson.

"And where are the two women?" said Sharpitlaw.

"Both made their heels serve them, I suspect," replied Ratcliffe, and he hummed the end of the old song—

> "Then hey play up the rin-awa bride,
> For she has taen the gee."

"One woman," said Sharpitlaw,—for, like all rogues, he was a great calumniator of the fair sex,[1]—"one woman is enough to dark the fairest ploy that ever was planned; and how could I be such an ass as to expect to carry through a job that had two in it? But we know how to come by them both, if they are wanted, that's one good thing."

Accordingly, like a defeated general, sad and sulky, he led back his discomfited forces to the metropolis, and dismissed them for the night.

The next morning early, he was under the necessity of making his report to the sitting magistrate of the day. The gentleman who occupied the chair of office on this occasion (for the bailies, *Anglicé*, aldermen, take it by rotation) chanced to be the same by whom Butler was committed, a person very generally respected among his fellow-citizens. Something he was of a humorist, and rather deficient in general education; but acute, patient, and upright, possessed of a fortune acquired by honest industry, which made him perfectly independent; and, in short, very happily qualified to support the respectability of the office which he held.

Mr Middleburgh had just taken his seat, and was debating in an animated manner, with one of his colleagues, the doubtful chances of a game at golf which they had played the day before, when a letter was delivered to him, addressed "For Bailie Middleburgh; These: to be forwarded with speed." It contained these words:—

"Sir,

"I know you to be a sensible and a considerate magistrate, and one who, as such, will be content to worship God, though the devil bid you. I therefore expect that, notwithstanding the signature of this letter acknowledges my share in an action, which, in a proper time and place, I would not fear either to avow or to justify, you will not on that account reject what evidence I place before you. The clergyman, Butler, is innocent of all but involuntary presence at an action which he wanted spirit to approve of, and from which he endeavoured, with his best set phrases, to dissuade us. But it was not for him that it is my hint to speak. There is a woman in your jail, fallen under the edge of a law so cruel, that it has hung by the wall, like unscoured armour, for twenty years, and is now brought down and whetted to spill the blood of the most beautiful and most innocent creature whom the walls of a prison ever girdled in. Her sister knows of her innocence, as she communicated to her that she was betrayed by a villain.—O that high Heaven

> 'Would put in every honest hand a whip,
> To scourge me such a villain through the world!'

"I write distractedly—But this girl—this Jeanie Deans, is a peevish puritan, superstitious and scrupulous after the manner of her sect; and I pray your honour, for so my phrase must go, to press upon her, that her sister's life depends upon her testimony. But though she should reman silent, do not dare to think that the young woman is guilty—far less to permit her execution. Remember the death of Wilson was fearfully avenged; and those yet live who can compel you to drink the dregs of your poisoned chalice.—I say, remember Porteous,—and say that you had good counsel from "One of his Slayers."

The magistrate read over this extraordinary letter twice or thrice. At first he was tempted to throw it aside as the production of a madman, so little did "the scraps from play-books," as he termed the poetical quotation, resemble the correspondence of a rational being. On a re-perusal, however, he thought that, amid its incoherence, he could discover something like a tone of awakened passion, though expressed in a manner quaint and unusual.

"It is a cruelly severe statute," said the magis-

[1] See Note P. *Calumniator of the Fair Sex.*

trate to his assistant, "and I wish the girl could be taken from under the letter of it. A child may have been born, and it may have been conveyed away while the mother was insensible, or it may have perished for want of that relief which the poor creature herself—helpless, terrified, distracted, despairing, and exhausted — may have been unable to afford to it. And yet it is certain, if the woman is found guilty under the statute, execution will follow. The crime has been too common, and examples are necessary."

"But if this other wench," said the city-clerk, "can speak to her sister communicating her situation, it will take the case from under the statute."

"Very true," replied the Bailie; "and I will walk out one of these days to St Leonard's, and examine the girl myself. I know something of their father Deans — an old true-blue Cameronian, who would see house and family go to wreck ere he would disgrace his testimony by a sinful complying with the defections of the times; and such he will probably uphold the taking an oath before a civil magistrate. If they are to go on and flourish with their bull-headed obstinacy, the legislature must pass an act to take their affirmations, as in the case of Quakers. But surely neither a father nor a sister will scruple in a case of this kind. As I said before, I will go speak with them myself, when the hurry of this Porteous investigation is somewhat over; their pride and spirit of contradiction will be far less alarmed, than if they were called into a court of justice at once."

"And I suppose Butler is to remain incarcerated?" said the city-clerk.

"For the present, certainly," said the magistrate, "But I hope soon to set him at liberty upon bail."

"Do you rest upon the testimony of that light-headed letter?" asked the clerk.

"Not very much," answered the Bailie; "and yet there is something striking about it too — it seems the letter of a man beside himself, either from great agitation, or some great sense of guilt."

"Yes," said the town-clerk, "it is very like the letter of a mad strolling play-actor, who deserves to be hanged with all the rest of his gang, as your honour justly observes."

"I was not quite so bloodthirsty," continued the magistrate. "But to the point. Butler's private character is excellent; and I am given to understand, by some inquiries I have been making this morning, that he did actually arrive in town only the day before yesterday, so that it was impossible he could have been concerned in any previous machinations of these unhappy rioters, and it is not likely that he should have joined them on a suddenty."

"There's no saying anent that — zeal catches fire at a slight spark as fast as a brunstane match," observed the secretary. "I hae kend a minister wad be fair gude-day and fair gude-e'en wi' ilka man in the parochine, and hing just as quiet as a rocket on a stick, till ye mentioned the word abjuration oath, or patronage, or siclike, and then, whiz, he was off, and up in the air an hundred miles beyond common manners, common sense, and common comprehension."

"I do not understand," answered the burgher-magistrate, "that the young man Butler's zeal is of so inflammable a character. But I will make farther investigation. What other business is there before us?"

And they proceeded to minute investigations concerning the affair of Porteous's death, and other affairs through which this history has no occasion to trace them.

In the course of their business they were interrupted by an old woman of the lower rank, extremely haggard in look, and wretched in her appearance, who thrust herself into the council room.

"What do you want, gudewife? — Who are you?" said Bailie Middleburgh.

"What do I want!" replied she, in a sulky tone — "I want my bairn, or I want naething frae nane o' ye, for as grand 's ye are." And she went on muttering to herself with the wayward spitefulness of age — "They maun hae lordships and honours, nae doubt—set them up, the gutter-bloods! and deil a gentleman amang them." — Then again addressing the sitting magistrate, "Will *your honour* gie me back my puir crazy bairn? — *His* honour! — I hae kend the day when less wad ser'd him, the oe of a Campvere skipper."

"Good woman," said the magistrate to this shrewish supplicant, — "tell us what it is you want, and do not interrupt the court."

"That's as muckle as till say, Bark, Bawtie, and be dune wi't! — I tell ye," raising her termagant voice, "I want my bairn! is na that braid Scots!"

"Who *are* you? — who is your bairn?" demanded the magistrate.

"Wha am I? — wha suld I be, but Meg Murdockson, and wha suld my bairn be but Magdalen Murdockson? — Your guard soldiers, and your constables, and your officers, ken us weel eneugh when they rive the bits o' duds aff our backs, and take what penny o' siller we hae, and harle us to the Correction-house in Leith Wynd, and pettle us up wi' bread and water, and siclike sunkets."

"Who is she?" said the magistrate, looking round to some of his people.

"Other than a gude ane, sir," said one of the city-officers, shrugging his shoulders, and smiling.

"Will ye say sae?" said the termagant, her eye gleaming with impotent fury; "an I had ye amang the Frigate-Whins, wadna I set my ten talents in your wuzzent face for that very word?" and she suited the word to the action, by spreading out a set of claws resembling those of St George's dragon on a country sign-post.

"What does she want here?" said the impatient magistrate — "Can she not tell her business, or go away?"

"It's my bairn! — it's Magdalen Murdockson I 'm wantin'," answered the beldame, screaming at the highest pitch of her cracked and mistuned voice — "havena I been tellin' ye sae this half-hour? And if ye are deaf, what needs ye sit cockit up there, and keep folk scraughin' t 'ye this gate?"

"She wants her daughter, sir," said the same officer whose interference had given the hag such offence before — "her daughter, who was taken up last night — Madge Wildfire, as they ca' her."

"Madge HELLFIRE, as they ca' her!" echoed the beldame; "and what business has a blackguard like you to ca' an honest woman's bairn out o' her ain name?"

"An *honest* woman's bairn, Maggie?" answered the peace-officer, smiling and shaking his head with

an ironical emphasis on the adjective, and a calmness calculated to provoke to madness the furious old shrew.

"If I am no honest now, I was honest ance," she replied; "and that's mair than ye can say, ye born and bred thief, that never kend ither folk's gear fra your ain since the day ye was cleckit. Honest, say ye?—ye pykit your mother's pouch o' twalpennies Scots when ye were five years auld, just as she was taking leave o' your father at the fit o' the gallows."

"She has you there, George," said the assistants, and there was a general laugh; for the wit was fitted for the meridian of the place where it was uttered. This general applause somewhat gratified the passions of the old hag; the "grim feature" smiled, and even laughed—but it was a laugh of bitter scorn. She condescended, however, as if appeased by the success of her sally, to explain her business more distinctly, when the magistrate, commanding silence, again desired her either to speak out her errand, or to leave the place.

"Her bairn," she said, "*was* her bairn, and she came to fetch her out of ill haft and waur guiding. If she wasna sae wise as ither folk, few ither folk had suffered as muckle as she had done; forby that she could fend the waur for hersell within the four wa's of a jail. She could prove by fifty witnesses, and fifty to that, that her daughter had never seen Jock Porteous, alive or dead, since he had gien her a loundering wi' his cane, the neger that he was! for driving a dead cat at the provost's wig on the Elector of Hanover's birth-day."

Notwithstanding the wretched appearance and violent demeanour of this woman, the magistrate felt the justice of her argument, that her child might be as dear to her as to a more fortunate and more amiable mother. He proceeded to investigate the circumstances which had led to Madge Murdockson's (or Wildfire's) arrest, and as it was clearly shewn that she had not been engaged in the riot, he contented himself with directing that an eye should be kept upon her by the police, but that for the present she should be allowed to return home with her mother. During the interval of fetching Madge from the jail, the magistrate endeavoured to discover whether her mother had been privy to the change of dress betwixt that young woman and Robertson. But on this point he could obtain no light. She persisted in declaring, that she had never seen Robertson since his remarkable escape during service-time; and that, if her daughter had changed clothes with him, it must have been during her absence at a hamlet about two miles out of town, called Duddingstone, where she could prove that she passed that eventful night. And, in fact, one of the town-officers, who had been searching for stolen linen at the cottage of a washerwoman in that village, gave his evidence, that he had seen Maggie Murdockson there, whose presence had considerably increased his suspicion of the house in which she was a visiter, in respect that he considered her as a person of no good reputation.

"I tauld ye sae," said the hag; "see now what it is to hae a character, gude or bad!—Now, maybe, after a', I could tell ye something about Porteous that you council-chamber bodies never could find out, for as muckle stir as ye mak."

All eyes were turned towards her—all ears were alert. "Speak out!" said the magistrate.

"It will be for your ain gude," insinuated the town-clerk.

"Dinna keep the Bailie waiting," urged the assistants.

She remained doggedly silent for two or three minutes, casting around a malignant and sulky glance, that seemed to enjoy the anxious suspense with which they waited her answer. And then she broke forth at once,—"A' that I ken about him is, that he was neither soldier nor gentleman, but just a thief and a blackguard, like maist o' yoursells, dears—What will ye gie me for that news, now?—He wad hae served the gude town lang or provost or bailie wad hae fund that out, my jo!"

While these matters were in discussion, Madge Wildfire entered, and her first exclamation was, "Eh! see if there isna our auld ne'er-do-weel deevil's-buckie o' a mither—Hegh, sirs! but we are a hopefu' family, to be twa o' us in the Guard at ance—But there were better days wi' us ance—were there na, mither?"

Old Maggie's eyes had glistened with something like an expression of pleasure when she saw her daughter set at liberty. But either her natural affection, like that of the tigress, could not be displayed without a strain of ferocity, or there was something in the ideas which Madge's speech awakened, that again stirred her cross and savage temper. "What signifies what we were, ye street-raking limmer!" she exclaimed, pushing her daughter before her to the door, with no gentle degree of violence. "I'se tell thee what thou is now—thou 's a crazed hellicat Bess o' Bedlam, that sall taste naething but bread and water for a fortnight, to serve ye for the plague ye hae gien me—and ower gude for ye, ye idle taupie!"

Madge, however, escaped from her mother at the door, ran back to the foot of the table, dropped a very low and fantastic curtsey to the judge, and said, with a giggling laugh,—"Our minnie's sair mis-set, after her ordinar, sir—She 'll hae had some quarrel wi' her auld gudeman—that's Satan, ye ken, sirs." This explanatory note she gave in a low confidential tone, and the spectators of that credulous generation did not hear it without an involuntary shudder. "The gudeman and her disna aye gree weel, and then I maun pay the piper; but my back's broad eneugh to bear't a'—an' if she hae nae havings, that's nae reason why wiser folk shouldna hae some." Here another deep curtsey, when the ungracious voice of her mother was heard.

"Madge, ye limmer! If I come to fetch ye!"

"Hear till her," said Madge. "But I 'll wun out a gliff the night for a' that, to dance in the moonlight, when her and the gudeman will be whirrying through the blue lift on a broom-shank, to see Jean Jap, that they hae putten intill the Kirkcaldy tolbooth—ay, they will hae a merry sail ower Inchkeith, and ower a' the bits o' bonny waves that are poppling and plashing against the rocks in the gowden glimmer o' the moon, ye ken.—I 'm coming, mother—I 'm coming," she concluded, on hearing a scuffle at the door betwixt the beldam and the officers, who were endeavouring to prevent her re-entrance. Madge then waved her hand wildly towards the ceiling, and sung, at the topmost pitch of her voice,—

> "Up in the air,
> On my bonny grey mare,
> And I see, and I see, and I see her yet."

And with a hop, skip, and jump, sprung out of the room, as the witches of Macbeth used, in less refined days, to seem to fly upwards from the stage.

Some weeks intervened before Mr Middleburgh, agreeably to his benevolent resolution, found an opportunity of taking a walk towards St Leonard's, in order to discover whether it might be possible to obtain the evidence hinted at in the anonymous letter respecting Effie Deans.

In fact, the anxious perquisitions made to discover the murderers of Porteous occupied the attention of all concerned with the administration of justice.

In the course of these inquiries, two circumstances happened material to our story. Butler, after a close investigation of his conduct, was declared innocent of accession to the death of Porteous; but, as having been present during the whole transaction, was obliged to find bail not to quit his usual residence at Libberton, that he might appear as a witness when called upon. The other incident regarded the disappearance of Madge Wildfire and her mother from Edinburgh. When they were sought, with the purpose of subjecting them to some farther interrogatories, it was discovered by Mr Sharpitlaw that they had eluded the observation of the police, and left the city so soon as dismissed from the council-chamber. No efforts could trace the place of their retreat.

In the meanwhile the excessive indignation of the Council of Regency, at the slight put upon their authority by the murder of Porteous, had dictated measures, in which their own extreme desire of detecting the actors in that conspiracy were consulted, in preference to the temper of the people and the character of their churchmen. An act of parliament was hastily passed, offering two hundred pounds reward to those who should inform against any person concerned in the deed, and the penalty of death, by a very unusual and severe enactment, was denounced against those who should harbour the guilty. But what was chiefly accounted exceptionable, was a clause, appointing the act to be read in churches by the officiating clergyman, on the first Sunday of every month, for a certain period, immediately before the sermon. The ministers who should refuse to comply with this injunction were declared, for the first offence, incapable of sitting or voting in any church judicature, and for the second, incapable of holding any ecclesiastical preferment in Scotland.

This last order united in a common cause those who might privately rejoice in Porteous's death, though they dared not vindicate the manner of it, with the more scrupulous presbyterians, who held that even the pronouncing the name of the "Lords Spiritual" in a Scottish pulpit was, *quodammodo*, an acknowledgment of prelacy, and that the injunction of the legislature was an interference of the civil government with the *jus divinum* of presbytery, since to the General Assembly alone, as representing the invisible head of the kirk, belonged the sole and exclusive right of regulating whatever pertained to public worship. Very many also, of different political or religious sentiments, and therefore not much moved by these considerations, thought they saw, in so violent an act of parliament, a more vindictive spirit than became the legislature of a great country, and something like an attempt to trample upon the rights and independence of Scotland. The various steps adopted for punishing the city of Edinburgh, by taking away her charter and liberties, for what a violent and overmastering mob had done within her walls, were resented by many, who thought a pretext was too hastily taken for degrading the ancient metropolis of Scotland. In short, there was much heart-burning, discontent, and disaffection, occasioned by these ill-considered measures.[1]

Amidst these heats and dissentions, the trial of Effie Deans, after she had been many weeks imprisoned, was at length about to be brought forward, and Mr Middleburgh found leisure to inquire into the evidence concerning her. For this purpose, he chose a fine day for his walk towards her father's house.

The excursion into the country was somewhat distant, in the opinion of a burgess of those days, although many of the present inhabit suburban villas considerably beyond the spot to which we allude. Three quarters of an hour's walk, however, even at a pace of magisterial gravity, conducted our benevolent office-bearer to the Crags of St Leonard's, and the humble mansion of David Deans.

The old man was seated on the deas, or turf-seat, at the end of his cottage, busied in mending his cart-harness with his own hands; for in those days any sort of labour which required a little more skill than usual fell to the share of the goodman himself, and that even when he was well to pass in the world. With stern and austere gravity he persevered in his task, after having just raised his head to notice the advance of the stranger. It would have been impossible to have discovered, from his countenance and manner, the internal feelings of agony with which he contended. Mr Middleburgh waited an instant, expecting Deans would in some measure acknowledge his presence, and lead into conversation; but, as he seemed determined to remain silent, he was himself obliged to speak first.

"My name is Middleburgh — Mr James Middleburgh, one of the present magistrates of the city of Edinburgh."

"It may be sae," answered Deans laconically, and without interrupting his labour.

"You must understand," he continued, "that the duty of a magistrate is sometimes an unpleasant one."

"It may be sae," replied David; "I hae naething to say in the contrair;" and he was again doggedly silent.

"You must be aware," pursued the magistrate, "that persons in my situation are often obliged to make painful and disagreeable inquiries of individuals, merely because it is their bounden duty."

"It may be sae," again replied Deans; "I hae naething to say anent it, either the tae way or the t'other. But I do ken there was ance in a day a just and God-fearing magistracy in yon town o' Edinburgh, that did not bear the sword in vain, but were a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to such as kept the path. In the glorious days of auld worthy faithfu' Provost Dick,[2] when there was a true and faithfu' General Assembly of the Kirk, walking hand in hand with the real noble Scottish-hearted barons, and with the magistrates of this and other towns, gentles, burgesses, and commons

[1] See Note Q. *Edinburgh Magistrates.*
[2] See Note R. *Sir William Dick of Braid.*

of all ranks, seeing with one eye, hearing with one ear, and upholding the ark with their united strength — And then folk might see men deliver up their silver to the state's use, as if it had been as muckle sclate stanes. My father saw them toom the sacks of dollars out o' Provost Dick's window intill the carts that carried them to the army at Dunse Law; and if ye winna believe his testimony, there is the window itsell still standing in the Luckenbooths — I think it 's a claith-merchant's booth the day[1] — at the airn stanchells, five doors abune Gossford's Close. — But now we haena sic spirit amang us; we think mair about the warst wally-draigle in our ain byre, than about the blessing which the angel of the covenant gave to the Patriarch even at Peniel and Mahanaim, or the binding obligation of our national vows; and we wad rather gie a pund Scots to buy an unguent to clear our auld rannell-trees and our beds o' the English bugs as they ca' them, than we wad gie a plack to rid the land of the swarm of Arminian caterpillars, Socinian pismires, and deistical Miss Katies, that have ascended out of the bottomless pit, to plague this perverse, insidious, and lukewarm generation."

It happened to Davie Deans on this occasion, as it has done to many other habitual orators; when once he became embarked on his favourite subject, the stream of his own enthusiasm carried him forward in spite of his mental distress, while his well-exercised memory supplied him amply with all the types and tropes of rhetoric peculiar to his sect and cause.

Mr Middleburgh contented himself with answering — "All this may be very true, my friend; but, as you said just now, I have nothing to say to it at present, either one way or other. — You have two daughters, I think, Mr Deans?"

The old man winced, as one whose smarting sore is suddenly galled; but instantly composed himself, resumed the work which, in the heat of his declamation, he had laid down, and answered with sullen resolution, "Ae daughter, sir — only *ane*."

"I understand you," said Mr Middleburgh; "you have only one daughter here at home with you — but this unfortunate girl who is a prisoner — she is, I think, your youngest daughter?"

The presbyterian sternly raised his eyes. "After the world, and according to the flesh, she *is* my daughter; but when she became a child of Belial, and a company-keeper, and a trader in guilt and iniquity, she ceased to be a bairn of mine."

"Alas, Mr Deans," said Middleburgh, sitting down by him, and endeavouring to take his hand, which the old man proudly withdrew, "we are ourselves all sinners; and the errors of our offspring, as they ought not to surprise us, being the portion which they derive of a common portion of corruption inherited through us, so they do not entitle us to cast them off because they have lost themselves."

"Sir," said Deans, impatiently, "I ken a' that as weel as — I mean to say," he resumed, checking the irritation he felt at being schooled, — a discipline of the mind, which those most ready to bestow it on others, do themselves most reluctantly submit to receive — "I mean to say, that what ye observe may be just and reasonable — But I hae nae freedom to enter into my ain private affairs wi' strangers — And now, in this great national emergency, when there 's the Porteous' Act has come doun frae London, that is a deeper blow to this poor sinfu' kingdom and suffering kirk, than ony that has been heard of since the foul and fatal Test — at a time like this——"

"But, goodman," interrupted Mr Middleburgh, "you must think of your own household first, or else you are worse even than the infidels."

"I tell ye, Bailie Middleburgh," retorted David Deans, "if ye be a bailie, as there is little honour in being ane in these evil days — I tell ye, I heard the gracious Saunders Peden — I wotna whan it was; but it was in killing time, when the plowers were drawing alang their furrows on the back of the Kirk of Scotland — I heard him tell his hearers, gude and waled Christians they were too, that some o' them wad greet mair for a bit drowned calf or stirk, than for a' the defections and oppressions of the day; and that they were some o' them thinking o' ae thing, some o' anither, and there was Lady Hundleslope thinking o' greeting Jock at the fireside! And the lady confessed in my hearing, that a drow of anxiety had come ower her for her son that she had left at hame weak of a decay[2] — And what wad he hae said of me, if I had ceased to think of the gude cause for a cast-away — a — It kills me to think of what she is!"——

"But the life of your child, goodman — think of that — if her life could be saved," said Middleburgh.

"Her life!" exclaimed David — "I wadna gie ane o' my grey hairs for her life, if her gude name be gane — And yet," said he, relenting and retracting as he spoke, "I wad make the niffer, Mr Middleburgh — I wad gie a' these grey hairs that she has brought to shame and sorrow — I wad gie the auld head they grow on for her life, and that she might hae time to amend and return, for what hae the wicked beyond the breath of their nosthrils? — But I 'll never see her mair. — No! — that — that I am determined in — I 'll never see her mair!" His lips continued to move for a minute after his voice ceased to be heard, as if he were repeating the same vow internally.

"Well, sir," said Mr Middleburgh, "I speak to you as a man of sense; if you would save your daughter's life, you must use human means."

"I understand what you mean; but Mr Novit, who is the procurator and doer of an honourable person, the Laird of Dumbiedikes, is to do what carnal wisdom can do for her in the circumstances. Mysell am not clear to trinquet and traffic wi' courts o' justice, as they are now constituted; I have a tenderness and scruple in my mind anent them."

"That is to say," said Middleburgh, "that you are a Cameronian, and do not acknowledge the authority of our courts of judicature, or present government?"

"Sir, under your favour," replied David, who was too proud of his own polemical knowledge, to call himself the follower of any one, "ye take me up before I fall down. I canna see why I suld be termed a Cameronian, especially now that ye hae given the name of that famous and savoury sufferer, not only until a regimental band of souldiers, whereof

[1] I think so too — But if the reader be curious, he may consult Mr Chambers's Traditions of Edinburgh.

[2] See Life of Peden, p. 111.

I am told many can now curse, swear, and use profane language, as fast as ever Richard Cameron could preach or pray; but also because ye have, in as far as it is in your power, rendered that martyr's name vain and contemptible, by pipes, drums, and fifes, playing the vain carnal spring, called the Cameronian Rant, which too many professors of religion dance to — a practice maist unbecoming a professor to dance to any tune whatsoever, more especially promiscuously, that is, with the female sex.[1] A brutish fashion it is, whilk is the beginning of defection with many, as I may hae as muckle cause as maist folk to testify."

"Well, but, Mr Deans," replied Mr Middleburgh, "I only meant to say that you were a Cameronian, or MacMillanite, one of the society people, in short, who think it inconsistent to take oaths under a government where the Covenant is not ratified."

"Sir," replied the controversialist, who forgot even his present distress in such discussions as these, "you cannot fickle me sae easily as you do opine. I am *not* a MacMillanite, or a Russelite, or a Hamiltonian, or a Harleyite, or a Howdenite[2] — I will be led by the nose by none — I take my name as a Christian from no vessel of clay. I have my own principles and practice to answer for, and am an humble pleader for the gude auld cause in a legal way."

"That is to say, Mr Deans," said Middleburgh, "that you are a *Deanite*, and have opinions peculiar to yourself."

"It may please you to say sae," said David Deans; "but I have maintained my testimony before as great folk, and in sharper times; and though I will neither exalt myself nor pull down others, I wish every man and woman in this land had kept the true testimony, and the middle and straight path, as it were, on the ridge of a hill, where wind and water shears, avoiding right-hand snares and extremes, and left-hand way-slidings, as weel as Johnny Dodds of Farthing's Acre, and ae man mair that shall be nameless."

"I suppose," replied the magistrate, "that is as much as to say, that Johnny Dodds of Farthing's Acre, and David Deans of St Leonard's, constitute the only members of the true, real, unsophisticated Kirk of Scotland?"

"God forbid that I suld make sic a vain-glorious speech, when there are sae mony professing Christians!" answered David; "but this I maun say, that all men act according to their gifts and their grace, sae that it is nae marvel that——"

"This is all very fine," interrupted Mr Middleburgh; "but I have no time to spend in hearing it. The matter in hand is this — I have directed a citation to be lodged in your daughter's hands — If she appears on the day of trial and gives evidence, there is reason to hope she may save her sister's life — if, from any constrained scruples about the legality of her performing the office of an affectionate sister and a good subject, by appearing in a court held under the authority of the law and government, you become the means of deterring her from the discharge of this duty, I must say, though the truth may sound harsh in your ears, that you, who gave life to this unhappy girl, will become the means of her losing it by a premature and violent death."

So saying, Mr Middleburgh turned to leave him.

"Bide awee — bide awee, Mr Middleburgh," said Deans, in great perplexity and distress of mind; but the Bailie, who was probably sensible that protracted discussion might diminish the effect of his best and most forcible argument, took a hasty leave, and declined entering farther into the controversy.

Deans sunk down upon his seat, stunned with a variety of conflicting emotions. It had been a great source of controversy among those holding his opinions in religious matters, how far the government which succeeded the Revolution could be, without sin, acknowledged by true presbyterians, seeing that it did not recognize the great national testimony of the Solemn League and Covenant? And latterly, those agreeing in this general doctrine, and assuming the sounding title of the anti-popish, anti-prelatic, anti-erastian, anti-sectarian, true presbyterian remnant, were divided into many petty sects among themselves, even as to the extent of submission to the existing laws and rulers, which constituted such an acknowledgment as amounted to sin.

At a very stormy and tumultuous meeting, held in 1682, to discuss these important and delicate points, the testimonies of the faithful few were found utterly inconsistent with each other.[3] The place where this conference took place was remarkably well adapted for such an assembly. It was a wild and very sequestered dell in Tweeddale, surrounded by high hills, and far remote from human habitation. A small river, or rather a mountain torrent, called the Talla, breaks down the glen with great fury, dashing successively over a number of small cascades, which has procured the spot the name of Talla-Linns. Here the leaders among the scattered adherents to the Covenant, men who, in their banishment from human society, and in the recollection of the severities to which they had been exposed, had become at once sullen in their tempers, and fantastic in their religious opinions, met with arms in their hands, and by the side of the torrent discussed, with a turbulence which the noise of the stream could not drown, points of controversy as empty and unsubstantial as its foam.

It was the fixed judgment of most of the meeting, that all payment of cess or tribute to the existing government was utterly unlawful, and a sacrificing to idols. About other impositions and degrees of submission there were various opinions; and perhaps it is the best illustration of the spirit of those military fathers of the church to say, that while all allowed it was impious to pay the cess employed for maintaining the standing army and militia, there was a fierce controversy on the lawfulness of paying the duties levied at ports and bridges, for maintaining roads and other necessary purposes; that there were some who, repugnant to these imposts for turnpikes and pontages, were nevertheless free in conscience to make payment of the usual freight at public ferries, and that a person of exceeding and punctilious zeal, James Russel, one of the slayers of the Archbishop

[1] See Note I. *Peter Walker.*

[2] All various species of the great genus Cameronian.

[3] See Note S. *Meeting at Talla-Linns.*

of St Andrews, had given his testimony with great warmth even against this last faint shade of subjection to constituted authority. This ardent and enlightened person and his followers had also great scruples about the lawfulness of bestowing the ordinary names upon the days of the week and the months of the year, which savoured in their nostrils so strongly of paganism, that at length they arrived at the conclusion that they who owned such names as Monday, Tuesday, January, February, and so forth, "served themselves heirs to the same, if not greater punishment, than had been denounced against the idolaters of old."

David Deans had been present on this memorable occasion, although too young to be a speaker among the polemical combatants. His brain, however, had been thoroughly heated by the noise, clamour, and metaphysical ingenuity of the discussion, and it was a controversy to which his mind had often returned; and though he carefully disguised his vacillation from others, and perhaps from himself, he had never been able to come to any precise line of decision on the subject. In fact, his natural sense had acted as a counterpoise to his controversial zeal. He was by no means pleased with the quiet and indifferent manner in which King William's government slurred over the errors of the times, when, far from restoring the presbyterian kirk to its former supremacy, they passed an act of oblivion even to those who had been its persecutors, and bestowed on many of them titles, favours, and employments. When, in the first General Assembly which succeeded the Revolution, an overture was made for the revival of the League and Covenant, it was with horror that Douce David heard the proposal eluded by the men of carnal wit and policy, as he called them, as being inapplicable to the present times, and not falling under the modern model of the church. The reign of Queen Anne had increased his conviction, that the Revolution government was not one of the true presbyterian complexion. But then, more sensible than the bigots of his sect, he did not confound the moderation and tolerance of these two reigns with the active tyranny and oppression exercised in those of Charles II. and James II. The presbyterian form of religion, though deprived of the weight formerly attached to its sentences of excommunication, and compelled to tolerate the co-existence of episcopacy, and of sects of various descriptions, was still the National Church; and though the glory of the second temple was far inferior to that which had flourished from 1639 till the battle of Dunbar, still it was a structure that, wanting the strength and the terrors, retained at least the form and symmetry, of the original model. Then came the insurrection in 1715, and David Deans's horror for the revival of the popish and prelatical faction reconciled him greatly to the government of King George, although he grieved that that monarch might be suspected of a leaning unto Erastianism. In short, moved by so many different considerations, he had shifted his ground at different times concerning the degree of freedom which he felt in adopting any act of immediate acknowledgment or submission to the present government, which, however mild and paternal, was still uncovenanted; and now he felt himself called upon by the most powerful motive conceivable, to authorize his daughter's giving testimony in a court of justice, which all who have been since called Cameronians accounted a step of lamentable and direct defection. The voice of nature, however, exclaimed loud in his bosom against the dictates of fanaticism; and his imagination, fertile in the solution of polemical difficulties, devised an expedient for extricating himself from the fearful dilemma, in which he saw, on the one side, a falling off from principle, and, on the other, a scene from which a father's thoughts could not but turn in shuddering horror.

"I have been constant and unchanged in my testimony," said David Deans; "but then who has said it of me, that I have judged my neighbour over closely, because he hath had more freedom in his walk than I have found in mine? I never was a separatist, nor for quarreling with tender souls about mint, cummin, or other the lesser tithes. My daughter Jean may have a light in this subject that is hid frae my auld een — it is laid on her conscience, and not on mine — If she hath freedom to gang before this judicatory, and hold up her hand for this poor cast-away, surely I will not say she steppeth over her bounds; and if not"—— He paused in his mental argument, while a pang of unutterable anguish convulsed his features, yet, shaking it off, he firmly resumed the strain of his reasoning — "And IF NOT — God forbid that she should go into defection at bidding of mine! I wunna fret the tender conscience of one bairn — no, not to save the life of the other."

A Roman would have devoted his daughter to death from different feelings and motives, but not upon a more heroic principle of duty.

CHAPTER XIX.

> To man, in this his trial state,
> The privilege is given,
> When tost by tides of human fate,
> To anchor fast on heaven.
>
> WATTS' *Hymns.*

IT was with a firm step that Deans sought his daughter's apartment, determined to leave her to the light of her own conscience in the dubious point of casuistry in which he supposed her to be placed.

The little room had been the sleeping apartment of both sisters, and there still stood there a small occasional bed which had been made for Effie's accommodation, when, complaining of illness, she had declined to share, as in happier times, her sister's pillow. The eyes of Deans rested involuntarily, on entering the room, upon this little couch, with its dark-green coarse curtains, and the ideas connected with it rose so thick upon his soul as almost to incapacitate him from opening his errand to his daughter. Her occupation broke the ice. He found her gazing on a slip of paper, which contained a citation to her to appear as a witness upon her sister's trial in behalf of the accused. For the worthy magistrate, determined to omit no chance of doing Effie justice, and to leave her sister no apology for not giving the evidence which she was supposed to possess, had caused the ordinary citation, or *subpœna*, of the Scottish criminal court, to be served upon her by an officer during his conference with David.

This precaution was so far favourable to Deans, that it saved him the pain of entering upon a formal explanation with his daughter; he only said, with a hollow and tremulous voice, "I perceive ye are aware of the matter."

"O father, we are cruelly sted between God's laws and man's laws—What shall we do?—What can we do?"

Jeanie, it must be observed, had no hesitation whatever about the mere act of appearing in a court of justice. She might have heard the point discussed by her father more than once; but we have already noticed, that she was accustomed to listen with reverence to much which she was incapable of understanding, and that subtle arguments of casuistry found her a patient, but unedified hearer. Upon receiving the citation, therefore, her thoughts did not turn upon the chimerical scruples which alarmed her father's mind, but to the language which had been held to her by the stranger at Muschat's Cairn. In a word, she never doubted but she was to be dragged forward into the court of justice, in order to place her in the cruel position of either sacrificing her sister by telling the truth, or committing perjury in order to save her life. And so strongly did her thoughts run in this channel, that she applied her father's words, "Ye are aware of the matter," to his acquaintance with the advice that had been so fearfully enforced upon her. She looked up with anxious surprise, not unmingled with a cast of horror, which his next words, as she interpreted and applied them, were not qualified to remove.

"Daughter," said David, "it has ever been my mind, that in things of ane doubtful and controversial nature, ilk Christian's conscience suld be his ain guide—Wherefore descend into yourself, try your ain mind with sufficiency of soul exercise, and as you sall finally find yourself clear to do in this matter—even so be it."

"But, father," said Jeanie, whose mind revolted at the construction which she naturally put upon his language, "can this—THIS be a doubtful or controversial matter?—Mind, father, the ninth command—'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.'"

David Deans paused; for, still applying her speech to his preconceived difficulties, it seemed to him as if *she*, a woman, and a sister, was scarce entitled to be scrupulous upon this occasion, where *he*, a man, exercised in the testimonies of that testifying period, had given indirect countenance to her following what must have been the natural dictates of her own feelings. But he kept firm his purpose, until his eyes involuntarily rested upon the little settle-bed, and recalled the form of the child of his old age, as she sate upon it, pale, emaciated, and broken-hearted. His mind, as the picture arose before him, involuntarily conceived, and his tongue involuntarily uttered—but in a tone how different from his usual dogmatical precision!—arguments for the course of conduct likely to ensure his child's safety.

"Daughter," he said, "I did not say that your path was free from stumbling—and, questionless, this act may be in the opinion of some a transgression, since he who beareth witness unlawfully, and against his conscience, doth in some sort bear false witness against his neighbour. Yet in matters of compliance, the guilt lieth not in the compliance sae muckle, as in the mind and conscience of him that doth comply; and, therefore, although my testimony hath not been spared upon public defections, I haena felt freedom to separate mysell from the communion of many who have been clear to hear those ministers who have taken the fatal indulgence because they might get good of them, though I could not."

When David had proceeded thus far, his conscience reproved him, that he might be indirectly undermining the purity of his daughter's faith, and smoothing the way for her falling off from strictness of principle. He, therefore, suddenly stopped, and changed his tone:—"Jeanie, I perceive that our vile affections,—so I call them in respect of doing the will of our Father,—cling too heavily to me in this hour of trying sorrow, to permit me to keep sight of my ain duty, or to airt you to yours. I will speak nae mair anent this overtrying matter.—Jeanie, if ye can, wi' God and gude conscience, speak in favour of this puir unhappy"—(here his voice faltered)—"She is your sister in the flesh—worthless and cast-away as she is, she is the daughter of a saint in heaven, that was a mother to you, Jeanie, in place of your ain—but if ye arena free in conscience to speak for her in the court of judicature, follow your conscience, Jeanie, and let God's will be done." After this adjuration he left the apartment, and his daughter remained in a state of great distress and perplexity.

It would have been no small addition to the sorrows of David Deans, even in this extremity of suffering, had he known that his daughter was applying the casuistical arguments which he had been using, not in the sense of a permission to follow her own opinion on a dubious and disputed point of controversy, but rather as an encouragement to trangress one of those divine commandments which Christians of all sects and denominations unite in holding most sacred.

"Can this be?" said Jeanie, as the door closed on her father—"Can these be his words that I have heard, or has the Enemy taken his voice and features to give weight unto the counsel which causeth to perish?—A sister's life, and a father pointing out how to save it!—O God deliver me!—this is a fearfu' temptation."

Roaming from thought to thought, she at one time imagined her father understood the ninth commandment literally, as prohibiting false witness *against* our neighbour, without extending the denunciation against falsehood uttered *in favour* of the criminal. But her clear and unsophisticated power of discriminating between good and evil, instantly rejected an interpretation so limited, and so unworthy of the Author of the law. She remained in a state of the most agitating terror and uncertainty—afraid to communicate her thoughts freely to her father, lest she should draw forth an opinion with which she could not comply,—wrung with distress on her sister's account, rendered the more acute by reflecting that the means of saving her were in her power, but were such as her conscience prohibited her from using,—tossed, in short, like a vessel in an open roadstead during a storm, and, like that vessel, resting on one only sure cable and anchor,—faith in Providence, and a resolution to discharge her duty.

Butler's affection and strong sense of religion

would have been her principal support in these distressing circumstances, but he was still under restraint, which did not permit him to come to St Leonard's Crags; and her distresses were of a nature, which, with her indifferent habits of scholarship, she found it impossible to express in writing. She was therefore compelled to trust for guidance to her own unassisted sense of what was right or wrong. It was not the least of Jeanie's distresses, that, although she hoped and believed her sister to be innocent, she had not the means of receiving that assurance from her own mouth.

The double-dealing of Ratcliffe in the matter of Robertson had not prevented his being rewarded, as double-dealers frequently have been, with favour and preferment. Sharpitlaw, who found in him something of a kindred genius, had been intercessor in his behalf with the magistrates, and the circumstance of his having voluntarily remained in the prison, when the doors were forced by the mob, would have made it a hard measure to take the life which he had such easy means of saving. He received a full pardon; and soon afterwards, James Ratcliffe, the greatest thief and housebreaker in Scotland, was, upon the faith, perhaps, of an ancient proverb, selected as a person to be intrusted with the custody of other delinquents.

When Ratcliffe was thus placed in a confidential situation, he was repeatedly applied to by the sapient Saddletree and others, who took some interest in the Deans' family, to procure an interview between the sisters; but the magistrates, who were extremely anxious for the apprehension of Robertson, had given strict orders to the contrary, hoping that, by keeping them separate, they might, from the one or the other, extract some information respecting that fugitive. On this subject Jeanie had nothing to tell them. She informed Mr Middleburgh, that she knew nothing of Robertson, except having met him that night by appointment to give her some advice respecting her sister's concern, the purport of which, she said, was betwixt God and her conscience. Of his motions, purposes, or plans, past, present, or future, she knew nothing, and so had nothing to communicate.

Effie was equally silent, though from a different cause. It was in vain that they offered a commutation and alleviation of her punishment, and even a free pardon, if she would confess what she knew of her lover. She answered only with tears; unless, when at times driven into pettish sulkiness by the persecution of the interrogators, she made them abrupt and disrespectful answers.

At length, after her trial had been delayed for many weeks, in hopes she might be induced to speak out on a subject infinitely more interesting to the magistracy than her own guilt or innocence, their patience was worn out, and even Mr Middleburgh finding no ear lent to farther intercession in her behalf, the day was fixed for the trial to proceed.

It was now, and not sooner, that Sharpitlaw, recollecting his promise to Effie Deans, or rather being dinned into compliance by the unceasing remonstrances of Mrs Saddletree, who was his next-door neighbour, and who declared it was heathen cruelty to keep the twa broken-hearted creatures separate, issued the important mandate, permitting them to see each other.

On the evening which preceded the eventful day of trial, Jeanie was permitted to see her sister —an awful interview, and occurring at a most distressing crisis. This, however, formed a part of the bitter cup which she was doomed to drink, to atone for crimes and follies to which she had no accession; and at twelve o'clock noon, being the time appointed for admission to the jail, she went to meet, for the first time for several months, her guilty, erring, and most miserable sister, in that abode of guilt, error, and utter misery.

CHAPTER XX.

> —— Sweet sister, let me live!
> What sin you do to save a brother's life,
> Nature dispenses with the deed so far,
> That it becomes a virtue.
>
> *Measure for Measure.*

Jeanie Deans was admitted into the jail by Ratcliffe. This fellow, as void of shame as of honesty, as he opened the now trebly secured door, asked her, with a leer which made her shudder, "whether she remembered him?"

A half-pronounced and timid "No," was her answer.

"What! not remember moonlight, and Muschat's Cairn, and Rob and Rat?" said he, with the same sneer;—"Your memory needs redding up, my jo."

If Jeanie's distresses had admitted of aggravation, it must have been to find her sister under the charge of such a profligate as this man. He was not, indeed, without something of good to balance so much that was evil in his character and habits. In his misdemeanours he had never been bloodthirsty or cruel; and in his present occupation, he had shewn himself, in a certain degree, accessible to touches of humanity. But these good qualities were unknown to Jeanie, who, remembering the scene at Muschat's Cairn, could scarce find voice to acquaint him, that she had an order from Bailie Middleburgh, permitting her to see her sister.

"I ken that fu' weel, my bonny doo; mair by token, I have a special charge to stay in the ward with you a' the time ye are thegither."

"Must that be sae?" asked Jeanie, with an imploring voice.

"Hout, ay, hinny," replied the turnkey; "and what the waur will you and your tittie be of Jim Ratcliffe hearing what ye hae to say to ilk other? — Deil a word ye 'll say that will gar him ken your kittle sex better than he kens them already; and another thing is, that if ye dinna speak o' breaking the Tolbooth, deil a word will I tell ower, either to do ye good or ill."

Thus saying, Ratcliffe marshalled her the way to the apartment where Effie was confined.

Shame, fear, and grief, had contended for mastery in the poor prisoner's bosom during the whole morning, while she had looked forward to this meeting; but when the door opened, all gave way to a confused and strange feeling that had a tinge of joy in it, as, throwing herself on her sister's neck, she ejaculated, "My dear Jeanie!—my dear Jeanie! it's lang since I hae seen ye." Jeanie returned the embrace with an earnestness that par-

took almost of rapture, but it was only a flitting emotion, like a sunbeam unexpectedly penetrating betwixt the clouds of a tempest, and obscured almost as soon as visible. The sisters walked together to the side of the pallet bed, and sate down side by side, took hold of each other's hands, and looked each other in the face, but without speaking a word. In this posture they remained for a minute, while the gleam of joy gradually faded from their features, and gave way to the most intense expression, first of melancholy, and then of agony, till, throwing themselves again into each other's arms, they, to use the language of Scripture, lifted up their voices and wept bitterly.

Even the hard-hearted turnkey, who had spent his life in scenes calculated to stifle both conscience and feeling, could not witness this scene without a touch of human sympathy. It was shewn in a trifling action, but which had more delicacy in it than seemed to belong to Ratcliffe's character and station. The unglazed window of the miserable chamber was open, and the beams of a bright sun fell right upon the bed where the sufferers were seated. With a gentleness that had something of reverence in it, Ratcliffe partly closed the shutter, and seemed thus to throw a veil over a scene so sorrowful.

"Ye are ill, Effie," were the first words Jeanie could utter; "ye are very ill."

"O, what wad I gie to be ten times waur, Jeanie!" was the reply — "what wad I gie to be cauld dead afore the ten o'clock bell the morn! And our father — but I am his bairn nae langer now — O, I hae nae friend left in the warld! — O, that I were lying dead at my mother's side, in Newbattle kirkyard!"

"Hout, lassie," said Ratcliffe, willing to shew the interest which he absolutely felt, "dinna be sae dooms doon-hearted as a' that; there 's mony a tod hunted that 's no killed. Advocate Langtale has brought folk through waur snappers than a' this, and there 's no a cleverer agent than Nichil Novit e'er drew a bill of suspension. Hanged or unhanged, they are weel aff has sic an agent and counsel; ane 's sure o' fair play. Ye are a bonny lass, too, an ye wad busk up your cockernonie a bit; and a bonny lass will find favour wi' judge and jury, when they would strap up a grewsome carle like me for the fifteenth part of a flea's hide and tallow, d — n them."

To this homely strain of consolation the mourners returned no answer; indeed, they were so much lost in their own sorrows as to have become insensible of Ratcliffe's presence. "O Effie," said her elder sister, "how could you conceal your situation from me? O woman, had I deserved this at your hand? — had ye spoke but ae word — sorry we might hae been, and shamed we might hae been, but this awfu' dispensation had never come ower us."

"And what gude wad that hae dune?" answered the prisoner. "Na, na, Jeanie, a' was ower when ance I forgot what I promised when I faulded down the leaf of my Bible. See," she said, producing the sacred volume, "the book opens aye at the place o' itsell. O see, Jeanie, what a fearfu' Scripture!"

Jeanie took her sister's Bible, and found that the fatal mark was made at this impressive text in the book of Job: "He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head He hath destroyed me on every side, and I am gone. And mine hope hath he removed like a tree."

"Isna that ower true a doctrine?" said the prisoner — "Isna my crown, my honour removed? And what am I but a poor wasted, wan-thriven tree, dug up by the roots, and flung out to waste in the highway, that man and beast may tread it under foot? I thought o' the bonny bit thorn that our father rooted out o' the yard last May, when it had a' the flush o' blossoms on it; and then it lay in the court till the beasts had trod them a' to pieces wi' their feet. I little thought, when I was wae for the bit silly green bush and its flowers, that I was to gang the same gate mysell."

"O, if ye had spoken ae word," again sobbed Jeanie, — "if I were free to swear that ye had said but ae word of how it stude wi' ye, they couldna hae touched your life this day."

"Could they na?" said Effie, with something like awakened interest — for life is dear even to those who feel it is a burden — "Wha tauld ye that, Jeanie?"

"It was ane that kend what he was saying weel eneugh," replied Jeanie, who had a natural reluctance at mentioning even the name of her sister's seducer.

"Wha was it? — I conjure you to tell me," said Effie, seating herself upright. — "Wha could tak interest in sic a cast-by as I am now? — Was it — was it *him*?"

"Hout," said Ratcliffe, "what signifies keeping the poor lassie in a swither? I 'se uphaud it 's been Robertson that learned ye that doctrine when ye saw him at Muschat's Cairn."

"Was it him?" said Effie, catching eagerly at his words — "was it him, Jeanie, indeed? — O, I see it was him — poor lad, and I was thinking his heart was as hard as the nether mill-stane — and him in sic danger on his ain part — poor George!"

Somewhat indignant at this burst of tender feeling towards the author of her misery, Jeanie could not help exclaiming — "O Effie, how can ye speak that gate of sic a man as that?"

"We maun forgie our enemies, ye ken," said poor Effie, with a timid look and a subdued voice; for her conscience told her what a different character the feelings with which she still regarded her seducer bore, compared with the Christian charity under which she attempted to veil it.

"And ye hae suffered a' this for him, and ye can think of loving him still?" said her sister, in a voice betwixt pity and blame.

"Love him!" answered Effie — "If I hadna loved as woman seldom loves, I hadna been within these wa's this day; and trow ye, that love sic as mine is lightly forgotten? — Na, na — ye may hew down the tree, but ye canna change its bend — And O Jeanie, if ye wad do good to me at this moment, tell me every word that he said, and whether he was sorry for poor Effie or no!"

"What needs I tell ye ony thing about it?" said Jeanie. "Ye may be sure he had ower muckle to do to save himsell, to speak lang or muckle about ony body beside."

"That 's nc true, Jeanie, though a saunt had said it," replied Effie, with a sparkle of her former lively and irritable temper. "But ye dinna ken, though I do, how far he pat his life in venture to save mine." And looking at Ratcliffe, she checked herself and was silent.

"I fancy," said Ratcliffe, with one of his familiar sneers, "the lassie thinks that naebody has een but hersell — Didna I see when Gentle Geordie was seeking to get other folk out of the Tolbooth forby Jock Porteous? but ye are of my mind, hinny — better sit and rue, than flit and rue — ye needna look in my face sae amazed. I ken mair things than that, maybe."

"O my God! my God!" said Effie, springing up and throwing herself down on her knees before him — "D'ye ken where they hae putten my bairn? — O my bairn! my bairn! the poor sackless innocent new-born wee ane — bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh! — O man, if ye wad e'er deserve a portion in heaven, or a broken-hearted creature's blessing upon earth, tell me where they hae put my bairn — the sign of my shame, and the partner of my suffering! tell me wha has taen 't away, or what they hae dune wi 't!"

"Hout tout," said the turnkey, endeavouring to extricate himself from the firm grasp with which she held him, "that 's taking me at my word wi' a witness — Bairn, quo' she? How the deil suld I ken ony thing of your bairn, huzzy? Ye maun ask that of auld Meg Murdockson, if ye dinna ken ower muckle about it yoursell."

As his answer destroyed the wild and vague hope which had suddenly gleamed upon her, the unhappy prisoner let go her hold of his coat, and fell with her face on the pavement of the apartment in a strong convulsion fit.

Jeanie Deans possessed, with her excellently clear understanding, the concomitant advantage of promptitude of spirit, even in the extremity of distress.

She did not suffer herself to be overcome by her own feelings of exquisite sorrow, but instantly applied herself to her sister's relief, with the readiest remedies which circumstances afforded; and which, to do Ratcliffe justice, he shewed himself anxious to suggest, and alert in procuring. He had even the delicacy to withdraw to the farthest corner of the room, so as to render his official attendance upon them as little intrusive as possible, when Effie was composed enough again to resume her conference with her sister.

The prisoner once more, in the most earnest and broken tones, conjured Jeanie to tell her the particulars of the conference with Robertson, and Jeanie felt it was impossible to refuse her this gratification.

"Do ye mind," she said, "Effie, when ye were in the fever before we left Woodend, and how angry your mother, that 's now in a better place, was wi' me for gieing ye milk and water to drink, because ye grat for it? Ye were a bairn then, and ye are a woman now, and should ken better than ask what canna but hurt you — But come weal or wo, I canna refuse ye ony thing that ye ask me wi' the tear in your ee."

Again Effie threw herself into her arms, and kissed her cheek and forehead, murmuring, "O, if ye kend how lang it is since I heard his name mentioned! — if ye but kend how muckle good it does me but to ken ony thing o' him, that 's like goodness or kindness, ye wadna wonder that I wish to hear o' him!"

Jeanie sighed, and commenced her narrative of all that had passed betwixt Robertson and her, making it as brief as possible. Effie listened in breathless anxiety, holding her sister's hand in hers, and keeping her eye fixed upon her face, as if devouring every word she uttered. The interjections of "Poor fellow," — "Poor George," which escaped in whispers, and betwixt sighs, were the only sounds with which she interrupted the story. When it was finished she made a long pause.

"And this was his advice?" were the first words she uttered.

"Just sic as I hae tell'd ye," replied her sister.

"And he wanted you to say something to yon folks, that wad save my young life?"

"He wanted," answered Jeanie, "that I suld be mansworn."

"And you tauld him," said Effie, "that ye wadna hear o' coming between me and the death that I am to die, and me no aughteen year auld yet?"

"I told him," replied Jeanie, who now trembled at the turn which her sister's reflections seemed about to take, "that I daured na swear to an untruth."

"And what d'ye ca' an untruth?" said Effie, again shewing a touch of her former spirit — "Ye are muckle to blame, lass, if ye think a mother would, or could, murder her ain bairn — Murder! — I wad hae laid down my life just to see a blink o' its ee!"

"I do believe," said Jeanie, "that ye are as innocent of sic a purpose as the new-born babe itsell."

"I am glad ye do me that justice," said Effie, haughtily; "it 's whiles the faut of very good folk like you, Jeanie, that they think a' the rest of the warld are as bad as the warst temptations can make them."

"I dinna deserve this frae ye, Effie," said her sister, sobbing, and feeling at once the injustice of the reproach, and compassion for the state of mind which dictated it.

"Maybe no, sister," said Effie. "But ye are angry because I love Robertson — How can I help loving him, that loves me better than body and soul baith? — Here he put his life in a niffer, to break the prison to let me out; and sure am I, had it stood wi' him as it stands wi' you" — Here she paused and was silent.

"O, if it stude wi' me to save ye wi' risk of *my* life!" said Jeanie.

"Ay, lass," said her sister, "that 's lightly said, but no sae lightly credited, frae ane that winna ware a word for me; and if it be a wrang word, ye 'll hae time eneugh to repent o 't."

"But that word is a grievous sin, and it 's a deeper offence when it 's a sin wilfully and presumptuously committed."

"Weel, weel, Jeanie," said Effie, "I mind a' about the sins o' presumption in the questions — we 'll speak nae mair about this matter, and ye may save your breath to say your carritch; and for me, I 'll soon hae nae breath to waste on ony body."

"I must needs say," interposed Ratcliffe, "that it's d—d hard, when three words of your mouth would give the girl the chance to nick Moll Blood,[1] that you make such scrupling about rapping[2] to them. D—n me, if they would take me, if I would not rap to all whatd'yecallums — Hyssop's Fables, for her life — I am us'd to 't, b — t me, for less matters. Why, I have smacked calf-skin[3] fifty times in England for a keg of brandy."

[1] The gallows. [2] Swearing. [3] Kissed the book.

"Never speak mair o't," said the prisoner. "It's just as weel as it is — and gude-day, sister; ye keep Mr Ratcliffe waiting on — Ye'll come back and see me, I reckon, before" —— here she stopped, and became deadly pale.

"And are we to part in this way," said Jeanie, "and you in sic deadly peril? O, Effie, look but up, and say what ye wad hae me to do, and I could find in my heart amaist to say that I wad do't."

"No, Jeanie," replied her sister, after an effort, "I am better minded now. At my best, I was never half sae gude as ye were, and what for suld you begin to mak yourself waur to save me, now that I am no worth saving? God knows, that in my sober mind, I wadna wuss ony living creature to do a wrang thing to save my life. I might have fled frae this tolbooth on that awfu' night wi' ane wad hae carried me through the warld, and friended me, and fended for me. But I said to them, let life gang when gude fame is gane before it. But this lang imprisonment has broken my spirit, and I am whiles sair left to mysell, and then I wad gie the Indian mines of gold and diamonds, just for life and breath — for I think, Jeanie, I have such roving fits as I used to hae in the fever; but, instead of the fiery een, and wolves, and Widow Butler's bullseg, that I used to see spieling up on my bed, I am thinking now about a high, black gibbet, and me standing up, and such seas of faces all looking up at poor Effie Deans, and asking if it be her that George Robertson used to call the Lily of Saint Leonard's. And then they stretch out their faces, and make mouths, and girn at me, and which ever way I look, I see a face laughing like Meg Murdockson, when she tauld me I had seen the last of my wean. God preserve us, Jeanie, that carline has a fearsome face!" She clapped her hands before her eyes as she uttered this exclamation, as if to secure herself against seeing the fearful object she had alluded to.

Jeanie Deans remained with her sister for two hours, during which she endeavoured, if possible, to extract something from her that might be serviceable in her exculpation. But she had nothing to say beyond what she had declared on her first examination, with the purport of which the reader will be made acquainted in proper time and place. "They wadna believe her," she said, "and she had naething mair to tell them."

At length Ratcliffe, though reluctantly, informed the sisters that there was a necessity that they should part. "Mr Novit," he said, "was to see the prisoner, and maybe Mr Langtale too. Langtale likes to look at a bonny lass, whether in prison or out o' prison."

Reluctantly, therefore, and slowly, after many a tear, and many an embrace, Jeanie retired from the apartment, and heard its jarring bolts turned upon the dear being from whom she was separated. Somewhat familiarized now even with her rude conductor, she offered him a small present in money, with a request he would do what he could for her sister's accommodation. To her surprise, Ratcliffe declined the fee. "I wasna bloody when I was on the pad," he said, "and I winna be greedy — that is, beyond what's right and reasonable — now that I am in the lock. — Keep the siller; and for civility, your sister sall hae sic as I can bestow; but I hope you'll think better on it, and rap an oath for her — deil a hair ill there is in it, if ye are rapping again the crown. I kend a worthy minister, as gude a man, bating the deed they deposed him for, as ever ye heard claver in a pu'pit, that rapped to a hogshead of pigtail tobacco, just for as muckle as filled his spleuchan.[1] But maybe ye are keeping your ain counsel — weel, weel, there's nae harm in that. As for your sister, I'se see that she gets her meat clean and warm, and I'll try to gar her lie down and take a sleep after dinner, for deil a ee she'll close the night. I hae gude experience of these matters. The first night is aye the warst o't. I hae never heard o' ane that sleepit the night afore trial, but of mony a ane that sleepit as sound as a tap the night before their necks were straughted. And it's nae wonder — the warst may be tholed when it's kend — Better a finger aff as aye wagging."

CHAPTER XXI.

> Yet though thou mayst be dragg'd in scorn
> To yonder ignominious tree,
> Thou shalt not want one faithful friend
> To share the cruel fates' decree.
>
> JEMMY DAWSON.

After spending the greater part of the morning in his devotions, (for his benevolent neighbours had kindly insisted upon discharging his task of ordinary labour,) David Deans entered the apartment when the breakfast meal was prepared. His eyes were involuntarily cast down, for he was afraid to look at Jeanie, uncertain as he was whether she might feel herself at liberty, with a good conscience, to attend the Court of Justiciary that day, to give the evidence which he understood that she possessed, in order to her sister's exculpation. At length, after a minute of apprehensive hesitation, he looked at her dress to discover whether it seemed to be in her contemplation to go abroad that morning. Her apparel was neat and plain, but such as conveyed no exact intimation of her intentions to go abroad. She had exchanged her usual garb for morning labour, for one something inferior to that with which, as her best, she was wont to dress herself for church, or any more rare occasion of going into society. Her sense taught her, that it was respectful to be decent in her apparel on such an occasion, while her feelings induced her to lay aside the use of the very few and simple personal ornaments, which, on other occasions, she permitted herself to wear. So that there occurred nothing in her external appearance which could mark out to her father, with any thing like certainty, her intentions on this occasion.

The preparations for their humble meal were that morning made in vain. The father and daughter sat, each assuming the appearance of eating, when the other's eyes were turned to them, and desisting from the effort with disgust, when the affectionate imposture seemed no longer necessary.

At length these moments of constraint were removed. The sound of St Giles's heavy toll announced the hour previous to the commencement of the trial; Jeanie arose, and, with a degree of composure for which she herself could not account, assumed her plaid, and made her other preparations for a distant walking. It was a strange con-

[1] Tobacco pouch.

trast between the firmness of her demeanour, and the vacillation and cruel uncertainty of purpose indicated in all her father's motions; and one unacquainted with both could scarcely have supposed that the former was, in her ordinary habits of life, a docile, quiet, gentle, and even timid country-maiden, while her father, with a mind naturally proud and strong, and supported by religious opinions, of a stern, stoical, and unyielding character, had in his time undergone and withstood the most severe hardships, and the most imminent peril, without depression of spirit, or subjugation of his constancy. The secret of this difference was, that Jeanie's mind had already anticipated the line of conduct which she must adopt, with all its natural and necessary consequences; while her father, ignorant of every other circumstance, tormented himself with imagining what the one sister might say or swear, or what effect her testimony might have upon the awful event of the trial.

He watched his daughter, with a faltering and indecisive look, until she looked back upon him, with a look of unutterable anguish, as she was about to leave the apartment.

"My dear lassie," said he, "I will"—His action, hastily and confusedly searching for his worsted mittans[1] and staff, shewed his purpose of accompanying her, though his tongue failed distinctly to announce it.

"Father," said Jeanie, replying rather to his action than his words, "ye had better not."

"In the strength of my God," answered Deans, assuming firmness, "I will go forth."

And, taking his daughter's arm under his, he began to walk from the door with a step so hasty, that she was almost unable to keep up with him. A trifling circumstance, but which marked the perturbed state of his mind, checked his course.—"Your bonnet, father?" said Jeanie, who observed he had come out with his grey hairs uncovered. He turned back with a slight blush on his cheek, being ashamed to have been detected in an omission which indicated so much mental confusion, assumed his large blue Scottish bonnet, and with a step slower, but more composed, as if the circumstance had obliged him to summon up his resolution, and collect his scattered ideas, again placed his daughter's arm under his, and resumed the way to Edinburgh.

The courts of justice were then, and are still, held in what is called the Parliament Close, or, according to modern phrase, the Parliament Square, and occupied the buildings intended for the accommodation of the Scottish Estates. This edifice, though in an imperfect and corrupted style of architecture, had then a grave, decent, and, as it were, a judicial aspect, which was at least entitled to respect from its antiquity. For which venerable front, I observed, on my last occasional visit to the metropolis, that modern taste had substituted, at great apparent expense, a pile so utterly inconsistent with every monument of antiquity around, and in itself so clumsy at the same time and fantastic, that it may be likened to the decorations of Tom Errand the porter, in the Trip to the Jubilee, when he appears bedizened with the tawdry finery of Beau Clincher. *Sed transeat cum cæteris erroribus.*

The small quadrangle, or Close, if we may presume still to give it that appropriate, though antiquated title, which at Litchfield, Salisbury, and elsewhere, is properly applied to designate the enclosure adjacent to a cathedral, already evinced tokens of the fatal scene which was that day to be acted. The soldiers of the City Guard were on their posts, now enduring, and now rudely repelling with the buts of their muskets, the motley crew who thrust each other forward, to catch a glance at the unfortunate object of trial, as she should pass from the adjacent prison to the Court in which her fate was to be determined. All must have occasionally observed, with disgust, the apathy with which the vulgar gaze on scenes of this nature, and how seldom, unless when their sympathies are called forth by some striking and extraordinary circumstance, the crowd evince any interest deeper than that of callous, unthinking bustle, and brutal curiosity. They laugh, jest, quarrel, and push each other to and fro, with the same unfeeling indifference as if they were assembled for some holyday sport, or to see an idle procession. Occasionally, however, this demeanour, so natural to the degraded populace of a large town, is exchanged for a temporary touch of human affections; and so it chanced on the present occasion.

When Deans and his daughter presented themselves in the Close, and endeavoured to make their way forward to the door of the Court-house, they became involved in the mob, and subject, of course, to their insolence. As Deans repelled with some force the rude pushes which he received on all sides, his figure and antiquated dress caught the attention of the rabble, who often shew an intuitive sharpness in ascribing the proper character from external appearance.—

> "Ye're welcome, whigs,
> Frae Bothwell briggs,"

sung one fellow (for the mob of Edinburgh were at that time jacobitically disposed, probably because that was the line of sentiment most diametrically opposite to existing authority.)

> "Mess David Williamson,
> Chosen of twenty,
> Ran up the pu'pit stair,
> And sang Killiecrankie,"

chanted a siren, whose profession might be guessed by her appearance. A tattered cadie, or errand porter, whom David Deans had jostled in his attempt to extricate himself from the vicinity of these scorners, exclaimed in a strong north-country tone, "Ta deil ding out her Cameronian een—what gies her titles to dunch gentlemans about?"

"Make room for the ruling elder," said yet another; "he comes to see a precious sister glorify God in the Grassmarket!"

"Whisht; shame's in ye, sirs," said the voice of a man very loudly, which, as quickly sinking, said in a low, but distinct tone, "It's her father and sister."

All fell back to make way for the sufferers; and all, even the very rudest and most profligate, were struck with shame and silence. In the space thus abandoned to them by the mob, Deans stood, holding his daughter by the hand, and said to her, with a countenance strongly and sternly expressive of his internal emotion, "Ye hear with your ears, and ye see with your eyes, where and to whom the backslidings and defections of professors are ascribed

[1] A kind of worsted gloves used by the lower orders.

by the scoffers. Not to themselves alone, but to the kirk of which they are members, and to its blessed and invisible Head. Then, weel may we take wi' patience our share and portion of this outspreading reproach."

The man who had spoken, no other than our old friend Dumbiedikes, whose mouth, like that of the prophet's ass, had been opened by the emergency of the case, now joined them, and, with his usual taciturnity, escorted them into the Court-house. No opposition was offered to their entrance, either by the guards or door-keepers; and it is even said, that one of the latter refused a shilling of civility-money, tendered him by the Laird of Dumbiedikes, who was of opinion that "siller wad make a' easy." But this last incident wants confirmation.

Admitted within the precincts of the Court-house, they found the usual number of busy office-bearers, and idle loiterers, who attend on these scenes by choice, or from duty. Burghers gaped and stared; young lawyers sauntered, sneered, and laughed, as in the pit of the theatre; while others apart sat on a bench retired, and reasoned highly, *inter apices juris*, on the doctrines of constructive crime, and the true import of the statute. The bench was prepared for the arrival of the judges. The jurors were in attendance. The crown-counsel, employed in looking over their briefs and notes of evidence, looked grave, and whispered with each other. They occupied one side of a large table placed beneath the bench; on the other sat the advocates, whom the humanity of the Scottish law (in this particular more liberal than that of the sister country) not only permits, but enjoins, to appear and assist with their advice and skill all persons under trial. Mr Nichil Novit was seen actively instructing the counsel for the panel, (so the prisoner is called in Scottish law-phraseology,) busy, bustling, and important. When they entered the Court-room, Deans asked the Laird, in a tremulous whisper, "Where will *she* sit?"

Dumbiedikes whispered Novit, who pointed to a vacant space at the bar, fronting the judges, and was about to conduct Deans towards it.

"No!" he said; "I cannot sit by her—I cannot own her—not as yet, at least—I will keep out of her sight, and turn mine own eyes elsewhere—better for us baith."

Saddletree, whose repeated interference with the counsel had procured him one or two rebuffs, and a special request that he would concern himself with his own matters, now saw with pleasure an opportunity of playing the person of importance. He bustled up to the poor old man, and proceeded to exhibit his consequence, by securing, through his interest with the bar-keepers and macers, a seat for Deans, in a situation where he was hidden from the general eye by the projecting corner of the bench.

"It's gude to have a friend at court," he said, continuing his heartless harangues to the passive auditor, who neither heard nor replied to them; "few folk but mysell could hae sorted ye out a seat like this—the Lords will be here incontinent, and proceed *instanter* to trial. They wunna fence the court as they do at the Circuit—The High Court of Justiciary is aye fenced.—But, Lord's sake, what's this o't?—Jeanie, ye are a cited witness—Macer, this lass is a witness—she maun be enclosed—she maun on nae account be at large.—Mr Novit, suldna Jeanie Deans be enclosed?"

Novit answered in the affirmative, and offered to conduct Jeanie to the apartment, where, according to the scrupulous practice of the Scottish Court, the witnesses remain in readiness to be called into court to give evidence; and separated, at the same time, from all who might influence their testimony, or give them information concerning that which was passing upon the trial.

"Is this necessary?" said Jeanie, still reluctant to quit her father's hand.

"A matter of absolute needcessity," said Saddletree; "wha ever heard of witnesses no being enclosed?"

"It is really a matter of necessity," said the younger counsellor, retained for her sister; and Jeanie reluctantly followed the macer of the court to the place appointed.

"This, Mr Deans," said Saddletree, "is ca'd sequestering a witness; but it's clean different (whilk maybe ye wadna fund out o' yoursell) frae sequestering ane's estate or effects, as in cases of bankruptcy. I hae aften been sequestered as a witness, for the Sheriff is in the use whiles to cry me in to witness the declarations at precognitions, and so is Mr Sharpitlaw; but I was ne'er like to be sequestered o' land and gudes but ance, and that was lang syne, afore I was married. But whisht, whisht! here's the Court coming."

As he spoke, the five Lords of Justiciary, in their long robes of scarlet, faced with white, and preceded by their mace-bearer, entered with the usual formalities, and took their places upon the bench of judgment.

The audience rose to receive them; and the bustle occasioned by their entrance was hardly composed, when a great noise and confusion of persons struggling, and forcibly endeavouring to enter at the doors of the Court-room and of the galleries, announced that the prisoner was about to be placed at the bar. This tumult takes place when the doors, at first only opened to those either having right to be present, or to the better and more qualified ranks, are at length laid open to all whose curiosity induces them to be present on the occasion. With inflamed countenances and dishevelled dresses, struggling with, and sometimes tumbling over each other, in rushed the rude multitude, while a few soldiers, forming, as it were, the centre of the tide, could scarce, with all their efforts, clear a passage for the prisoner to the place which she was to occupy. By the authority of the Court, and the exertions of its officers, the tumult among the spectators was at length appeased, and the unhappy girl brought forward, and placed betwixt two sentinels with drawn bayonets, as a prisoner at the bar, where she was to abide her deliverance for good or evil, according to the issue of her trial

CHAPTER XXII.

> We have strict statutes, and most biting laws—
> The needful bits, and curbs for headstrong steeds—
> Which, for these fourteen years, we have let sleep,
> Like to an o'ergrown lion in a cave,
> That goes not out to prey.
>
> *Measure for Measure.*

"Euphemia Deans," said the presiding Judge, in an accent in which pity was blended with dig-

nity, "stand up, and listen to the criminal indictment now to be preferred against you."

The unhappy girl, who had been stupified by the confusion through which the guards had forced a passage, cast a bewildered look on the multitude of faces around her, which seemed to tapestry, as it were, the walls, in one broad slope from the ceiling to the floor, with human countenances, and instinctively obeyed a command, which rung in her ears like the trumpet of the judgment-day.

"Put back your hair, Effie," said one of the macers. For her beautiful and abundant tresses of long fair hair, which, according to the costume of the country, unmarried women were not allowed to cover with any sort of cap, and which, alas! Effie dared no longer confine with the snood or riband, which implied purity of maiden-fame, now hung unbound and dishevelled over her face, and almost concealed her features. On receiving this hint from the attendant, the unfortunate young woman, with a hasty, trembling, and apparently mechanical compliance, shaded back from her face her luxuriant locks, and shewed to the whole court, excepting one individual, a countenance, which, though pale and emaciated, was so lovely amid its agony, that it called forth an universal murmur of compassion and sympathy. Apparently the expressive sound of human feeling recalled the poor girl from the stupor of fear, which predominated at first over every other sensation, and awakened her to the no less painful sense of shame and exposure attached to her present situation. Her eye, which had at first glanced wildly around, was turned on the ground; her cheek, at first so deadly pale, began gradually to be overspread with a faint blush, which increased so fast, that, when in agony of shame she strove to conceal her face, her temples, her brow, her neck, and all that her slender fingers and small palms could not cover, became of the deepest crimson.

All marked and were moved by these changes, excepting one. It was old Deans, who, motionless in his seat, and concealed, as we have said, by the corner of the bench, from seeing or being seen, did nevertheless keep his eyes firmly fixed on the ground, as if determined that, by no possibility whatever, would he be an ocular witness of the shame of his house.

"Ichabod!" he said to himself—"Ichabod! my glory is departed!"

While these reflections were passing through his mind, the indictment, which set forth in technical form the crime of which the panel stood accused, was read as usual, and the prisoner was asked if she was Guilty, or Not Guilty.

"Not guilty of my poor bairn's death," said Effie Deans, in an accent corresponding in plaintive softness of tone to the beauty of her features, and which was not heard by the audience without emotion.

The presiding Judge next directed the counsel to plead to the relevancy; that is, to state on either part the arguments in point of law, and evidence in point of fact, against and in favour of the criminal: after which it is the form of the Court to pronounce a preliminary judgment, sending the cause to the cognizance of the jury, or assize.

The counsel for the crown briefly stated the frequency of the crime of infanticide, which had given rise to the special statute under which the panel stood indicted. He mentioned the various instances, many of them marked with circumstances of atrocity, which had at length induced the King's Advocate, though with great reluctance, to make the experiment, whether, by strictly enforcing the Act of Parliament which had been made to prevent such enormities, their occurrence might be prevented. "He expected," he said, "to be able to establish by witnesses, as well as by the declaration of the panel herself, that she was in the state described by the statute. According to his information, the panel had communicated her pregnancy to no one, nor did she allege in her own declaration that she had done so. This secrecy was the first requisite in support of the indictment. The same declaration admitted, that she had borne a male child, in circumstances which gave but too much reason to believe it had died by the hands, or at least with the knowledge or consent, of the unhappy mother. It was not, however, necessary for him to bring positive proof that the panel was accessory to the murder, nay, nor even to prove that the child was murdered at all. It was sufficient to support the indictment, that it could not be found. According to the stern, but necessary severity of this statute, she who should conceal her pregnancy, who should omit to call that assistance which is most necessary on such occasions, was held already to have meditated the death of her offspring, as an event most likely to be the consequence of her culpable and cruel concealment. And if, under such circumstances, she could not alternatively shew by proof that the infant had died a natural death, or produce it still in life, she must, under the construction of the law, be held to have murdered it, and suffer death accordingly."

The counsel for the prisoner, Mr Fairbrother, a man of considerable fame in his profession, did not pretend directly to combat the arguments of the King's Advocate. He began by lamenting that his senior at the bar, Mr Langtale, had been suddenly called to the county of which he was Sheriff, and that he had been applied to, on short warning, to give the panel his assistance in this interesting case. He had had little time, he said, to make up for his inferiority to his learned brother by long and minute research; and he was afraid he might give a specimen of his incapacity, by being compelled to admit the accuracy of the indictment under the statute. "It was enough for their Lordships," he observed, "to know, that such was the law, and he admitted the Advocate had a right to call for the usual interlocutor of relevancy." But he stated, "that when he came to establish his case by proof, he trusted to make out circumstances which would satisfactorily elide the charge in the libel. His client's story was a short, but most melancholy one. She was bred up in the strictest tenets of religion and virtue, the daughter of a worthy and conscientious person, who, in evil times, had established a character for courage and religion, by becoming a sufferer for conscience' sake."

David Deans gave a convulsive start at hearing himself thus mentioned, and then resumed the situation, in which, with his face stooped against his hands, and both resting against the corner of the elevated bench on which the Judges sate, he had hitherto listened to the procedure in the trial. The whig lawyers seemed to be interested; the tories put up their lip.

"Whatever may be our difference of opinion," resumed the lawyer, whose business it was to carry his whole audience with him if possible, "concerning the peculiar tenets of these people," (here Deans groaned deeply,) "it is impossible to deny them the praise of sound, and even rigid morals, or the merit of training up their children in the fear of God; and yet it was the daughter of such a person whom a jury would shortly be called upon, in the absence of evidence, and upon mere presumptions, to convict of a crime, more properly belonging to a heathen, or a savage, than to a Christian and civilized country. It was true," he admitted, "that the excellent nurture and early instruction which the poor girl had received, had not been sufficient to preserve her from guilt and error. She had fallen a sacrifice to an inconsiderate affection for a young man of prepossessing manners, as he had been informed, but of a very dangerous and desperate character. She was seduced under promise of marriage — a promise, which the fellow might have, perhaps, done her justice by keeping, had he not at that time been called upon by the law to atone for a crime, violent and desperate in itself, but which became the preface to another eventful history, every step of which was marked by blood and guilt, and the final termination of which had not even yet arrived. He believed that no one would hear him without surprise, when he stated that the father of this infant now amissing, and said by the learned Advocate to have been murdered, was no other than the notorious George Robertson, the accomplice of Wilson, the hero of the memorable escape from the Tolbooth Church, and, as no one knew better than his learned friend the Advocate, the principal actor in the Porteous conspiracy."—

"I am sorry to interrupt a counsel in such a case as the present," said the presiding Judge; "but I must remind the learned gentleman, that he is travelling out of the case before us."

The counsel bowed, and resumed. "He only judged it necessary," he said, "to mention the name and situation of Robertson, because the circumstance in which that character was placed, went a great way in accounting for the silence on which his Majesty's counsel had laid so much weight, as affording proof that his client proposed to allow no fair play for its life, to the helpless being whom she was about to bring into the world. She had not announced to her friends that she had been seduced from the path of honour — and why had she not done so? — Because she expected daily to be restored to character, by her seducer doing her that justice which she knew to be in his power, and believed to be in his inclination. Was it natural — was it reasonable — was it fair, to expect that she should, in the interim, become *felo de se* of her own character, and proclaim her frailty to the world, when she had every reason to expect, that, by concealing it for a season, it might be veiled for ever? Was it not, on the contrary, pardonable, that, in such an emergency, a young woman, in such a situation, should be found far from disposed to make a confident of every prying gossip, who, with sharp eyes, and eager ears, pressed upon her for an explanation of suspicious circumstances, which females in the lower — he might say which females of all ranks, are so alert in noticing, that they sometimes discover them where they do not exist? Was it strange, or was it criminal, that she should have repelled their inquisitive impertinence, with petulant denials? The sense and feeling of all who heard him would answer directly in the negative. But although his client had thus remained silent towards those to whom she was not called upon to communicate her situation, — to whom," said the learned gentleman, "I will add, it would have been unadvised and improper in her to have done so; yet, I trust, I shall remove this case most triumphantly from under the statute, and obtain the unfortunate young woman an honourable dismission from your Lordships' bar, by shewing that she did, in due time and place, and to a person most fit for such confidence, mention the calamitous circumstances in which she found herself. This occurred after Robertson's conviction, and when he was lying in prison in expectation of the fate which his comrade Wilson afterwards suffered, and from which he himself so strangely escaped. It was then, when all hopes of having her honour repaired by wedlock vanished from her eyes, — when an union with one in Robertson's situation, if still practicable, might, perhaps, have been regarded rather as an addition to her disgrace, — it was *then*, that I trust to be able to prove that the prisoner communicated and consulted with her sister, a young woman several years older than herself, the daughter of her father, if I mistake not, by a former marriage, upon the perils and distress of her unhappy situation."

"If, indeed, you are able to instruct *that* point, Mr Fairbrother," said the presiding Judge ——

"If I am indeed able to instruct that point, my Lord," resumed Mr Fairbrother, "I trust not only to serve my client, but to relieve your Lordships from that which I know you feel the most painful duty of your high office; and to give all who now hear me the exquisite pleasure of beholding a creature so young, so ingenuous, and so beautiful, as she that is now at the bar of your Lordships' Court, dismissed from thence in safety and in honour."

This address seemed to affect many of the audience, and was followed by a slight murmur of applause. Deans, as he heard his daughter's beauty and innocent appearance appealed to, was involuntarily about to turn his eyes towards her; but, recollecting himself, he bent them again on the ground with stubborn resolution.

"Will not my learned brother, on the other side of the bar," continued the advocate, after a short pause, "share in this general joy, since, I know, while he discharges his duty in bringing an accused person here, no one rejoices more in their being freely and honourably sent hence? My learned brother shakes his head doubtfully, and lays his hand on the panel's declaration. I understand him perfectly — he would insinuate that the facts now stated to your Lordships are inconsistent with the confession of Euphemia Deans herself. I need not remind your Lordships, that her present defence is no whit to be narrowed within the bounds of her former confession; and that it is not by any account which she may formerly have given of herself, but by what is now to be proved for or against her, that she must ultimately stand or fall. I am not under the necessity of accounting for her choosing to drop out of her declaration the circumstances of her confession to her sister. She might not be aware of its importance; she might be afraid of implicating her sister; she might even have

forgotten the circumstance entirely, in the terror and distress of mind incidental to the arrest of so young a creature on a charge so heinous. Any of these reasons are sufficient to account for her having suppressed the truth in this instance, at whatever risk to herself; and I incline most to her erroneous fear of criminating her sister, because I observe she has had a similar tenderness towards her lover, (however undeserved on his part,) and has never once mentioned Robertson's name from beginning to end of her declaration.

"But, my Lords," continued Fairbrother, "I am aware the King's Advocate will expect me to shew, that the proof I offer is consistent with other circumstances of the case, which I do not and cannot deny. He will demand of me how Effie Deans' confession to her sister, previous to her delivery, is reconcilable with the mystery of the birth, — with the disappearance, perhaps the murder (for I will not deny a possibility which I cannot disprove) of the infant. My Lords, the explanation of this is to be found in the placability, perchance, I may say, in the facility and pliability, of the female sex. The *dulcis Amaryllidis iræ*, as your Lordships well know, are easily appeased; nor is it possible to conceive a woman so atrociously offended by the man whom she has loved, but what she will retain a fund of forgiveness, upon which his penitence, whether real or affected, may draw largely, with a certainty that his bills will be answered. We can prove, by a letter produced in evidence, that this villain Robertson, from the bottom of the dungeon whence he already probably meditated the escape, which he afterwards accomplished by the assistance of his comrade, contrived to exercise authority over the mind, and to direct the motions, of this unhappy girl. It was in compliance with his injunctions, expressed in that letter, that the panel was prevailed upon to alter the line of conduct which her own better thoughts had suggested; and, instead of resorting, when her time of travail approached, to the protection of her own family, was induced to confide herself to the charge of some vile agent of this nefarious seducer, and by her conducted to one of those solitary and secret purlieus of villainy, which, to the shame of our police, still are suffered to exist in the suburbs of this city, where, with the assistance, and under the charge, of a person of her own sex, she bore a male-child, under circumstances which added treble bitterness to the wo denounced against our original mother. What purpose Robertson had in all this, it is hard to tell, or even to guess. He may have meant to marry the girl, for her father is a man of substance. But, for the termination of the story, and the conduct of the woman whom he had placed about the person of Euphemia Deans, it is still more difficult to account. The unfortunate young woman was visited by the fever incidental to her situation. In this fever she appears to have been deceived by the person that waited on her, and, on recovering her senses, she found that she was childless in that abode of misery. Her infant had been carried off, perhaps for the worst purposes, by the wretch that waited on her. It may have been murdered, for what I can tell."

He was here interrupted by a piercing shriek, uttered by the unfortunate prisoner. She was with difficulty brought to compose herself. Her counsel availed himself of the tragical interruption, to close his pleading with effect.

"My Lords," said he, "in that piteous cry you heard the eloquence of maternal affection, far surpassing the force of my poor words — Rachel weeping for her children! Nature herself bears testimony in favour of the tenderness and acuteness of the prisoner's parental feelings. I will not dishonour her plea by adding a word more."

"Heard ye ever the like o' that, Laird?" said Saddletree to Dumbiedikes, when the counsel had ended his speech. "There 's a chield can spin a muckle pirn out of a wee tait of tow! Deil haet he kens mair about it than what 's in the declaration, and a surmise that Jeanie Deans suld hae been able to say something about her sister's situation, whilk surmise, Mr Crossmyloof says, rests on sma' authority. And he 's cleckit this great muckle bird out o' this wee egg! He could wile the very flounders out o' the Firth. — What garr'd my father no send me to Utrecht? — But whisht, the court is gaun to pronounce the interlocutor of relevancy."

And accordingly the Judges, after a few words, recorded their judgment, which bore, that the indictment, if proved, was relevant to infer the pains of law: And that the defence, that the panel had communicated her situation to her sister, was a relevant defence: And, finally, appointed the said indictment and defence to be submitted to the judgment of an assize.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> Most righteous judge! a sentence. — Come, prepare.
> *Merchant of Venice.*

It is by no means my intention to describe minutely the forms of a Scottish criminal trial, nor am I sure that I could draw up an account so intelligible and accurate as to abide the criticism of the gentlemen of the long robe. It is enough to say that the jury was impanelled, and the case proceeded. The prisoner was again required to plead to the charge, and she again replied, "Not Guilty," in the same heart-thrilling tone as before.

The crown counsel then called two or three female witnesses, by whose testimony it was established, that Effie's situation had been remarked by them, that they had taxed her with the fact, and that her answers had amounted to an angry and petulant denial of what they charged her with. But, as very frequently happens, the declaration of the panel or accused party herself was the evidence which bore hardest upon her case.

In the event of these tales ever finding their way across the Border, it may be proper to apprise the southern reader that it is the practice in Scotland, on apprehending a suspected person, to subject him to a judicial examination before a magistrate He is not compelled to answer any of the questions asked of him, but may remain silent if he sees it his interest to do so. But whatever answers he chooses to give are formally written down, and being subscribed by himself and the magistrate, are produced against the accused in case of his being brought to trial. It is true, that these declarations are not produced as being in themselves

evidence properly so called, but only as *adminicles* of testimony, tending to corroborate what is considered as legal and proper evidence. Notwithstanding this nice distinction, however, introduced by lawyers to reconcile this procedure to their own general rule, that a man cannot be required to bear witness against himself, it nevertheless usually happens that these declarations become the means of condemning the accused, as it were, out of their own mouths. The prisoner, upon these previous examinations, has indeed the privilege of remaining silent if he pleases; but every man necessarily feels that a refusal to answer natural and pertinent interrogatories, put by judicial authority, is in itself a strong proof of guilt, and will certainly lead to his being committed to prison; and few can renounce the hope of obtaining liberty, by giving some specious account of themselves, and shewing apparent frankness in explaining their motives and accounting for their conduct. It, therefore, seldom happens that the prisoner refuses to give a judicial declaration, in which, nevertheless, either by letting out too much of the truth, or by endeavouring to substitute a fictitious story, he almost always exposes himself to suspicion and to contradictions, which weigh heavily in the minds of the jury.

The declaration of Effie Deans was uttered on other principles, and the following is a sketch of its contents, given in the judicial form, in which they may still be found in the Books of Adjournal.

The declarant admitted a criminal intrigue with an individual whose name she desired to conceal. "Being interrogated, what her reason was for secrecy on this point? She declared, that she had no right to blame that person's conduct more than she did her own, and that she was willing to confess her own faults, but not to say any thing which might criminate the absent. Interrogated, if she confessed her situation to any one, or made any preparation for her confinement? Declares, she did not. And being interrogated, why she forbore to take steps which her situation so peremptorily required? Declares, she was ashamed to tell her friends, and she trusted the person she has mentioned would provide for her and the infant. Interrogated, if he did so? Declares, that he did not do so personally; but that it was not his fault, for that the declarant is convinced he would have laid down his life sooner than the bairn or she had come to harm. Interrogated, what prevented him from keeping his promise? Declares, that it was impossible for him to do so, he being under trouble at the time, and declines farther answer to this question. Interrogated, where she was from the period she left her master, Mr Saddletree's family, until her appearance at her father's, at St Leonard's, the day before she was apprehended? Declares, she does not remember. And, on the interrogatory being repeated, declares, she does not mind muckle about it, for she was very ill. On the question being again repeated, she declares, she will tell the truth, if it should be the undoing of her, so long as she is not asked to tell on other folk; and admits, that she passed that interval of time in the lodging of a woman, an acquaintance of that person who had wished her to that place to be delivered, and that she was there delivered accordingly of a male child. Interrogated, what was the name of that person? Declares and refuses to answer this question. Interrogated, where she lives? Declares, she has no certainty, for that she was taken to the lodging aforesaid under cloud of night. Interrogated, if the lodging was in the city or suburbs? Declares and refuses to answer that question. Interrogated, whether, when she left the house of Mr Saddletree, she went up or down the street? Declares and refuses to answer the question. Interrogated whether she had ever seen the woman before she was wished to her, as she termed it, by the person whose name she refuses to answer? Declares and replies, not to her knowledge. Interrogated, whether this woman was introduced to her by the said person verbally, or by word of mouth? Declares, she has no freedom to answer this question. Interrogated, if the child was alive when it was born? Declares, that—God help her and it!—it certainly was alive. Interrogated, if it died a natural death after birth? Declares not to her knowledge. Interrogated, where it now is? Declares, she would give her right hand to ken, but that she never hopes to see mair than the banes of it. And being interrogated, why she supposes it is now dead? the declarant wept bitterly and made no answer. Interrogated, if the woman, in whose lodging she was, seemed to be a fit person to be with her in that situation? Declares, she might be fit enough for skill, but that she was an hard-hearted bad woman. Interrogated, if there was any other person in the lodging excepting themselves two? Declares, that she thinks there was another woman; but her head was so carried with pain of body and trouble of mind, that she minded her very little. Interrogated, when the child was taken away from her? Declared, that she fell in a fever, and was light-headed, and when she came to her own mind, the woman told her the bairn was dead; and that the declarant answered, if it was dead it had had foul play. That, thereupon, the woman was very sair on her, and gave her much ill language; and that the deponent was frightened, and crawled out of the house when her back was turned, and went home to Saint Leonard's Crags, as well as a woman in her condition dought.[1] Interrogated, why she did not tell her story to her sister and father, and get force to search the house for her child, dead or alive? Declares, it was her purpose to do so, but she had not time. Interrogated, why she now conceals the name of the woman, and the place of her abode? The declarant remained silent for a time, and then said, that to do so could not repair the skaith that was done, but might be the occasion of more. Interrogated, whether she had herself, at any time, had any purpose of putting away the child by violence? Declares, never; so might God be merciful to her—and then again declares, never, when she was in her perfect senses; but what bad thoughts the Enemy might put into her brain when she was out of herself, she cannot answer. And again solemnly interrogated, declares, that she would have been drawn with wild horses, rather than have touched the bairn with an unmotherly hand. Interrogated, declares, that among the ill-language the woman gave her, she did say sure enough that the declarant had hurt the bairn when she was in the brain-fever; but

[1] *i. e.* was able to do.

that the declarant does not believe that she said this from any other cause than to frighten her, and make her be silent. Interrogated, what else the woman said to her? Declares, that when the declarant cried loud for her bairn, and was like to raise the neighbours, the woman threatened her, that they that could stop the wean's skirling would stop hers, if she did not keep a' the lounder.[1] And that this threat, with the manner of the woman, made the declarant conclude, that the bairn's life was gone, and her own in danger, for that the woman was a desperate bad woman, as the declarant judged from the language she used. Interrogated, declares, that the fever and delirium were brought on her by hearing bad news, suddenly told to her, but refuses to say what the said news related to. Interrogated, why she does not now communicate these particulars, which might, perhaps, enable the magistrate to ascertain whether the child is living or dead; and requested to observe, that her refusing to do so exposes her own life, and leaves the child in bad hands; as also, that her present refusal to answer on such points, is inconsistent with her alleged intention to make a clean breast to her sister? Declares, that she kens the bairn is now dead, or, if living, there is one that will look after it; that for her own living or dying, she is in God's hands, who knows her innocence of harming her bairn with her will or knowledge; and that she has altered her resolution of speaking out, which she entertained when she left the woman's lodging, on account of a matter which she has since learned. And declares, in general, that she is wearied, and will answer no more questions at this time."

Upon a subsequent examination, Euphemia Deans adhered to the declaration she had formerly made, with this addition, that a paper found in her trunk being shewn to her, she admitted that it contained the credentials, in consequence of which she resigned herself to the conduct of the woman at whose lodgings she was delivered of the child. Its tenor ran thus: —

"Dearest Effie,

"I have gotten the means to send to you by a woman who is well qualified to assist you in your approaching streight; she is not what I could wish her, but I cannot do better for you in my present condition. I am obliged to trust to her in this present calamity, for myself and you too. I hope for the best, though I am now in a sore pinch; yet thought is free — I think Handie Dandie and I may queer the stifler[2] for all that is come and gone. You will be angry for me writing this, to my little Cameronian Lily; but if I can but live to be a comfort to you, and a father to your babie, you will have plenty of time to scold. — Once more, let none know your counsel — my life depends on this hag, d — n her — she is both deep and dangerous, but she has more wiles and wit than ever were in a beldam's head, and has cause to be true to me. Farewell, my Lily — Do not droop on my account — in a week I will be yours, or no more my own."

Then followed a postscript. "If they must truss me, I will repent of nothing so much, even at the last hard pinch, as of the injury I have done my Lily."

Effie refused to say from whom she had received this letter, but enough of the story was now known, to ascertain that it came from Robertson; and from the date, it appeared to have been written about the time when Andrew Wilson (called for a nickname Handie Dandie) and he were meditating their first abortive attempt to escape, which miscarried in the manner mentioned in the beginning of this history.

The evidence of the Crown being concluded, the counsel for the prisoner began to lead a proof in her defence. The first witnesses were examined upon the girl's character. All gave her an excellent one, but none with more feeling than worthy Mrs Saddletree, who, with the tears on her cheeks, declared, that she could not have had a higher opinion of Effie Deans, nor a more sincere regard for her, if she had been her own daughter. All present gave the honest woman credit for her goodness of heart, excepting her husband, who whispered to Dumbiedikes, "That Nichil Novit of yours is but a raw hand at leading evidence, I 'm thinking. What signified his bringing a woman here to snotter and snivel, and bather their Lordships? He should hae ceeted me, sir, and I should hae gien them sic a screed o' testimony, they shouldna hae touched a hair o' her head."

"Hadna ye better get up and try 't yet?" said the Laird. "I 'll mak a sign to Novit."

"Na, na," said Saddletree, "thank ye for naething, neighbour — that would be ultroneous evidence, and I ken what belangs to that; but Nichil Novit suld hae had me ceeted *debito tempore*." And wiping his mouth with his silk handkerchief with great importance, he resumed the port and manner of an edified and intelligent auditor.

Mr Fairbrother now premised, in a few words, "that he meant to bring forward his most important witness, upon whose evidence the cause must in a great measure depend. What his client was, they had learned from the preceding witnesses; and so far as general character, given in the most forcible terms, and even with tears, could interest every one in her fate, she had already gained that advantage. It was necessary, he admitted, that he should produce more positive testimony of her innocence than what arose out of general character, and this he undertook to do by the mouth of the person to whom she had communicated her situation — by the mouth of her natural counsellor and guardian — her sister. — Macer, call into court, Jean, or Jeanie Deans, daughter of David Deans, cowfeeder, at Saint Leonard's Crags."

When he uttered these words, the poor prisoner instantly started up, and stretched herself half-way over the bar, towards the side at which her sister was to enter. And when, slowly following the officer, the witness advanced to the foot of the table, Effie, with the whole expression of her countenance altered, from that of confused shame and dismay, to an eager, imploring, and almost ecstatic earnestness of entreaty, with outstretched hands, hair streaming back, eyes raised eagerly to her sister's face, and glistening through tears, exclaimed, in a tone which went through the heart of all who heard her — "O Jeanie, Jeanie, save me, save me!"

[1] *i. e.* the quieter. [2] Avoid the gallows.

With a different feeling, yet equally appropriated to his proud and self-dependent character, old Deans drew himself back still farther under the cover of the bench; so that when Jeanie, as she entered the court, cast a timid glance towards the place at which she had left him seated, his venerable figure was no longer visible. He sate down on the other side of Dumbiedikes, wrung his hand hard, and whispered, "Ah, Laird, this is warst of a'—if I can but win ower this part—I feel my head unco dizzy; but my Master is strong in his servant's weakness." After a moment's mental prayer, he again started up, as if impatient of continuing in any one posture, and gradually edged himself forward towards the place he had just quitted.

Jeanie in the meantime had advanced to the bottom of the table, when, unable to resist the impulse of affection, she suddenly extended her hand to her sister. Effie was just within the distance that she could seize it with both hers, press it to her mouth, cover it with kisses, and bathe it in tears, with the fond devotion that a Catholic would pay to a guardian saint descended for his safety; while Jeanie, hiding her own face with her other hand, wept bitterly. The sight would have moved a heart of stone, much more of flesh and blood. Many of the spectators shed tears, and it was some time before the presiding Judge himself could so far subdue his emotion, as to request the witness to compose herself, and the prisoner to forbear those marks of eager affection, which, however natural, could not be permitted at that time, and in that presence.

The solemn oath,—"the truth to tell, and no truth to conceal, as far as she knew or should be asked," was then administered by the Judge "in the name of God, and as the witness should answer to God at the great day of judgment;" an awful adjuration, which seldom fails to make impression even on the most hardened characters, and to strike with fear even the most upright. Jeanie, educated in deep and devout reverence for the name and attributes of the Deity, was, by the solemnity of a direct appeal to his person and justice, awed, but at the same time elevated above all considerations, save those which she could, with a clear conscience, call HIM to witness. She repeated the form in a low and reverent, but distinct tone of voice, after the Judge, to whom, and not to any inferior officer of the court, the task is assigned in Scotland of directing the witness in that solemn appeal, which is the sanction of his testimony.

When the Judge had finished the established form, he added in a feeling, but yet a monitory tone, an advice, which the circumstances appeared to him to call for.

"Young woman," these were his words, "you come before this Court in circumstances, which it would be worse than cruel not to pity and to sympathize with. Yet it is my duty to tell you, that the truth, whatever its consequences may be, the truth is what you owe to your country, and to that God whose word is truth, and whose name you have now invoked. Use your own time in answering the questions that gentleman" (pointing to the counsel) "shall put to you.—But remember, that what you may be tempted to say beyond what is the actual truth, you must answer both here and hereafter."

The usual questions were then put to her:—Whether any one had instructed her what evidence she had to deliver? Whether any one had given or promised her any good deed, hire, or reward, for her testimony? Whether she had any malice or ill-will at his Majesty's Advocate, being the party against whom she was cited as a witness? To which questions she successively answered by a quiet negative. But their tenor gave great scandal and offence to her father, who was not aware that they are put to every witness as a matter of form.

"Na, na," he exclaimed, loud enough to be heard, "my bairn is no like the widow of Tekoah—nae man has putten words into her mouth."

One of the Judges, better acquainted, perhaps, with the Books of Adjournal than with the Book of Samuel, was disposed to make some instant inquiry after this Widow of Tekoah, who, as he construed the matter, had been tampering with the evidence. But the presiding Judge, better versed in Scripture history, whispered to his learned brother the necessary explanation; and the pause occasioned by this mistake, had the good effect of giving Jeanie Deans time to collect her spirits for the painful task she had to perform.

Fairbrother, whose practice and intelligence were considerable, saw the necessity of letting the witness compose herself. In his heart he suspected that she came to bear false witness in her sister's cause.

"But that is her own affair," thought Fairbrother; "and it is my business to see that she has plenty of time to regain composure, and to deliver her evidence, be it true, or be it false—*valeat quantum*."

Accordingly, he commenced his interrogatories with uninteresting questions, which admitted of instant reply.

"You are, I think, the sister of the prisoner?"

"Yes, sir."

"Not the full sister, however?"

"No, sir—we are by different mothers."

"True; and you are, I think, several years older than your sister?"

"Yes, sir," &c.

After the advocate had conceived that, by these preliminary and unimportant questions, he had familiarized the witness with the situation in which she stood, he asked, "whether she had not remarked her sister's state of health to be altered, during the latter part of the term when she had lived with Mrs Saddletree?"

Jeanie answered in the affirmative.

"And she told you the cause of it, my dear, I suppose?" said Fairbrother, in an easy, and, as one may say, an inductive sort of tone.

"I am sorry to interrupt my brother," said the Crown Counsel, rising; "but I am in your Lordships' judgment, whether this be not a leading question?"

"If this point is to be debated," said the presiding Judge, "the witness must be removed."

For the Scottish lawyers regard with a sacred and scrupulous horror, every question so shaped by the counsel examining, as to convey to a witness the least intimation of the nature of the answer which is desired from him. These scruples, though founded on an excellent principle, are sometimes carried to an absurd pitch of nicety, especially as it is generally easy for a lawyer who has his wits

about him to elude the objection. Fairbrother did so in the present case.

"It is not necessary to waste the time of the Court, my Lord; since the King's Counsel thinks it worth while to object to the form of my question, I will shape it otherwise. — Pray, young woman, did you ask your sister any question when you observed her looking unwell? — take courage — speak out."

"I asked her," replied Jeanie, "what ailed her."

"Very well — take your own time — and what was the answer she made?" continued Mr Fairbrother.

Jeanie was silent, and looked deadly pale. It was not that she at any one instant entertained an idea of the possibility of prevarication — it was the natural hesitation to extinguish the last spark of hope that remained for her sister.

"Take courage, young woman," said Fairbrother. — "I asked what your sister said ailed her when you inquired?"

"Nothing," answered Jeanie, with a faint voice, which was yet heard distinctly in the most distant corner of the Court-room, — such an awful and profound silence had been preserved during the anxious interval, which had interposed betwixt the lawyer's question and the answer of the witness.

Fairbrother's countenance fell; but with that ready presence of mind, which is as useful in civil as in military emergencies, he immediately rallied. — "Nothing? True; you mean nothing at *first* — but when you asked her again, did she not tell you what ailed her?"

The question was put in a tone meant to make her comprehend the importance of her answer, had she not been already aware of it. The ice was broken, however, and, with less pause than at first, she now replied, — "Alack! alack! she never breathed word to me about it."

A deep groan passed through the Court. It was echoed by one deeper and more agonized from the unfortunate father. The hope, to which unconsciously, and in spite of himself, he had still secretly clung, had now dissolved, and the venerable old man fell forward senseless on the floor of the Court-house, with his head at the foot of his terrified daughter. The unfortunate prisoner, with impotent passion, strove with the guards, betwixt whom she was placed. "Let me gang to my father! — I *will* gang to him — I *will* gang to him — he is dead — he is killed — I hae killed him!" — she repeated in frenzied tones of grief, which those who heard them did not speedily forget.

Even in this moment of agony and general confusion, Jeanie did not lose that superiority, which a deep and firm mind assures to its possessor, under the most trying circumstances.

"He is my father — he is our father," she mildly repeated to those who endeavoured to separate them, as she stooped, — shaded aside his grey hairs, and began assiduously to chafe his temples.

The Judge, after repeatedly wiping his eyes, gave directions that they should be conducted into a neighbouring apartment, and carefully attended. The prisoner, as her father was borne from the Court, and her sister slowly followed, pursued them with her eyes so earnestly fixed, as if they would have started from their sockets. But when they were no longer visible, she seemed to find, in her despairing and deserted state, a courage which she had not yet exhibited.

"The bitterness of it is now past," she said, and then boldly addressed the Court. "My Lords, if it is your pleasure to gang on wi' this matter, the weariest day will hae its end at last."

The Judge, who, much to his honour, had shared deeply in the general sympathy, was surprised at being recalled to his duty by the prisoner. He collected himself, and requested to know if the panel's counsel had more evidence to produce. Fairbrother replied, with an air of dejection, that his proof was concluded.

The King's Counsel addressed the jury for the crown. He said in few words, that no one could be more concerned than he was for the distressing scene which they had just witnessed. But it was the necessary consequence of great crimes to bring distress and ruin upon all connected with the perpetrators. He briefly reviewed the proof, in which he shewed that all the circumstances of the case concurred with those required by the act under which the unfortunate prisoner was tried: That the counsel for the panel had totally failed in proving, that Euphemia Deans had communicated her situation to her sister: That, respecting her previous good character, he was sorry to observe, that it was females who possessed the world's good report, and to whom it was justly valuable, who were most strongly tempted, by shame and fear of the world's censure, to the crime of infanticide: That the child was murdered, he professed to entertain no doubt. The vacillating and inconsistent declaration of the prisoner herself, marked as it was by numerous refusals to speak the truth on subjects, when, according to her own story, it would have been natural, as well as advantageous, to have been candid; even this imperfect declaration left no doubt in his mind as to the fate of the unhappy infant. Neither could he doubt that the panel was a partner in this guilt. Who else had an interest in a deed so inhuman? Surely neither Robertson, nor Robertson's agent, in whose house she was delivered, had the least temptation to commit such a crime, unless upon her account, with her connivance, and for the sake of saving her reputation. But it was not required of him, by the law, that he should bring precise proof of the murder, or of the prisoner's accession to it. It was the very purpose of the statute to substitute a certain chain of presumptive evidence in place of a probation, which, in such cases, it was peculiarly difficult to obtain. The jury might peruse the statute itself, and they had also the libel and interlocutor of relevancy to direct them in point of law. He put it to the conscience of the jury, that under both he was entitled to a verdict of Guilty.

The charge of Fairbrother was much cramped by his having failed in the proof which he expected to lead. But he fought his losing cause with courage and constancy. He ventured to arraign the severity of the statute under which the young woman was tried. "In all other cases," he said, "the first thing required of the criminal prosecutor was, to prove unequivocally that the crime libelled had actually been committed, which lawyers called proving the *corpus delicti*. But this statute, made doubtless with the best intentions, and under the impulse of a just horror for the unnatural crime of infanticide, ran the risk of itself occasioning the worst of murders, the death of an innocent person,

to atone for a supposed crime which may never have been committed by any one. He was so far from acknowledging the alleged probability of the child's violent death, that he could not even allow that there was evidence of its having ever lived."

The King's Counsel pointed to the woman's declaration; to which the counsel replied—"A production concocted in a moment of terror and agony, and which approached to insanity," he said, "his learned brother well knew was no sound evidence against the party who emitted it. It was true, that a judicial confession, in presence of the Justices themselves, was the strongest of all proof, in so much that it is said in law, that '*in confitentem nullæ sunt partes judicis.*' But this was true of judicial confession only, by which law meant that which is made in presence of the justices, and the sworn inquest. Of extrajudicial confession, all authorities held with the illustrious Farinaceus, and Matheus, '*confessio extrajudicialis in se nulla est; et quod nullum est, non potest adminiculari.* It was totally inept, and void of all strength and effect from the beginning; incapable, therefore, of being bolstered up or supported, or, according to the law-phrase, adminiculated, by other presumptive circumstances. In the present case, therefore, letting the extrajudicial confession go, as it ought to go, for nothing," he contended, "the prosecutor had not made out the second quality of the statute, that a live child had been born; and *that*, at least, ought to be established before presumptions were received that it had been murdered. If any of the assize," he said, "should be of opinion that this was dealing rather narrowly with the statute, they ought to consider that it was in its nature highly penal, and therefore entitled to no favourable construction."

He concluded a learned speech, with an eloquent peroration on the scene they had just witnessed, during which Saddletree fell fast asleep.

It was now the presiding Judge's turn to address the jury. He did so briefly and distinctly.

"It was for the jury," he said, "to consider whether the prosecutor had made out his plea. For himself, he sincerely grieved to say, that a shadow of doubt remained not upon his mind concerning the verdict which the inquest had to bring in. He would not follow the prisoner's counsel through the impeachment which he had brought against the statute of King William and Queen Mary. He and the jury were sworn to judge according to the laws as they stood, not to criticise, or to evade, or even to justify them. In no civil case would a counsel have been permitted to plead his client's case in the teeth of the law; but in the hard situation in which counsel were often placed in the Criminal Court, as well as out of favour to all presumptions of innocence, he had not inclined to interrupt the learned gentleman, or narrow his plea. The present law, as it now stood, had been instituted by the wisdom of their fathers, to check the alarming progress of a dreadful crime; when it was found too severe for its purpose, it would doubtless be altered by the wisdom of the legislature; at present it was the law of the land, the rule of the court, and, according to the oath which they had taken, it must be that of the jury. This unhappy girl's situation could not be doubted; that she had borne a child, and that the child had disappeared, were certain facts. The learned counsel had failed to shew that she had communicated her situation. All the requisites of the case required by the statute were therefore before the jury. The learned gentleman had, indeed, desired them to throw out of consideration the panel's own confession, which was the plea usually urged, in penury of all others, by counsel in his situation, who usually felt that the declarations of their clients bore hard on them. But that the Scottish law designed that a certain weight should be laid on these declarations, which, he admitted, were *quodammodo* extrajudicial, was evident from the universal practice by which they were always produced and read, as part of the prosecutor's probation. In the present case, no person, who had heard the witnesses describe the appearance of the young woman before she left Saddletree's house, and contrasted it with that of her state and condition at her return to her father's, could have any doubt that the fact of delivery had taken place, as set forth in her own declaration, which was, therefore, not a solitary piece of testimony, but adminiculated and supported by the strongest circumstantial proof.

"He did not," he said, "state the impression upon his own mind with the purpose of biassing theirs. He had felt no less than they had done from the scene of domestic misery which had been exhibited before them; and if they, having God and a good conscience, the sanctity of their oath, and the regard due to the law of the country, before their eyes, could come to a conclusion favourable to this unhappy prisoner, he should rejoice as much as any one in Court; for never had he found his duty more distressing than in discharging it that day, and glad he would be to be relieved from the still more painful task, which would otherwise remain for him."

The jury, having heard the Judge's address, bowed and retired, preceded by a macer of Court, to the apartment destined for their deliberation

CHAPTER XXIV.

> Law, take thy victim — May she find the mercy
> In yon mild heaven, which this hard world denies her!

It was an hour ere the jurors returned, and as they traversed the crowd with slow steps, as men about to discharge themselves of a heavy and painful responsibility, the audience was hushed into profound, earnest, and awful silence.

"Have you agreed on your chancellor, gentlemen?" was the first question of the Judge.

The foreman, called in Scotland the chancellor of the jury, usually the man of best rank and estimation among the assizers, stepped forward, and, with a low reverence, delivered to the Court a sealed paper, containing the verdict, which, until of late years, that verbal returns are in some instances permitted, was always couched in writing. The jury remained standing while the Judge broke the seals, and, having perused the paper, handed it with an air of mournful gravity, down to the Clerk of Court, who proceeded to engross in the record the yet unknown verdict, of which, however, all omened the tragical contents. A form still remained, trifling and unimportant in itself, but to which imagination adds a sort of solemnity, from the awful occasion upon which it is used. A lighted candle was placed

on the table, the original paper containing the verdict was enclosed in a sheet of paper, and, sealed with the Judge's own signet, was transmitted to the Crown Office, to be preserved among other records of the same kind. As all this is transacted in profound silence, the producing and extinguishing the candle seems a type of the human spark which is shortly afterwards doomed to be quenched, and excites in the spectators something of the same effect which in England is obtained by the Judge assuming the fatal cap of judgment. When these preliminary forms had been gone through, the Judge required Euphemia Deans to attend to the verdict to be read.

After the usual words of style, the verdict set forth, that the Jury having made choice of John Kirk, Esq. to be their chancellor, and Thomas Moore, merchant, to be their clerk, did by a plurality of voices, find the said Euphemia Deans GUILTY of the crime libelled; but, in consideration of her extreme youth, and the cruel circumstances of her case, did earnestly entreat that the Judge would recommend her to the mercy of the Crown.

"Gentlemen," said the Judge, "you have done your duty — and a painful one it must have been to men of humanity like you. I will, undoubtedly, transmit your recommendation to the throne. But it is my duty to tell all who now hear me, but especially to inform that unhappy young woman, in order that her mind may be settled accordingly, that I have not the least hope of a pardon being granted in the present case. You know the crime has been increasing in this land, and I know farther, that this has been ascribed to the lenity in which the laws have been exercised, and that there is therefore no hope whatever of obtaining a remission for this offence." The jury bowed again, and, released from their painful office, dispersed themselves among the mass of bystanders.

The Court then asked Mr Fairbrother, whether he had any thing to say, why judgment should not follow on the verdict? The counsel had spent some time in perusing and reperusing the verdict, counting the letters in each juror's name, and weighing every phrase, nay, every syllable, in the nicest scales of legal criticism. But the clerk of the jury had understood his business too well. No flaw was to be found, and Fairbrother mournfully intimated, that he had nothing to say in arrest of judgment.

The presiding Judge then addressed the unhappy prisoner: — "Euphemia Deans, attend to the sentence of the Court now to be pronounced against you."

She rose from her seat, and, with a composure far greater than could have been augured from her demeanour during some parts of the trial, abode the conclusion of the awful scene. So nearly does the mental portion of our feelings resemble those which are corporeal, that the first severe blows which we receive bring with them a stunning apathy, which renders us indifferent to those that follow them. Thus said Mandrin, when he was undergoing the punishment of the wheel; and so have all felt, upon whom successive inflictions have descended with continuous and reiterated violence.

"Young woman," said the Judge, "it is my painful duty to tell you, that your life is forfeited under a law, which, if it may seem in some degree severe, is yet wisely so, to render those of your unhappy situation aware what risk they run, by concealing, out of pride or false shame, their lapse from virtue, and making no preparation to save the lives of the unfortunate infants whom they are to bring into the world. When you concealed your situation from your mistress, your sister, and other worthy and compassionate persons of your own sex, in whose favour your former conduct had given you a fair place, you seem to me to have had in your contemplation, at least, the death of the helpless creature, for whose life you neglected to provide. How the child was disposed of — whether it was dealt upon by another, or by yourself — whether the extraordinary story you have told is partly false, or altogether so, is between God and your own conscience. I will not aggravate your distress by pressing on that topic, but I do most solemnly adjure you to employ the remaining space of your time in making your peace with God, for which purpose such reverend clergymen, as you yourself may name, shall have access to you. Notwithstanding the humane recommendation of the jury, I cannot afford to you, in the present circumstances of the country, the slightest hope that your life will be prolonged beyond the period assigned for the execution of your sentence. Forsaking, therefore, the thoughts of this world, let your mind be prepared by repentance for those of more awful moments — for death, judgment, and eternity. — Doomster, read the sentence."[1]

When the Doomster shewed himself, a tall haggard figure, arrayed in a fantastic garment of black and grey, passmented with silver lace, all fell back with a sort of instinctive horror, and made wide way for him to approach the foot of the table. As this office was held by the common executioner, men shouldered each other backward to avoid even the touch of his garment, and some were seen to brush their own clothes, which had accidentally become subject to such contamination. A sound went through the court, produced by each person drawing in their breath hard, as men do when they expect or witness what is frightful, and at the same time affecting. The caitiff villain yet seemed, amid his hardened brutality, to have some sense of his being the object of public detestation, which made him impatient of being in public, as birds of evil omen are anxious to escape from daylight, and from pure air.

Repeating after the Clerk of Court, he gabbled over the words of the sentence, which condemned Euphemia Deans to be conducted back to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and detained there until Wednesday the —— day of ——; and upon that day, betwixt the hours of two and four o'clock afternoon to be conveyed to the common place of execution, and there hanged by the neck upon a gibbet. "And this," said the Doomster, aggravating his harsh voice, "I pronounce for *doom*."

He vanished when he had spoken the last emphatic word, like a foul fiend after the purpose of his visitation has been accomplished; but the impression of horror, excited by his presence and his errand, remained upon the crowd of spectators.

The unfortunate criminal, — for so she must now be termed, — with more susceptibility, and more irritable feelings than her father and sister, was found, in this emergence, to possess a considerable share of their courage. She had remained standing

[1] See Note S. *Doomster, or Dempster, of Court.*

motionless at the bar while the sentence was pronounced, and was observed to shut her eyes when the Doomster appeared. But she was the first to break silence when that evil form had left his place.

"God forgive ye, my Lords," she said, "and dinna be angry wi' me for wishing it—we a' need forgiveness.—As for myself I canna blame ye, for ye act up to your lights; and if I havena killed my poor infant, ye may witness a' that hae seen it this day, that I hae been the means of killing my greyheaded father—I deserve the warst frae man, and frae God too—But God is mair mercifu' to us than we are to each other."

With these words the trial concluded. The crowd rushed, bearing forward and shouldering each other, out of the court, in the same tumultuary mode in which they had entered; and, in excitation of animal motion and animal spirits, soon forgot whatever they had felt as impressive in the scene which they had witnessed. The professional spectators, whom habit and theory had rendered as callous to the distress of the scene as medical men are to those of a surgical operation, walked homeward in groups, discussing the general principle of the statute under which the young woman was condemned, the nature of the evidence, and the arguments of the counsel, without considering even that of the Judge as exempt from their criticism.

The female spectators, more compassionate, were loud in exclamation against that part of the Judge's speech which seemed to cut off the hope of pardon.

"Set him up, indeed," said Mrs Howden, "to tell us that the poor lassie behoved to die, when Mr John Kirk, as civil a gentleman as is within the ports of the town, took the pains to prigg for her himsell."

"Ay, but, neighbour," said Miss Damahoy, drawing up her thin maidenly form to its full height of prim dignity—"I really think this unnatural business of having bastard-bairns should be putten a stop to.—There isna a hussy now on this side of thirty that you can bring within your doors, but there will be chields—writer-lads, prentice-lads, and what not—coming traiking after them for their destruction, and discrediting ane 's honest house into the bargain—I hae nae patience wi' them."

"Hout, neighbour," said Mrs Howden, "we suld live and let live—we hae been young oursells, and we are no aye to judge the warst when lads and lasses forgather."

"Young oursells! and judge the warst!" said Miss Damahoy. "I am no sae auld as that comes to, Mrs Howden; and as for what ye ca' the warst, I ken neither good nor bad about the matter, I thank my stars!"

"Ye are thankfu' for sma' mercies, then," said Mrs Howden, with a toss of her head; "and as for *you* and *young*—I trow ye were doing for yoursell at the last riding of the Scots Parliament, and that was in the gracious year seven, sae ye can be nae sic chicken at ony rate."

Plumdamas, who acted as squire of the body to the two contending dames, instantly saw the hazard of entering into such delicate points of chronology, and being a lover of peace and good neighbourhood, lost no time in bringing back the conversation to its originai subject.

"The Judge didna tell us a' he could hae tell'd us, if he had liked, about the application for pardon, neighbours," said he; "there is aye a wimple in a lawyer's clew; but it 's a wee bit of a secret."

"And what is 't—what is 't, neighbour Plumdamas?" said Mrs Howden and Miss Damahoy at once, the acid fermentation of their dispute being at once neutralized by the powerful alkali implied in the word secret.

"Here 's Mr Saddletree can tell ye that better than me, for it was him that tauld me," said Plumdamas as Saddletree came up, with his wife hanging on his arm, and looking very disconsolate.

When the question was put to Saddletree, he looked very scornful. "They speak about stopping the frequency of child-murder," said he, in a contemptuous tone; "do ye think our auld enemies of England, as Glendook aye ca 's them in his printed Statute-book, care a boddle whether we didna kill ane anither, skin and birn, horse and foot, man, woman, and bairns, all and sindry, *omnes et singulos*, as Mr Crossmyloof says? Na, na, it 's no *that* hinders them frae pardoning the bit lassie. But here is the pinch of the plea. The king and queen are sae ill pleased wi' that mistak about Porteous, that deil a kindly Scot will they pardon again, either by reprieve or remission, if the hail town o' Edinburgh should be a' hanged on ae tow."

"Deil that they were back at their German kaleyard then, as my neighbour MacCroskie ca's it," said Mrs Howden, "an that 's the way they 're gaun to guide us!"

"They say for certain," said Miss Damahoy "that King George flang his periwig in the fire when he heard o' the Porteous mob."

"He has done that, they say," replied Saddletree "for less thing."

"Aweel," said Miss Damahoy, "he might keep mair wit in his anger—but it 's a' the better for his wigmaker, I'se warrant."

"The queen tore her biggonets for perfect anger,—ye 'll hae heard o' that too?" said Plumdamas. "And the king, they say, kickit Sir Robert Walpole for no keeping down the mob of Edinburgh; but I dinna believe he wad behave sae ungenteel."

"It 's dooms truth, though," said Saddletree; "and he was for kickin the Duke of Argyle[1] too."

"Kickin the Duke of Argyle!" exclaimed the hearers at once, in all the various combined keys of utter astonishment.

"Ay, but MacCallummore's blood wadna sit down wi' that; there was risk of Andro Ferrara coming in thirdsman."

"The duke is a real Scotsman—a true friend to the country," answered Saddletree's hearers.

"Ay, troth is he, to king and country baith, as ye sall hear," continued the orator, "if ye will come in bye to our house, for it 's safest speaking of sic things *inter parietes*."

When they entered his shop he thrust his prentice boy out of it, and, unlocking his desk, took out, with an air of grave and complacent importance, a dirty and crumpled piece of printed paper; he observed, "This is new corn—it 's no every body could shew you the like o' this. It 's the duke's speech about the Porteous mob, just promulgated by the hawkers. Ye shall hear what Ian Roy Cean[2] says for himsell.

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1 See Note U. *John Duke of Argyle and Greenwich.*

2 Red John the Warrior, a name personal and proper in the Highlands to John Duke of Argyle and Greenwich, as Mac-Cummin was that of his race or dignity.

My correspondent bought it in the Palace yard, that 's like just under the King's nose — I think he claws up their mittans! — It came in a letter about a foolish bill of exchange that the man wanted me to renew for him. I wish ye wad see about it, Mrs Saddletree."

Honest Mrs Saddletree had hitherto been so sincerely distressed about the situation of her unfortunate protegée, that she had suffered her husband to proceed in his own way, without attending, to what he was saying. The words *bills* and *renew* had, however an awakening sound in them; and she snatched the letter which her husband held towards her, and wiping her eyes, and putting on her spectacles, endeavoured, as fast as the dew which collected on her glasses would permit, to get at the meaning of the needful part of the epistle; while her husband, with pompous elevation, read an extract from the speech.

"I am no minister, I never was a minister, and I never will be one ——"

"I didna ken his grace was ever designed for the ministry," interrupted Mrs Howden.

"He disna mean a minister of the gospel, Mrs Howden, but a minister of state," said Saddletree, with condescending goodness, and then proceeded: "The time was when I might have been a piece of a minister, but I was too sensible of my own incapacity to engage in any state affair. And I thank God that I had always too great a value for those few abilities which nature has given me, to employ them in doing any drudgery, or any job of what kind soever. I have, ever since I set out in the world, (and I believe few have set out more early,) served my prince with my tongue; I have served him with any little interest I had, and I have served him with my sword, and in my profession of arms. I have held employments which I have lost, and were I to be to-morrow deprived of those which still remain to me, and which I have endeavoured honestly to deserve, I would still serve him to the last acre of my inheritance, and to the last drop of my blood. ——"

Mrs Saddletree here broke in upon the orator. — "Mr Saddletree, what *is* the meaning of a' this? Here are ye clavering about the Duke of Argyle, and this man Martingale gaun to break on our hands, and lose us gude sixty pounds — I wonder what duke will pay that, quotha — I wish the Duke of Argyle would pay his ain accounts — He is in a thousand punds Scots on thae very books when he was last at Roystoun — I 'm no saying but he 's a just nobleman, and that it 's gude siller — but it wad drive ane daft to be confused wi' deukes and drakes, and thae distressed folk up stairs, that 's Jeanie Deans and her father. And then, putting the very callant that was sewing the curpel out o' the shop, to play wi' blackguards in the close — Sit still, neighbours, it 's no that I mean to disturb *you;* but what between courts o' law and courts o' state, and upper and under parliaments, and parliament-houses, here and in London, the gudeman's gane clean gyte, I think."

The gossips understood civility, and the rule of doing as they would be done by, too well, to tarry upon the slight invitation implied in the conclusion of this speech, and therefore made their farewells and departure as fast as possible, Saddletree whispering to Plumdamas that he would "meet him at MacCroskie's," (the low-browed shop in the Luckenbooths, already mentioned,) "in the hour of cause, and put MacCullummore's speech in his pocket, for a' the gudewife's din."

When Mrs Saddletree saw the house freed of her importunate visiters, and the little boy reclaimed from the pastimes of the wynd to the exercise of the awl, she went to visit her unhappy relative, David Deans, and his elder daughter, who had found in her house the nearest place of friendly refuge.

CHAPTER XXV.

Isab. Alas! what poor ability 's in me
To do him good?
Lucio. Assay the power you have.
Measure for Measure.

When Mrs Saddletree entered the apartment in which her guests had shrouded their misery, she found the window darkened. The feebleness which followed his long swoon had rendered it necessary to lay the old man in bed. The curtains were drawn around him, and Jeanie sate motionless by the side of the bed. Mrs Saddletree was a woman of kindness, nay, of feeling, but not of delicacy. She opened the half-shut window, drew aside the curtain, and taking her kinsman by the hand, exhorted him to sit up, and bear his sorrow like a good man, and a Christian man, as he was. But when she quitted his hand, it fell powerless by his side, nor did he attempt the least reply.

"Is all over?" asked Jeanie, with lips and cheeks as pale as ashes, — "And is there nae hope for her?"

"Nane, or next to nane," said Mrs Saddletree; "I heard the Judge-carle say it with my ain ears — It was a burning shame to see sae mony o' them set up yonder in their red gowns and black gowns, and a' to take the life o' a bit senseless lassie. I had never muckle broo o' my gudeman's gossips, and now I like them waur than ever. The only wiselike thing I heard ony body say, was decent Mr John Kirk of Kirk-knowe, and he wussed them just to get the king's mercy, and nae mair about it. But he spake to unreasonable folk — he might just hae keepit his breath to hae blawn on his porridge."

"But *can* the king gie her mercy?" said Jeanie, earnestly. "Some folk tell me he canna gie mercy in cases of mur —— in cases like hers."

"*Can* he gie mercy, hinny? — I weel I wot he *can*, when he likes. There was young Singlesword, that stickit the Laird of Ballencleuch, and Captain Hackum, the Englishman, that killed Lady Colgrain's gudeman, and the Master of Saint Clair, that shot the twa Shaws, and mony mair in my time — to be sure they were gentle blood, and had their kin to speak for them — And there was Jock Porteous the other day — I 'se warrant there 's mercy, an folk could win at it."

"Porteous!" said Jeanie; "very true — I forget a' that I suld maist mind. — Fare ye weel, Mrs Saddletree; and may ye never want a friend in the hour of distress!"

"Will ye no stay wi' your father, Jeanie, bairn? — Ye had better," said Mrs Saddletree.

"I will be wanted ower yonder," indicating the Tolbooth with her hand, "and I maun leave him now, or I will never be able to leave him. I fearna for his life — I ken how strong-hearted he is — I ken it," she said, laying her hand on her bosom, "by my ain heart at this minute."

"Weel, hinny, if ye think it 's for the best, better he stay here and rest him, than gang back to St Leonard's."

"Muckle better — muckle better — God bless you! — God bless you!—At no rate let him gang till ye hear frae me," said Jeanie.

"But ye 'll be back belive?" said Mrs Saddletree, detaining her; "they winna let ye stay yonder, hinny."

"But I maun gang to St Leonard's — there 's muckle to be dune, and little time to do it in — And I have friends to speak to — God bless you — take care of my father."

She had reached the door of the apartment, when, suddenly turning, she came back, and knelt down by the bedside. — "O father, gie me your blessing — I dare not go till ye bless me. Say but God bless ye, and prosper ye, Jeanie — try but to say that!"

Instinctively, rather than by an exertion of intellect, the old man murmured a prayer, that "purchased and promised blessings might be multiplied upon her."

"He has blessed mine errand," said his daughter, rising from her knees, "and it is borne in upon my mind that I shall prosper."

So saying, she left the room.

Mrs Saddletree looked after her, and shook her head. "I wish she binna roving, poor thing — There 's something queer about a' thae Deanses. I dinna like folk to be sae muckle better than other folk — seldom comes gude o 't. But if she 's gaun to look after the kye at St Leonard's, that 's another story; to be sure they maun be sorted. — Grizzie, come up here, and tak tent to the honest auld man, and see he wants naething. — Ye silly tawpie," (addressing the maid-servant as she entered,) "what garr'd ye busk up your cockernony that gate? — I think there 's been eneugh the day to gie an awfu' warning about your cockups and your fallal duds — see what they a' come to," &c. &c. &c.

Leaving the good lady to her lecture upon worldly vanities, we must transport our reader to the cell in which the unfortunate Effie Deans was now immured, being restricted of several liberties which she had enjoyed before the sentence was pronounced.

When she had remained about an hour in the state of stupified horror so natural in her situation, she was disturbed by the opening of the jarring bolts of her place of confinement, and Ratcliffe shewed himself. "It 's your sister," he said, "wants to speak t' ye, Effie."

"I canna see naebody," said Effie, with the hasty irritability which misery had rendered more acute — "I canna see naebody, and least of a' her — Bid her take care of the auld man — I am naething to ony o' them now, nor them to me."

"She says she maun see ye, though," said Ratcliffe; and Jeanie, rushing into the apartment, threw her arms round her sister's neck, who writhed to extricate herself from her embrace.

"What signifies coming to greet ower me," said poor Effie, "when you have killed me? — killed me, when a word of your mouth would have saved me — killed me, when I am an innocent creature — innocent of that guilt at least — and me that wad hae wared body and soul to save your finger from being hurt!"

"You shall not die," said Jeanie, with enthusiastic firmness; "say what you like o' me — think what ye like o' me — only promise — for I doubt your proud heart — that ye wunna harm yourself, and you sall not die this shameful death."

"A *shameful* death I will not die, Jeanie, lass. I have that in my heart — though it has been ower kind a ane — that wunna bide shame. Gae hame to our father, and think nae mair on me — I have eat my last earthly meal."

"O, this was what I feared!" said Jeanie.

"Hout, tout, hinnie," said Ratcliffe; "it 's but little ye ken o' thae things. Ane aye thinks at the first dinnle o' the sentence, they hae heart eneugh to die rather than bide out the sax weeks · but they aye bide the sax weeks out for a' that. I ken the gate o 't weel; I hae fronted the doomster three times, and here I stand, Jim Ratcliffe, for a' that. Had I tied my napkin strait the first time, as I had a great mind till 't — and it was a' about a bit grey cowt, wasna worth ten punds sterling — where would I have been now?"

"And how *did* you escape?" said Jeanie, the fates of this man, at first so odious to her, having acquired a sudden interest in her eyes from their correspondence with those of her sister.

"*How* did I escape?" said Ratcliffe, with a knowing wink,—"I tell ye I 'scapit in a way that naebody will escape from this Tolbooth while I keep the keys."

"My sister shall come out in the face of the sun," said Jeanie; "I will go to London, and beg her pardon from the king and queen. If they pardoned Porteous, they may pardon her; if a sister asks a sister's life on her bended knees, they will pardon her — they *shall* pardon her — and they will win a thousand hearts by it."

Effie listened in bewildered astonishment, and so earnest was her sister's enthusiastic assurance, that she almost involuntarily caught a gleam of hope; but it instantly faded away.

"Ah, Jeanie! the king and queen live in London, a thousand miles from this — far ayont the saut sea; I 'll be gane before ye win there."

"You are mistaen," said Jeanie; "it is no sae far, and they go to it by land; I learned something about thae things from Reuben Butler."

"Ah, Jeanie! ye never learned ony thing but what was gude frae the folk ye keepit company wi'; but I — but I"— she wrung her hands, and wept bitterly.

"Dinna think on that now," said Jeanie; "there will be time for that if the present space be redeemed. Fare ye weel. Unless I die by the road, I will see the king's face that gies grace — O, sir," (to Ratcliffe,) "be kind to her — She ne'er kend what it was to need a stranger's kindness till now. — Fareweel — fareweel, Effie! — Dinna speak to me — I maunna greet now — my head's ower dizzy already!"

She tore herself from her sister's arms, and left the cell. Ratcliffe followed her, and beckoned her into a small room. She obeyed his signal, but not without trembling.

"What 's the fule thing shaking for?" said he; "I mean nothing but civility to you. D—n me, I respect you, and I can't help it. You have so much spunk, that, d—n me, but I think there 's some chance of your carrying the day. But you must not go to the king till you have made some friend; try the duke — try MacCallumore; he 's Scotland's friend — I ken that the great folks dinna muckle

like him — but they fear him, and that will serve your purpose as weel. D' ye ken naebody wad gie ye a letter to him ?"

"Duke of Argyle !" said Jeanie, recollecting herself suddenly, "what was he to that Argyle that suffered in my father's time — in the persecution ?"

"His son or grandson, I 'm thinking," said Ratcliffe ; "but what o' that ?"

"Thank God !" said Jeanie, devoutly clasping her hands.

"You whigs are aye thanking God for something," said the ruffian. "But hark ye, hinny, I 'll tell ye a secret. Ye may meet wi' rough customers on the Border, or in the Midland, afore ye get to Lunnon. Now, deil ane o' them will touch an acquaintance o' Daddie Ratton's ; for though I am retired frae public practice, yet they ken I can do a gude or an ill turn yet — and deil a gude fellow that has been but a twelvemonth on the lay, be he ruffler or padder, but he knows my gybe[1] as well as the jark[2] of e'er a queer cuffin[3] in England — and there 's rogue's Latin for you."

It was, indeed, totally unintelligible to Jeanie Deans, who was only impatient to escape from him. He hastily scrawled a line or two on a dirty piece of paper, and said to her, as she drew back when he offered it, "Hey ! what the deil — it wunna bite you, my lass — if it does nae gude, it can do nae ill. But I wish you to shew it, if you have ony fasherie wi' ony o' St Nicholas's clerks."

"Alas !" said she, "I do not understand what you mean ?"

"I mean, if ye fall among thieves, my precious, — that is a Scripture phrase, if ye will hae ane — the bauldest of them will ken a scart o' my guse feather. And now awa wi' ye — and stick to Argyle; if ony body can do the job, it maun be him."

After casting an anxious look at the grated windows and blackened walls of the old Tolbooth, and another scarce less anxious at the hospitable lodging of Mrs Saddletree, Jeanie turned her back on that quarter, and soon after on the city itself. She reached Saint Leonard's Crags without meeting any one whom she knew, which, in the state of her mind, she considered as a great blessing. I must do naething, she thought, as she went along, that can soften or weaken my heart — it 's ower weak already for what I hae to do. I will think and act as firmly as I can, and speak as little.

There was an ancient servant, or rather cottar, of her father's, who had lived under him for many years, and whose fidelity was worthy of full confidence. She sent for this woman, and explaining to her that the circumstances of her family required that she should undertake a journey, which would detain her for some weeks from home, she gave her full instructions concerning the management of the domestic concerns in her absence. With a precision, which, upon reflection, she herself could not help wondering at, she described and detailed the most minute steps which were to be taken, and especially such as were necessary for her father's comfort. "It was probable," she said, "that he would return to St Leonard's to-morrow ; certain that he would return very soon — all must be in order for him. He had eneugh to distress him, without being fashed about warldly matters."

In the meanwhile she toiled busily, along with May Hettly, to leave nothing unarranged.

It was deep in the night when all these matters were settled ; and when they had partaken of some food, the first which Jeanie had tasted on that eventful day, May Hettly, whose usual residence was a cottage at a little distance from Deans's house, asked her young mistress, whether she would not permit her to remain in the house all night ? "Ye hae had an awfu' day," she said, "and sorrow and fear are but bad companions in the watches of the night, as I hae heard the gudeman say himsell."

"They are ill companions indeed," said Jeanie ; "but I maun learn to abide their presence, and better begin in the house than in the field."

She dismissed her aged assistant accordingly, — for so slight was the gradation in their rank of life, that we can hardly term May a servant, — and proceeded to make a few preparations for her journey.

The simplicity of her education and country made these preparations very brief and easy. Her tartan screen served all the purposes of a riding-habit, and of an umbrella ; a small bundle contained such changes of linen as were absolutely necessary. Barefooted, as Sancho says, she had come into the world, and barefooted she proposed to perform her pilgrimage ; and her clean shoes and change of snow-white thread stockings were to be reserved for special occasions of ceremony. She was not aware, that the English habits of *comfort* attach an idea of abject misery to the idea of a barefooted traveller ; and if the objection of cleanliness had been made to the practice, she would have been apt to vindicate herself upon the very frequent ablutions to which, with Mahometan scrupulosity, a Scottish damsel of some condition usually subjects herself. Thus far, therefore, all was well.

From an oaken press, or cabinet, in which her father kept a few old books, and two or three bundles of papers, besides his ordinary accounts and receipts, she sought out and extracted from a parcel of notes of sermons, calculations of interest, records of dying speeches of the martyrs, and the like, one or two documents which she thought might be of some use to her upon her mission. But the most important difficulty remained behind, and it had not occurred to her until that very evening. It was the want of money, without which it was impossible she could undertake so distant a journey as she now meditated.

David Deans, as we have said, was easy, and even opulent in his circumstances. But his wealth, like that of the patriarchs of old, consisted in his kine and herds, and in two or three sums lent out at interest to neighbours or relatives, who, far from being in circumstances to pay any thing to account of the principal sums, thought they did all that was incumbent on them when, with considerable difficulty, they discharged "the annual rent." To these debtors it would be in vain, therefore, to apply, even with her father's concurrence ; nor could she hope to obtain such concurrence, or assistance in any mode, without such a series of explanations and debates as she felt might deprive her totally of the power of taking the step, which, however daring and hazardous, she felt was absolutely necessary for trying the last chance in favour of her sister. Without departing from filial reve-

[1] Pass. [2] Seal. [3] Justice of Peace.

rence, Jeanie had an inward conviction that the feelings of her father, however just, and upright, and honourable, were too little in unison with the spirit of the time to admit of his being a good judge of the measures to be adopted in this crisis. Herself more flexible in manner, though no less upright in principle, she felt that to ask his consent to her pilgrimage would be, to encounter the risk of drawing down his positive prohibition, and under that she believed her journey could not be blessed in its progress and event. Accordingly, she had determined upon the means by which she might communicate to him her undertaking and its purpose, shortly after her actual departure. But it was impossible to apply to him for money without altering this arrangement, and discussing fully the propriety of her journey; pecuniary assistance from that quarter, therefore, was laid out of the question.

It now occurred to Jeanie that she should have consulted with Mrs Saddletree on this subject. But, besides the time that must now necessarily be lost in recurring to her assistance, Jeanie internally revolted from it. Her heart acknowledged the goodness of Mrs Saddletree's general character, and the kind interest she took in their family misfortunes; but still she felt that Mrs Saddletree was a woman of an ordinary and worldly way of thinking, incapable, from habit and temperament, of taking a keen or enthusiastic view of such a resolution as she had formed; and to debate the point with her, and to rely upon her conviction of its propriety for the means of carrying it into execution, would have been gall and wormwood.

Butler, whose assistance she might have been assured of, was greatly poorer than herself. In these circumstances, she formed a singular resolution for the purpose of surmounting this difficulty, the execution of which will form the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Tis the voice of the sluggard, I've heard him complain,
"You have waked me too soon, I must slumber again;"
As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
Turns his side, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.
DR WATTS.

THE mansion-house of Dumbiedikes, to which we are now to introduce our readers, lay three or four miles — no matter for the exact topography — to the southward of St Leonard's. It had once borne the appearance of some little celebrity; for the "auld laird," whose humours and pranks were often mentioned in the ale-houses for about a mile round it, wore a sword, kept a good horse, and a brace of greyhounds; brawled, swore, and betted at cock-fights and horse-matches; followed Somerville of Drum's hawks, and the Lord Ross's hounds, and called himself *point devise* a gentleman. But the line had been veiled of its splendour in the present proprietor, who cared for no rustic amusements, and was as saving, timid, and retired, as his father had been at once grasping and selfishly extravagant, — daring, wild, and intrusive.

Dumbiedikes was what is called in Scotland a *single* house; that is, having only one room occupying its whole depth from back to front, each of which single apartments was illuminated by six or eight cross lights, whose diminutive panes and heavy frames permitted scarce so much light to enter as shines through one well constructed modern window. This inartificial edifice, exactly such as a child would build with cards, having a steep roof flagged with coarse grey stones instead of slates; a half-circular turret, battlemented, or, to use the appropriate phrase, bartizan'd on the top, served as a case for a narrow turnpike-stair, by which an ascent was gained from story to story; and at the bottom of the said turret was a door studded with large headed nails. There was no lobby at the bottom of the tower, and scarce a landing-place opposite to the doors which gave access to the apartments. One or two low and dilapidated outhouses, connected by a court-yard wall equally ruinous, surrounded the mansion. The court had been paved, but the flags being partly displaced, and partly renewed, a gallant crop of docks and thistles sprung up between them, and the small garden, which opened by a postern through the wall, seemed not to be in a much more orderly condition. Over the low-arched gateway which led into the yard, there was a carved stone, exhibiting some attempt at armorial bearings; and above the inner entrance hung, and had hung, for many years, the mouldering hatchment, which announced that umquhile Laurence Dumbie, of Dumbiedikes, had been gathered to his fathers in Newbattle kirk-yard. The approach to this palace of pleasure was by a road formed by the rude fragments of stone gathered from the fields, and it was surrounded by ploughed, but unenclosed land. Upon a baulk, that is, an unploughed ridge of land interposed among the corn, the Laird's trusty palfrey was tethered by the head, and picking a meal of grass. The whole argued neglect and discomfort; the consequence, however, of idleness and indifference, not of poverty.

In this inner court, not without a sense of bashfulness and timidity, stood Jeanie Deans, at an early hour in a fine spring morning. She was no heroine of romance, and therefore looked with some curiosity and interest on the mansion-house and domains, of which, it might at that moment occur to her, a little encouragement, such as women of all ranks know by instinct how to apply, might have made her mistress. Moreover, she was no person of taste beyond her time, rank, and country, and certainly thought the house of Dumbiedikes, though inferior to Holyroodhouse, or the palace at Dalkeith, was still a stately structure in its way, and the land a "very bonny bit, if it were better seen to and done to." But Jeanie Deans, was a plain, true-hearted, honest girl, who, while she acknowledged all the splendour of her old admirer's habitation, and the value of his property, never for a moment harboured a thought of doing the Laird, Butler, or herself, the injustice, which many ladies of higher rank would not have hesitated to do to all three, on much less temptation.

Her present errand being with the Laird, she looked round the offices to see if she could find any domestic to announce that she wished to see him. As all was silence, she ventured to open one door: — it was the old Laird's dog-kennel, now deserted, unless when occupied, as one or two tubs seemed to testify, as a washing-house. She tried another — it was the roofless shed where the hawks had been

once kept, as appeared from a perch or two not yet completely rotten, and a lure and jesses which were mouldering on the wall. A third door led to the coal-house, which was well stocked. To keep a very good fire, was one of the few points of domestic management in which Dumbiedikes was positively active; in all other matters of domestic economy he was completely passive, and at the mercy of his housekeeper, the same buxom dame whom his father had long since bequeathed to his charge, and who, if fame did her no injustice, had feathered her nest pretty well at his expense.

Jeanie went on opening doors, like the second Calender wanting an eye, in the castle of the hundred obliging damsels, until, like the said prince errant, she came to a stable. The Highland Pegasus, Rory Bean, to which belonged the single entire stall, was her old acquaintance, whom she had seen grazing on the baulk, as she failed not to recognize by the well-known ancient riding furniture and demi-pique saddle, which half hung on the walls, half trailed on the litter. Beyond the "treviss," which formed one side of the stall, stood a cow, who turned her head and lowed when Jeanie came into the stable, an appeal which her habitual occupations enabled her perfectly to understand, and with which she could not refuse complying, by shaking down some fodder to the animal, which had been neglected like most things else in the castle of the sluggard.

While she was accommodating "the milky mother" with the food which she should have received two hours sooner, a slip-shod wench peeped into the stable, and perceiving that a stranger was employed in discharging the task which she, at length, and reluctantly, had quitted her slumbers to perform, ejaculated, "Eh, sirs! the Brownie! the Brownie!" and fled, yelling as if she had seen the devil.

To explain her terror, it may be necessary to notice, that the old house of Dumbiedikes had, according to report, been long haunted by a Brownie, one of those familiar spirits, who were believed in ancient times to supply the deficiencies of the ordinary labourer—

"Whirl the long mop, and ply the airy flail."

Certes, the convenience of such a supernatural assistance could have been nowhere more sensibly felt, than in a family where the domestics were so little disposed to personal activity; yet this serving maiden was so far from rejoicing in seeing a supposed aerial substitute discharging a task which she should have long since performed herself, that she proceeded to raise the family by her screams of horror, uttered as thick as if the Brownie had been flaying her. Jeanie, who had immediately resigned her temporary occupation, and followed the yelling damsel into the court-yard, in order to undeceive and appease her, was there met by Mrs Janet Balchristie, the favourite sultana of the last Laird, as scandal went — the housekeeper of the present. The good-looking buxom woman, betwixt forty and fifty, (for such we described her at the death of the last Laird,) was now a fat, red-faced, old dame of seventy, or thereabouts, fond of her place, and jealous of her authority. Conscious that her administration did not rest on so sure a basis as in the time of the old proprietor, this considerate lady had introduced into the family the screamer aforesaid, who added good features and bright eyes to the powers of her lungs. She made no conquest of the Laird, however, who seemed to live as if there was not another woman in the world but Jeanie Deans, and to bear no very ardent or overbearing affection even to her. Mrs Janet Balchristie, notwithstanding, had her own uneasy thoughts upon the almost daily visits to Saint Leonard's Crags, and often, when the Laird looked at her wistfully and paused, according to his custom before utterance, she expected him to say, "Jenny, I am gaun to change my condition;" but she was relieved by "Jenny, I am gaun to change my shoon."

Still, however, Mrs Balchristie regarded Jeanie Deans with no small portion of malevolence, the customary feeling of such persons towards any one who they think has the means of doing them an injury. But she had also a general aversion to any female, tolerably young, and decently well-looking, who shewed a wish to approach the house of Dumbiedikes and the proprietor thereof. And as she had raised her mass of mortality out of bed two hours earlier than usual, to come to the rescue of her clamorous niece, she was in such extreme bad humour against all and sundry, that Saddletree would have pronounced, that she harboured *inimicitiam contra omnes mortales.*

"Wha the deil are ye?" said the fat dame to poor Jeanie, whom she did not immediately recognize, "scouping about a decent house at sic an hour in the morning?"

"It was ane wanting to speak to the Laird," said Jeanie, who felt something of the intuitive terror which she had formerly entertained for this termagant, when she was occasionally at Dumbiedikes on business of her father's.

"Ane!—And what sort of ane are ye?—hae ye nae name?—D'ye think his honour has naething else to do than to speak wi' ilka idle tramper that comes about the town, and him in his bed yet, honest man?"

"Dear Mrs Balchristie," replied Jeanie, in a submissive tone, "d'ye no mind me?—d'ye no mind Jeanie Deans?"

"Jeanie Deans!" said the termagant, in accents affecting the utmost astonishment; then, taking two strides nearer to her, she peered into her face with a stare of curiosity, equally scornful and malignant—"I say Jeanie Deans indeed—Jeanie Deevil, they had better hae ca'ed ye!—A bonny spot o' wark your tittie and you hae made out, murdering ae puir wean, and your light limmer of a sister's to be hanged for't, as weel she deserves! —And the like o' you to come to ony honest man's house, and want to be in to a decent bachelor gentleman's room at this time in the morning, and him in his bed!—Gae wa', gae wa'!"

Jeanie was struck mute with shame at the unfeeling brutality of this accusation, and could not even find words to justify herself from the vile construction put upon her visit, when Mrs Balchristie, seeing her advantage, continued in the same tone, "Come, come, bundle up your pipes and tramp awa wi' ye!—ye may be seeking a father to another wean for ony thing I ken. If it warna that your father, auld David Deans, had been a tenant on our land, I would cry up the men-folk, and hae ye dookit in the burn for your impudence."

Jeanie had already turned her back, and was

walking towards the door of the court-yard, so that Mrs Balchristie, to make her last threat impressively audible to her, had raised her stentorian voice to its utmost pitch. But, like many a general, she lost the engagement by pressing her advantage too far.

The Laird had been disturbed in his morning slumbers by the tones of Mrs Balchristie's objurgation, sounds in themselves by no means uncommon, but very remarkable, in respect to the early hour at which they were now heard. He turned himself on the other side, however, in hopes the squall would blow by, when, in the course of Mrs Balchristie's second explosion of wrath, the name of Deans distinctly struck the tympanum of his ear. As he was, in some degree, aware of the small portion of benevolence with which his housekeeper regarded the family at Saint Leonard's, he instantly conceived that some message from thence was the cause of this untimely ire, and getting out of his bed, he slipt as speedily as possible into an old brocaded night-gown, and some other necessary garments, clapped on his head his father's gold-laced hat, (for though he was seldom seen without it, yet it is proper to contradict the popular report, that he slept in it, as Don Quixote did in his helmet,) and opening the window of his bedroom, beheld, to his great astonishment, the well-known figure of Jeanie Deans herself retreating from his gate; while his housekeeper, with arms a-kimbo, fist clenched and extended, body erect, and head shaking with rage, sent after her a volley of Billingsgate oaths. His choler rose in proportion to the surprise, and perhaps, to the disturbance of his repose. "Hark ye," he exclaimed from the window, "ye auld limb of Satan — wha the deil gies you commission to guide an honest man's daughter that gate?"

Mrs Balchristie was completely caught in the manner. She was aware, from the unusual warmth with which the Laird expressed himself, that he was quite serious in this matter, and she knew that, with all his indolence of nature, there were points on which he might be provoked, and that, being provoked, he had in him something dangerous, which her wisdom taught her to fear accordingly. She began, therefore, to retract her false step as fast as she could. "She was but speaking for the house's credit, and she couldna think of disturbing his honour in the morning sae early, when the young woman might as weel wait or call again; and to be sure, she might make a mistake between the twa sisters, for ane o' them wasna sae creditable an acquaintance."

"Haud your peace, ye auld jade," said Dumbiedikes; "the warst quean e'er stude in their shoon may ca' you cousin, an a' be true that I have heard. — Jeanie, my woman, gang into the parlour — but stay, that winna be redd up yet — wait there a minute till I come down to let ye in — Dinna mind what Jenny says to ye."

"Na, na," said Jenny, with a laugh of affected heartiness, "never mind me, lass — a' the warld kens my bark's waur than my bite — if ye had had an appointment wi' the Laird, ye might hae tauld me — I am nae uncivil person — gang your ways in by, hinny." And she opened the door of the house with a master-key.

"But I had no appointment wi' the Laird," said Jeanie, drawing back; "I want just to speak twa words to him, and I wad rather do it standing here, Mrs Balchristie."

"In the open court-yard! — Na, na, that wad never do, lass; we maunna guide ye that gate neither — And how 's that douce honest man, your father?"

Jeanie was saved the pain of answering this hypocritical question by the appearance of the Laird himself.

"Gang in and get breakfast ready," said he to his housekeeper — "and, d'ye hear, breakfast wi' us yourself — ye ken how to manage thae porringers of tea-water — and, hear ye, see abune a' that there 's a gude fire. — Weel, Jeanie, my woman, gang in by — gang in by, and rest ye."

"Na, Laird," Jeanie replied, endeavouring as much as she could to express herself with composure, notwithstanding she still trembled, "I canna gang in — I have a lang day's darg afore me — I maun be twenty mile o' gate the night yet, if feet will carry me."

"Guide and deliver us! — twenty mile — twenty mile on your feet!" ejaculated Dumbiedikes, whose walks were of a very circumscribed diameter, — "Ye maun never think o' that — come in by."

"I canna do that, Laird," replied Jeanie; "the twa words I hae to say to ye I can sae here; forby that Mrs Balchristie ——"

"The deil flee awa wi' Mrs Balchristie," said Dumbiedikes, "and he 'll hae a heavy lading o' her! I tell ye, Jeanie Deans, I am a man of few words, but I am laird at hame, as well as in the field; deil a brute or body about my house but I can manage when I like, except Rory Bean, my powny; but I can seldom be at the plague, an it binna when my bluid's up."

"I was wanting to say to ye, Laird," said Jeanie, who felt the necessity of entering upon her business, "that I was gaun a lang journey, outby of my father's knowledge."

"Outby his knowledge, Jeanie! — Is that right? Ye maun think o't again — it 's no right," said Dumbiedikes, with a countenance of great concern.

"If I were anes at Lunnon," said Jeanie, in exculpation, "I am amaist sure I could get means to speak to the queen about my sister's life."

"Lunnon — and the queen — and her sister's life!" said Dumbiedikes, whistling for very amazement — "the lassie 's demented."

"I am no out o' my mind," said she, "and, sink or swim, I am determined to gang to Lunnon, if I suld beg my way frae door to door — and so I maun, unless ye wad lend me a small sum to pay my expenses — little thing will do it; and ye ken my father 's a man of substance, and wad see nae man, far less you, Laird, come to loss by me."

Dumbiedikes, on comprehending the nature of this application, could scarce trust his ears — he made no answer whatever, but stood with his eyes riveted on the ground.

"I see ye are no for assisting me, Laird," said Jeanie; "sae fare ye weel — and gang and see my poor father as aften as ye can — he will be lonely eneugh now."

"Where is the silly bairn gaun?" said Dumbiedikes; and, laying hold of her hand, he led her into the house. "It 's no that I didna think o't before," he said, "but it stack in my throat."

Thus speaking to himself, he led her into an old-fashioned parlour, shut the door behind them,

and fastened it with a bolt. While Jeanie, surprised at this manœuvre, remained as near the door as possible, the Laird quitted her hand, and pressed upon a spring lock fixed in an oak panel in the wainscot, which instantly slipped aside. An iron strong-box was discovered in a recess of the wall; he opened this also, and, pulling out two or three drawers, shewed that they were filled with leathern bags, full of gold and silver coin.

"This is my bank, Jeanie, lass," he said, looking first at her and then at the treasure, with an air of great complacency,—"nane o' your goldsmith's bills for me,—they bring folk to ruin."

Then suddenly changing his tone, he resolutely said,—"Jeanie, I will make ye Lady Dumbiedikes afore the sun sets, and ye may ride to Lunnon in your ain coach, if ye like."

"Na, Laird," said Jeanie, "that can never be—my father's grief—my sister's situation—the discredit to you——"

"That 's *my* business," said Dumbiedikes; "ye wad say naething about that if ye werena a fule—and yet I like ye the better for 't—ae wise body 's eneugh in the married state. But if your heart 's ower fu', take what siller will serve ye, and let it be when ye come back again—as gude syne as sune."

"But, Laird," said Jeanie, who felt the necessity of being explicit with so extraordinary a lover, "I like another man better than you, and I canna marry ye."

"Another man better than me, Jeanie!" said Dumbiedikes—"how is that possible?—It 's no possible, woman—ye hae kend me sae lang."

"Ay but, Laird," said Jeanie, with persevering simplicity, "I hae kend him langer."

"Langer!—It 's no possible," exclaimed the poor Laird. "It canna be; ye were born on the land. O Jeanie woman, ye haena lookit—ye haena seen the half o' the gear." He drew out another drawer—"A' gowd, Jeanie, and there 's bands for siller lent—And the rental book, Jeanie—clear three hunder sterling—deil a wadset, heritable band, or burden—Ye haena lookit at them, woman—And then my mother's wardrobe, and my grandmother's forby—silk gowns wad stand on their ends, their pearlin-lace as fine as spiders' webs, and rings and ear-rings to the boot of a' that—they are a' in the chamber of deas—Oh, Jeanie, gang up the stair and look at them!"

But Jeanie held fast her integrity, though beset with temptations, which perhaps the Laird of Dumbiedikes did not greatly err in supposing were those most affecting to her sex.

"It canna be, Laird—I have said it—and I canna break my word till him, if ye wad gie me the haill barony of Dalkeith, and Lugton into the bargain."

"Your word to *him*," said the Laird, somewhat pettishly; "but wha is he, Jeanie?—wha is he?—I haena heard his name yet—Come now, Jeanie, ye are but queering us—I am no trowing that there is sic a ane in the warld—ye are but making fashion—What is he?—wha is he?"

"Just Reuben Butler, that 's schulemaster at Libberton," said Jeanie.

"Reuben Butler! Reuben Butler!" echoed the Laird of Dumbiedikes, pacing the apartment in high disdain,—"Reuben Butler, the dominie at Libberton—and a dominie depute too!—Reuben, the son of my cottar!—Very weel, Jeanie lass, wilfu' woman will hae her way—Reuben Butler! he hasna in his pouch the value o' the auld black coat he wears—but it disna signify." And, as he spoke, he shut successively and with vehemence, the drawers of his treasury. "A fair offer, Jeanie, is nae cause of feud—Ae man may bring a horse to the water, but twenty wunna gar him drink—And as for wasting my substance on other folk's joes——"

There was something in the last hint that nettled Jeanie's honest pride.—"I was begging nane frae your honour," she said; "least of a' on sic a score as ye pit it on.—Gude-morning to ye, sir; ye hae been kind to my father, and it isna in my heart to think otherwise than kindly of you."

So saying, she left the room without listening to a faint "But, Jeanie—Jeanie—stay, woman!" and traversing the court-yard with a quick step, she set out on her forward journey, her bosom glowing with that natural indignation and shame, which an honest mind feels at having subjected itself to ask a favour, which had been unexpectedly refused. When out of the Laird's ground, and once more upon the public road, her pace slackened, her anger cooled, and anxious anticipations of the consequence of this unexpected disappointment began to influence her with other feelings. Must she then actually beg her way to London? for such seemed the alternative; or must she turn back, and solicit her father for money; and by doing so lose time, which was precious, besides the risk of encountering his positive prohibition respecting her journey? Yet she saw no medium between these alternatives; and, while she walked slowly on, was still meditating whether it were not better to return.

While she was thus in an uncertainty, she heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs, and a well-known voice calling her name. She looked round, and saw advancing towards her on a pony, whose bare back and halter assorted ill with the nightgown, slippers, and laced cocked-hat of the rider, a cavalier of no less importance than Dumbiedikes himself. In the energy of his pursuit, he had overcome even the Highland obstinacy of Rory Bean, and compelled that self-willed palfrey to canter the way his rider chose; which Rory, however, performed with all the symptoms of reluctance, turning his head, and accompanying every bound he made in advance with a sidelong motion, which indicated his extreme wish to turn round,—a manœuvre which nothing but the constant exercise of the Laird's heels and cudgel could possibly have counteracted.

When the Laird came up with Jeanie, the first words he uttered were,—"Jeanie, they say ane shouldna aye take a woman at her first word?"

"Ay, but ye maun take me at mine, Laird," said Jeanie, looking on the ground, and walking on without a pause.—"I hae but ae word to bestow on ony body, and that 's aye a true ane."

"Then," said Dumbiedikes, "at least ye suldna aye take a man at *his* first word. Ye maunna gang this wilfu' gate sillerless, come o 't what like."—He put a purse into her hand. "I wad gie you Rory too, but he 's as wilfu' as yoursell, and he 's ower weel used to a gate that maybe he and I hae gaen ower aften, and he 'll gang nae road else."

"But, Laird," said Jeanie, "though I ken my father will satisfy every penny of this siller, whatever there 's o 't, yet I wadna like to borrow it frae

ane that maybe thinks of something mair than the paying o 't back again."

"There 's just twenty-five guineas o 't," said Dumbiedikes, with a gentle sigh, "and whether your father pays or disna pay, I make ye free till 't without another word. Gang where ye like — do what ye like — and marry a' the Butlers in the country gin ye like — And sae, gude-morning to you, Jeanie."

"And God bless you, Laird, wi' mony a gude-morning," said Jeanie, her heart more softened by the unwonted generosity of this uncouth character, than perhaps Butler might have approved, had he known her feelings at that moment; "and comfort, and the Lord's peace, and the peace of the world, be with you, if we suld never meet again!"

Dumbiedikes turned and waved his hand; and his pony, much more willing to return than he had been to set out, hurried him homewards so fast, that, wanting the aid of a regular bridle, as well as of saddle and stirrups, he was too much puzzled to keep his seat to permit of his looking behind, even to give the parting glance of a forlorn swain. I am ashamed to say, that the sight of a lover, run away with in nightgown and slippers and a laced hat, by a bare-backed Highland pony, had something in it of a sedative, even to a grateful and deserved burst of affectionate esteem. The figure of Dumbiedikes was too ludicrous not to confirm Jeanie in the original sentiments she entertained towards him.

"He 's a gude creature," said she, "and a kind — it 's a pity he has sae willyard a powny." And she immediately turned her thoughts to the important journey which she had commenced, reflecting with pleasure, that, according to her habits of life and of undergoing fatigue, she was now amply or even superfluously provided with the means of encountering the expenses of the road, up and down from London, and all other expenses whatever.

CHAPTER XXVII.

> What strange and wayward thoughts will slide
> Into a lover's head;
> "O mercy!" to myself I cried,
> "If Lucy should be dead!"
>
> WORDSWORTH.

In pursuing her solitary journey, our heroine, soon after passing the house of Dumbiedikes, gained a little eminence, from which, on looking to the eastward down a prattling brook, whose meanders were shaded with straggling willows and alder trees, she could see the cottages of Woodend and Beersheba, the haunts and habitation of her early life, and could distinguish the common on which she had so often herded sheep, and the recesses of the rivulet where she had pulled rushes with Butler, to plait crowns and sceptres for her sister Effie, then a beautiful but spoiled child, of about three years old. The recollections which the scene brought with them were so bitter, that, had she indulged them, she would have sate down and relieved her heart with tears.

"But I kend," said Jeanie, when she gave an account of her pilgrimage, "that greeting would do but little good, and that it was mair beseeming to thank the Lord, that had shewed me kindness and countenance by means of a man, that mony ca'd a Nabal and churl, but wha was free of his gudes to me, as ever the fountain was free of the stream. And I minded the Scripture about the sin of Israel at Meribah, when the people murmured, although Moses had brought water from the dry rock that the congregation might drink and live. Sae, I wad not trust mysell with another look at puir Woodend, for the very blue reek that came out of the lum-head pat me in mind of the change of market days with us."

In this resigned and Christian temper she pursued her journey, until she was beyond this place of melancholy recollections, and not distant from the village where Butler dwelt, which, with its old-fashioned church and steeple, rises among a tuft of trees, occupying the ridge of an eminence to the south of Edinburgh. At a quarter of a mile's distance is a clumsy square tower, the residence of the Laird of Libberton, who, in former times, with the habits of the predatory chivalry of Germany, is said frequently to have annoyed the city of Edinburgh, by intercepting the supplies and merchandise which came to the town from the southward.

This village, its tower, and its church, did not lie precisely in Jeanie's road towards England; but they were not much aside from it, and the village was the abode of Butler. She had resolved to see him in the beginning of her journey, because she conceived him the most proper person to write to her father concerning her resolution and her hopes. There was probably another reason latent in her affectionate bosom. She wished once more to see the object of so early and so sincere an attachment, before commencing a pilgrimage, the perils of which she did not disguise from herself, although she did not allow them so to press upon her mind as to diminish the strength and energy of her resolution. A visit to a lover from a young person in a higher rank of life than Jeanie's, would have had something forward and improper in its character. But the simplicity of her rural habits was unacquainted with these punctilious ideas of decorum, and no notion, therefore, of impropriety crossed her imagination, as, setting out upon a long journey, she went to bid adieu to an early friend.

There was still another motive that pressed upon her mind with additional force as she approached the village. She had looked anxiously for Butler in the court-house, and had expected that certainly, in some part of that eventful day, he would have appeared to bring such countenance and support as he could give to his old friend, and the protector of his youth, even if her own claims were laid aside.

She knew, indeed, that he was under a certain degree of restraint; but she still had hoped that he would have found means to emancipate himself from it, at least for one day. In short, the wild and wayward thoughts which Wordsworth has described as rising in an absent lover's imagination, suggested, as the only explanation of his absence, that Butler must be very ill. And so much had this wrought on her imagination, that when she approached the cottage where her lover occupied a small apartment, and which had been pointed out to her by a maiden with a milk-pail on her head, she trembled at anticipating the answer she might receive on inquiring for him.

Her fears in this case had, indeed, only hit upon the truth. Butler, whose constitution was natu-

rally feeble, did not soon recover the fatigue of body and distress of mind which he had suffered, in consequence of the tragical events with which our narrative commenced. The painful idea that his character was breathed on by suspicion, was an aggravation to his distress.

But the most cruel addition was the absolute prohibition laid by the magistrates on his holding any communication with Deans or his family. It had unfortunately appeared likely to them, that some intercourse might be again attempted with that family by Robertson, through the medium of Butler, and this they were anxious to intercept, or prevent if possible. The measure was not meant as a harsh or injurious severity on the part of the magistrates; but, in Butler's circumstances, it pressed cruelly hard. He felt he must be suffering under the bad opinion of the person who was dearest to him, from an imputation of unkind desertion, the most alien to his nature.

This painful thought, pressing on a frame already injured, brought on a succession of slow and lingering feverish attacks, which greatly impaired his health, and at length rendered him incapable even of the sedentary duties of the school, on which his bread depended. Fortunately, old Mr Whackbairn, who was the principal teacher of the little parochial establishment, was sincerely attached to Butler. Besides that he was sensible of his merits and value as an assistant, which had greatly raised the credit of his little school, the ancient pedagogue, who had himself been tolerably educated, retained some taste for classical lore, and would gladly relax, after the drudgery of the school was over, by conning over a few pages of Horace or Juvenal with his usher. A similarity of taste begot kindness, and accordingly he saw Butler's increasing debility with great compassion, roused up his own energies to teaching the school in the morning hours, insisted upon his assistant's reposing himself at that period, and, besides, supplied him with such comforts as the patient's situation required, and his own means were inadequate to compass.

Such was Butler's situation, scarce able to drag himself to the place where his daily drudgery must gain his daily bread, and racked with a thousand fearful anticipations concerning the fate of those who were dearest to him in the world, when the trial and condemnation of Effie Deans put the copestone upon his mental misery.

He had a particular account of these events from a fellow-student who resided in the same village, and who, having been present on the melancholy occasion, was able to place it in all its agony of horrors before his excruciated imagination. That sleep should have visited his eyes after such a curfew-note, was impossible. A thousand dreadful visions haunted his imagination all night, and in the morning he was awaked from a feverish slumber, by the only circumstance which could have added to his distress,—the visit of an intrusive ass.

This unwelcome visitant was no other than Bartoline Saddletree. The worthy and sapient burgher had kept his appointment at MacCroskie's, with Plumdamas and some other neighbours, to discuss the Duke of Argyle's speech, the justice of Effie Deans's condemnation, and the improbability of her obtaining a reprieve. This sage conclave disputed high and drank deep, and on the next morning Bartoline felt, as he expressed it, as if his head was like a "confused progress of writs."

To bring his reflective powers to their usual serenity, Saddletree resolved to take a morning's ride upon a certain hackney, which he, Plumdamas, and another honest shopkeeper, combined to maintain by joint subscription, for occasional jaunts for the purpose of business or exercise. As Saddletree had two children boarded with Whackbairn, and was, as we have seen, rather fond of Butler's society, he turned his palfrey's head towards Libberton, and came, as we have already said, to give the unfortunate usher that additional vexation, of which Imogene complains so feelingly, when she says,

> "I'm sprighted with a fool—
> Sprighted and anger'd worse."

If any thing could have added gall to bitterness, it was the choice which Saddletree made of a subject for his prosing harangues, being the trial of Effie Deans, and the probability of her being executed. Every word fell on Butler's ear like the knell of a death-bell, or the note of a screech-owl.

Jeanie paused at the door of her lover's humble abode upon hearing the loud and pompous tones of Saddletree sounding from the inner apartment, "Credit me, it will be sae, Mr Butler. Brandy cannot save her. She maun gang down the Bow wi' the lad in the pioted coat[1] at her heels.—I am sorry for the lassie, but the law, sir, maun hae its course—

> 'Vivat Rex,
> Currat Lex,'

as the poet has it, in whilk of Horace's odes I know not."

Here Butler groaned, in utter impatience of the brutality and ignorance which Bartoline had contrived to amalgamate into one sentence. But Saddletree, like other prosers, was blessed with a happy obtuseness of perception concerning the unfavourable impression which he sometimes made on his auditors. He proceeded to deal forth his scraps of legal knowledge without mercy, and concluded by asking Butler, with great self-complacency, "Was it na a pity my father didna send me to Utrecht? Havena I missed the chance to turn out as *clarissimus* an *ictus*, as auld Grunwiggin himsell?—Whatfor dinna ye speak, Mr Butler? Wad I no hae been a *clarissimus ictus*?—Eh, man."

"I really do not understand you, Mr Saddletree," said Butler, thus pushed hard for an answer. His faint and exhausted tone of voice was instantly drowned in the sonorous bray of Bartoline.

"No understand me, man?—*Ictus* is Latin for a lawyer, is it not?"

"Not that ever I heard of," answered Butler, in the same dejected tone.

"The deil ye didna!—See, man, I got the word but this morning out of a memorial of Mr Crossmyloof's—see, there it is, *ictus clarissimus et perti—peritissimus*—it's a' Latin, for it's printed in the Italian types."

"O, you mean *juris-consultus*—*Ictus* is an abbreviation for *juris-consultus*."

"Dinna tell me, man," persevered Saddletree,

[1] The executioner, in livery of black or dark grey and silver, likened by low wit to a magpie.

" there 's nae abbreviates except in adjudications; and this is a' about a servitude of water-drap — that is to say, *tillicidian*,[1] (maybe ye 'll say that 's no Latin neither,) in Mary King's Close in the High Street."

" Very likely," said poor Butler, overwhelmed by the noisy perseverance of his visiter. " I am not able to dispute with you."

" Few folk are — few folk are, Mr Butler, though I say it, that shouldna say it," returned Bartoline, with great delight. " Now, it will be twa hours yet or ye 're wanted in the schule, and as ye are no weel, I 'll sit wi' you to divert ye, and explain t' ye the nature of a *tillicidian*. Ye maun ken, the petitioner, Mrs Crombie, a very decent woman, is a friend of mine, and I hae stude her friend in this case, and brought her wi' credit into the court, and I doubtna that in due time she will win out o't wi' credit, win she or lose she. Ye see, being an inferior tenement or laigh house, we grant ourselves to be burdened wi' the *tillicide*, that is, that we are obligated to receive the natural water-drap of the superior tenement, sae far as the same fa's frae the heavens, or the roof of our neighbour's house, and from thence by the gutters or eaves upon our laigh tenement. But the other night comes a Highland quean of a lass, and she flashes, God kens what, out at the eastmost window of Mrs MacPhail's house, that 's the superior tenement. I believe the auld women wad hae agreed, for Luckie MacPhail sent down the lass to tell my friend Mrs Crombie that she had made the gardyloo out of the wrang window, out of respect for twa Highlandmen that were speaking Gaelic in the close below the right ane. But luckily for Mrs Crombie, I just chanced to come in in time to break aff the communing, for it 's a pity the point suldna be tried. We had Mrs MacPhail into the Ten-Mark Court — The Hieland limmer of a lass wanted to swear herself free — but haud ye there, says I ——"

The detailed account of this important suit might have lasted until poor Butler's hour of rest was completely exhausted, had not Saddletree been interrupted by the noise of voices at the door. The woman of the house where Butler lodged, on returning with her pitcher from the well, whence she had been fetching water for the family, found our heroine Jeanie Deans standing at the door, impatient of the prolix harangue of Saddletree, yet unwilling to enter until he should have taken his leave.

The good woman abridged the period of hesitation by inquiring, " Was ye wanting the gudeman or me, lass ?"

" I wanted to speak with Mr Butler, if he 's at leisure," replied Jeanie.

" Gang in by then, my woman," answered the goodwife; and opening the door of a room, she announced the additional visiter with, " Mr Butler, here 's a lass wants to speak t' ye."

The surprise of Butler was extreme, when Jeanie, who seldom stirred half a mile from home, entered his apartment upon this annunciation.

" Good God !" he said, starting from his chair, while alarm restored to his cheek the colour of which sickness had deprived it; " some new misfortune must have happened !"

" None, Mr Reuben, but what you must hae heard of — but O, ye are looking ill yourself !" — for the " hectic of a moment" had not concealed from her affectionate eyes the ravages which lingering disease and anxiety of mind had made in her lover's person.

" No: I am well — quite well," said Butler, with eagerness; " if I can do any thing to assist you, Jeanie — or your father."

" Ay, to be sure," said Saddletree; " the family may be considered as limited to them twa now, just as if Effie had never been in the tailzie, puir thing. But, Jeanie lass, what brings you out to Libberton sae air in the morning, and your father lying ill in the Luckenbooths ?"

" I had a message frae my father to Mr Butler," said Jeanie, with embarrassment; but instantly feeling ashamed of the fiction to which she had resorted, for her love of and veneration for truth was almost quaker-like, she corrected herself — " That is to say, I wanted to speak with Mr Butler about some business of my father's and puir Effie's."

" Is it law business ?" said Bartoline; " because if it be, ye had better take my opinion on the subject than his."

" It is not just law business," said Jeanie, who saw considerable inconvenience might arise from letting Mr Saddletree into the secret purpose of her journey; " but I want Mr Butler to write a letter for me."

" Very right," said Mr Saddletree; " and if ye 'll tell me what it is about, I 'll dictate to Mr Butler as Mr Crossmyloof does to his clerk. — Get your pen and ink *in initialibus*, Mr Butler."

Jeanie looked at Butler, and wrung her hands with vexation and impatience.

" I believe, Mr Saddletree," said Butler, who saw the necessity of getting rid of him at all events, " that Mr Whackbairn will be somewhat affronted, if you do not hear your boys called up to their lessons."

" Indeed, Mr Butler, and that 's as true; and I promised to ask a half play-day to the schule, so that the bairns might gang and see the hanging, which canna but have a pleasing effect on their young minds, seeing there is no knowing what they may come to themselves. — Odd so, I didna mind ye were here, Jeanie Deans; but ye maun use yoursell to hear the matter spoken o'. — Keep Jeanie here till I come back, Mr Butler; I winna bide ten minutes."

And with this unwelcome assurance of an immediate return, he relieved them of the embarrassment of his presence.

" Reuben," said Jeanie, who saw the necessity of using the interval of his absence in discussing what had brought her there, " I am bound on a lang journey — I am gaun to Lunnon to ask Effie's life of the king and of the queen."

" Jeanie ! you are surely not yourself," answere Butler, in the utmost surprise; " *you* go to London — *you* address the king and queen !"

" And what for no, Reuben ?" said Jeanie, with all the composed simplicity of her character; " it 's but speaking to a mortal man and woman when a' is done. And their hearts maun be made o' flesh and blood like other folk's, and Effie's story wad melt them were they stane. Forby, I hae heard that they are no sic bad folk as what the Jacobites ca' them."

" Yes, Jeanie," said Butler; " but their magni-

[1] He meant, probably, *stillicidium*.

ficence—their retinue—the difficulty of getting audience?"

"I have thought of a' that, Reuben, and it shall not break my spirit. Nae doubt their claiths will be very grand, wi' their crowns on their heads, and their sceptres in their hands, like the great King Ahasuerus when he sate upon his royal throne fornent the gate of his house, as we are told in Scripture. But I have that within me that will keep my heart from failing, and I am amaist sure that I will be strengthened to speak the errand I came for."

"Alas! alas!" said Butler, "the kings now-a-days do not sit in the gate to administer justice, as in patriarchal times. I know as little of courts as you do, Jeanie, by experience; but by reading and report I know, that the King of Britain does every thing by means of his ministers."

"And if they be upright, God-fearing ministers," said Jeanie, "it's sae muckle the better chance for Effie and me."

"But you do not even understand the most ordinary words relating to a court," said Butler; "by the ministry is meant not clergymen, but the king's official servants."

"Nae doubt," returned Jeanie, "he maun hae a great number mair, I daur to say, than the duchess has at Dalkeith, and great folk's servants are aye mair saucy than themselves. But I'll be decently put on, and I'll offer them a trifle o' siller, as if I came to see the palace. Or, if they scruple that, I'll tell them I'm come on a business of life and death, and then they will surely bring me to speech of the king and queen?"

Butler shook his head. "O Jeanie, this is entirely a wild dream. You can never see them but through some great lord's intercession, and I think it is scarce possible even then."

"Weel, but maybe I can get that too," said Jeanie, "with a little helping from you."

"From me, Jeanie! this is the wildest imagination of all."

"Ay, but it is not, Reuben. Havena I heard you say, that your grandfather (that my father never likes to hear about) did some gude langsyne to the forbear of this MacCallummore, when he was Lord of Lorn?"

"He did so," said Butler, eagerly, "and I can prove it.—I will write to the Duke of Argyle—report speaks him a good kindly man, as he is known for a brave soldier and true patriot—I will conjure him to stand between your sister and this cruel fate. There is but a poor chance of success, but we will try all means."

"We *must* try all means," replied Jeanie; "but writing winna do it—a letter canna look, and pray, and beg, and beseech, as the human voice can do to the human heart. A letter's like the music that the ladies have for their spinets—naething but black scores, compared to the same tune played or sung. It's word of mouth maun do it, or naething, Reuben."

"You are right," said Reuben, recollecting his firmness, "and I will hope that Heaven has suggested to your kind heart and firm courage the only possible means of saving the life of this unfortunate girl. But, Jeanie, you must not take this most perilous journey alone; I have an interest in you, and I will not agree that my Jeanie throws herself away. You must even, in the present circumstances, give me a husband's right to protect you, and I will go with you myself on this journey, and assist you to do your duty by your family."

"Alas, Reuben!" said Jeanie in her turn, "this must not be; a pardon will not gie my sister her fair fame again, or make me a bride fitting for an honest man and an usefu' minister. Wha wad mind what he said in the pu'pit, that had to wife the sister of a woman that was condemned for sic wickedness!"

"But, Jeanie," pleaded her lover, "I do not believe, and I cannot believe, that Effie has done this deed."

"Heaven bless ye for saying sae, Reuben," answered Jeanie; "but she maun bear the blame o't after all."

"But the blame, were it even justly laid on her, does not fall on you."

"Ah, Reuben, Reuben," replied the young woman, "ye ken it is a blot that spreads to kith and kin.—Ichabod—as my poor father says—the glory is departed from our house; for the poorest man's house has a glory, where there are true hands, a divine heart, and an honest fame—And the last has gane frae us a'."

"But, Jeanie, consider your word and plighted faith to me; and would you undertake such a journey without a man to protect you?—and who should that protector be but your husband?"

"You are kind and good, Reuben, and wad take me wi' a' my shame, I doubtna. But ye canna but own that this is no time to marry or be given in marriage. Na, if that suld ever be, it maun be in another and a better season.—And, dear Reuben, ye speak of protecting me on my journey—Alas! who will protect and take care of you?—your very limbs tremble with standing for ten minutes on the floor; how could you undertake a journey as far as Lunnon?"

"But I am strong—I am well," continued Butler, sinking in his seat totally exhausted, "at least I shall be quite well to-morrow."

"Ye see, and ye ken, ye maun just let me depart," said Jeanie, after a pause; and then taking his extended hand, and gazing kindly in his face, she added, "It's e'en a grief the mair to me to see you in this way. But ye maun keep up your heart for Jeanie's sake, for if she isna your wife, she will never be the wife of living man. And now gie me the paper for MacCallummore, and bid God speed me on my way."

There was something of romance in Jeanie's venturous resolution; yet, on consideration, as it seemed impossible to alter it by persuasion, or to give her assistance but by advice, Butler, after some farther debate, put into her hands the paper she desired, which, with the muster-roll in which it was folded up, were the sole memorials of the stout and enthusiastic Bible Butler, his grandfather. While Butler sought this document, Jeanie had time to take up his pocket Bible. "I have marked a scripture," she said, as she again laid it down, "with your kylevine pen, that will be useful to us baith. And ye maun tak the trouble, Reuben, to write a' this to my father, for, God help me, I have neither head nor hand for lang letters at ony time, forby now; and I trust him entirely to you, and I trust you will soon be permitted to see him. And, Reuben, when ye do win to the speech o' him, mind a the auld man's bits o' ways, for Jeanie's sake;

and dinna speak o' Latin or English terms to him, for he 's o' the auld warld, and downa bide to be fashed wi' them, though I daresay he may be wrang. And dinna ye say muckle to him, but set him on speaking himsell, for he 'll bring himsell mair comfort that way. And O, Reuben, the poor lassie in yon dungeon!—but I needna bid your kind heart —gie her what comfort ye can as soon as they will let ye see her—tell her—But I maunna speak mair about her, for I maunna take leave o' ye wi' the tear in my ee, for that wadna be canny.—God bless, ye, Reuben!"

To avoid so ill an omen she left the room hastily, while her features yet retained the mournful and affectionate smile which she had compelled them to wear, in order to support Butler's spirits.

It seemed, as if the power of sight, of speech, and of reflection, had left him as she disappeared from the room, which she had entered and retired from so like an apparition. Saddletree, who entered immediately afterwards, overwhelmed him with questions, which he answered without understanding them, and with legal disquisitions, which conveyed to him no iota of meaning. At length the learned burgess recollected that there was a Baron Court to be held at Loanhead that day, and though it was hardly worth while, "he might as weel go to see if there was ony thing doing, as he was acquainted with the baron-bailie, who was a decent man, and would be glad of a word of legal advice."

So soon as he departed, Butler flew to the Bible, the last book which Jeanie had touched. To his extreme surprise, a paper, containing two or three pieces of gold, dropped from the book. With a black-lead pencil, she had marked the sixteenth and twenty-fifth verses of the thirty-seventh Psalm,—"A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of the wicked."—"I have been young and am now old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread."

Deeply impressed with the affectionate delicacy which shrouded its own generosity under the cover of a providential supply to his wants, he pressed the gold to his lips with more ardour than ever the metal was greeted with by a miser. To emulate her devout firmness and confidence seemed now the pitch of his ambition, and his first task was to write an account to David Deans of his daughter's resolution and journey southward. He studied every sentiment, and even every phrase, which he thought could reconcile the old man to her extraordinary resolution. The effect which this epistle produced will be hereafter adverted to. Butler committed it to the charge of an honest clown, who had frequent dealings with Deans in the sale of his dairy produce, and who readily undertook a journey to Edinburgh, to put the letter into his own hands.[1]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"My native land, good night!"
LORD BYRON.

IN the present day, a journey from Edinburgh to London is a matter at once safe, brief, and simple, however inexperienced or unprotected the traveller. Numerous coaches of different rates of charge, and as many packets, are perpetually passing and repassing betwixt the capital of Britain and her northern sister, so that the most timid or indolent may execute such a journey upon a few hours' notice. But it was different in 1737. So slight and infrequent was the intercourse betwixt London and Edinburgh, that men still alive remember that upon one occasion the mail from the former city arrived at the General Post-Office in Scotland with only one letter in it.[2] The usual mode of travelling was by means of post-horses, the traveller occupying one, and his guide another, in which manner, by relays of horses from stage to stage, the journey might be accomplished in a wonderfully short time by those who could endure fatigue. To have the bones shaken to pieces by a constant change of those hacks was a luxury for the rich—the poor were under the necessity of using the mode of conveyance with which nature had provided them.

With a strong heart, and a frame patient of fatigue, Jeanie Deans, travelling at the rate of twenty miles a-day, and sometimes farther, traversed the southern part of Scotland, and advanced as far as Durham.

Hitherto she had been either among her own country-folk, or those to whom her bare feet and tartan screen were objects too familiar to attract much attention. But as she advanced, she perceived that both circumstances exposed her to sarcasm and taunts, which she might otherwise have escaped; and although in her heart she thought it unkind, and inhospitable, to sneer at a passing stranger on account of the fashion of her attire, yet she had the good sense to alter those parts of her dress which attracted ill-natured observation. Her checqued screen was deposited carefully in her bundle, and she conformed to the national extravagance of wearing shoes and stockings for the whole day. She confessed afterwards, that, "besides the wastrife, it was lang or she could walk sae comfortably with the shoes as without them; but there was often a bit saft heather by the road-side, and that helped her weel on." The want of the screen, which was drawn over the head like a veil, she supplied by a *bon-grace*, as she called it; a large straw bonnet, like those worn by the English maidens when labouring in the fields. "But I thought unco shame o' mysell," she said, "the first time I put on a married woman's *bon-grace*, and me a single maiden."

With these changes she had little, as she said, to make "her kenspeckle when she didna speak," but her accent and language drew down on her so many jests and gibes, couched in a worse *patois* by far than her own, that she soon found it was her interest to talk as little and as seldom as possible. She answered, therefore, civil salutations of chance passengers with a civil curtsey, and chose, with anxious circumspection, such places of repose as looked at once most decent and sequestered. She found the common people of England, although inferior in courtesy to strangers, such as was then practised in her own more unfrequented country, yet, upon the whole, by no means deficient in the

[1] By dint of assiduous research I am enabled to certiorate the reader, that the name of this person was Saunders Broadfoot, and that he dealt in the wholesome commodity called kirn-milk, (*Anglicè*, butter milk.)—J. C.

[2] The fact is certain. The single epistle was addressed to the principal director of the British Linen Company.

real duties of hospitality. She readily obtained food, and shelter, and protection at a very moderate rate, which sometimes the generosity of mine host altogether declined, with a blunt apology,—"Thee hast a long way afore thee, lass; and I'se ne'er take penny out o' a single woman's purse; it's the best friend thou can have on the road."

It often happened, too, that mine hostess was struck with "the tidy, nice Scotch body," and procured her an escort, or a cast in a waggon, for some part of the way, or gave her a useful advice and recommendation respecting her resting-places.

At York our pilgrim stopped for the best part of a day, partly to recruit her strength,—partly because she had the good luck to obtain a lodging in an inn kept by a countrywoman,—partly to indite two letters to her father and Reuben Butler; an operation of some little difficulty, her habits being by no means those of literary composition. That to her father was in the following words:

"Dearest Father,

"I make my present pilgrimage more heavy and burdensome, through the sad occasion to reflect that it is without your knowledge, which, God knows, was far contrary to my heart; for Scripture says, that 'the vow of the daughter should not be binding without the consent of the father,' wherein it may be I have been guilty to tak this wearie journey without your consent. Nevertheless, it was borne in upon my mind that I should be an instrument to help my poor sister in this extremity of needcessity, otherwise I wad not, for wealth or for world's gear, or for the haill lands of Da'keith and Lugton, have done the like o' this, without your free will and knowledge. O, dear father, as ye wad desire a blessing on my journey, and upon your household, speak a word or write a line of comfort to yon poor prisoner. If she has sinned, she has sorrowed and suffered, and ye ken better than me, that we maun forgie others, as we pray to be forgien. Dear father, forgive my saying this muckle, for it doth not become a young head to instruct grey hairs; but I am sae far frae ye, that my heart yearns to ye a', and fain wad I hear that ye had forgien her trespass, and sae I nae doubt say mair than may become me. The folk here are civil, and, like the barbarians unto the holy apostle, hae shewn me much kindness; and there are a sort of chosen people in the land, for they hae some kirks without organs that are like ours, and are called meeting-houses, where the minister preaches without a gown. But most of the country are prelatists, whilk is awfu' to think; and I saw twa men that were ministers following hunds, as bauld as Roslin or Driden, the young Laird of Loup-the-dike, or ony wild gallant in Lothian. A sorrowfu' sight to behold! O, dear father, may a blessing be with your downlying and up-rising, and remember in your prayers your affectionate daughter to command,

"Jean Deans."

A postscript bore, "I learned from a decent woman, a grazier's widow, that they hae a cure for the muir-ill in Cumberland, whilk is ane pint, as they ca't, of yill, whilk is a dribble in comparison of our gawsie Scots pint, and hardly a mutchkin, boil'd wi' sope and hartshorn draps, and toomed doun the creature's throat wi' ane whorn. Ye might try it on the bauson-faced year-auld quey; an it does nae gude, it can do nae ill.—She was a kind woman, and seemed skeely about horned beasts. When I reach Lunnon, I intend to gang to our cousin Mrs Glass, the tobacconist, at the sign o' the Thistle, wha is so ceevil as to send you down your spleuchan-fu' anes a-year; and as she must be well kend in Lunnon, I doubt not easily to find out where she lives."

Being seduced into betraying our heroine's confidence thus far, we will stretch our communication a step beyond, and impart to the reader her letter to her lover.

"Mr Reuben Butler,

"Hoping this will find you better, this comes to say, that I have reached this great town safe, and am not wearied with walking, but the better for it. And I have seen many things which I trust to tell you one day, also the muckle kirk of this place; and all around the city are mills, whilk havena muckle wheels nor mill-dams, but gang by the wind—strange to behold. Ane miller asked me to gang in and see it work, but I wad not, for I am not come to the south to make acquaintance with strangers. I keep the straight road, and just beck if ony body speaks to me ceevilly, and answers naebody with the tong but women of mine ain sect. I wish, Mr Butler, I kend ony thing that wad mak ye weel, for they hae mair medicines in this town of York than wad cure a' Scotland, and surely some of them wad be gude for your complaints. If ye had a kindly motherly body to nurse ye, and no to let ye waste yourself wi' reading—whilk ye read mair than eneugh wi' the bairns in the schule—and to gie ye warm milk in the morning, I wad be mair easy for ye. Dear Mr Butler, keep a good heart, for we are in the hands of Ane that kens better what is gude for us than we ken what is for oursells. I hae nae doubt to do that for which I am come—I canna doubt it—I winna think to doubt it—because, if I haena full assurance, how shall I bear myself with earnest entreaties in the great folk's presence? But to ken that ane's purpose is right, and to make their heart strong, is the way to get through the warst day's darg. The bairns' rime says, the warst blast of the borrowing days[1] couldna kill the three silly poor hog-lams. And if it be God's pleasure, we that are sindered in sorrow may meet again in joy, even on this hither side of Jordan. I dinna bid ye mind what I said at our partin' anent my poor father and that misfortunate lassie, for I ken you will do sae for the sake of Christian charity, whilk is mair than the entreaties of her that is your servant to command,

"Jeanie Deans."

This letter also had a postscript. "Dear Reuben, If ye think that it wad hae been right for me to have said mair and kinder things to ye, just think that I hae written sae, since I am sure that I wish a' that is kind and right to ye and by ye. Ye will think I am turned waster, for I wear clean hose and shoon every day; but it's the fashion here for decent bodies, and ilka land has its ain land-

[1] The three last days of March, old style, are called the Borrowing Days; for as they are remarked to be unusually stormy, it is feigned that March had borrowed them from April, to extend the sphere of his rougher sway. The rhyme on the subject is quoted in Leyden's edition of the Complaynt of Scotland.

law. Ower and aboon a', if laughing days were e'er to come back again till us, ye wad laugh weel to see my round face at the far end of a strae *bon-grace*, that looks as muckle and round as the middell aisle in Libberton Kirk. But it sheds the sun weel aff, and keeps unceevil folk frae staring as if ane were a worrycow. I sall tell ye by writ how I come on wi' the Duke of Argyle, when I won up to Lunnon. Direct a line, to say how ye are, to me, to the charge of Mrs Margaret Glass, tobacconist, at the sign of the Thistle, Lunnon, whilk, if it assures me of your health, will make my mind sae muckle easier. Excuse bad spelling and writing, as I have ane ill pen."

The orthography of these epistles may seem to the southron to require a better apology than the letter expresses, though a bad pen was the excuse of a certain Galwegian laird for bad spelling; but, on behalf of the heroine, I would have them to know, that, thanks to the care of Butler, Jeanie Deans wrote and spelled fifty times better than half the women of rank in Scotland at that period, whose strange orthography and singular diction form the strongest contrast to the good sense which their correspondence usually intimates.

For the rest, in the tenor of these epistles, Jeanie expressed, perhaps, more hopes, a firmer courage, and better spirits, than she actually felt. But this was with the amiable idea of relieving her father and lover from apprehensions on her account, which she was sensible must greatly add to their other troubles. "If they think me weel, and like to do weel," said the poor pilgrim to herself, "my father will be kinder to Effie, and Butler will be kinder to himself. For I ken weel that they will think mair o' me than I do o' mysell."

Accordingly, she sealed her letters carefully, and put them into the post-office with her own hand, after many inquiries concerning the time in which they were likely to reach Edinburgh. When this duty was performed, she readily accepted her landlady's pressing invitation to dine with her, and remain till the next morning. The hostess, as we have said, was her countrywoman, and the eagerness with which Scottish people meet, communicate, and, to the extent of their power, assist each other, although it is often objected to us as a prejudice and narrowness of sentiment, seems, on the contrary, to arise from a most justifiable and honourable feeling of patriotism, combined with a conviction, which, if undeserved, would long since have been confuted by experience, that the habits and principles of the nation are a sort of guarantee for the character of the individual. At any rate, if the extensive influence of this national partiality be considered as an additional tie, binding man to man, and calling forth the good offices of such as can render them to the countryman who happens to need them, we think it must be found to exceed, as an active and efficient motive to generosity, that more impartial and wider principle of general benevolence, which we have sometimes seen pleaded as an excuse for assisting no individual whatever.

Mrs Bickerton, lady of the ascendant of the Seven Stars, in the Castle-gate, York, was deeply infected with the unfortunate prejudices of her country. Indeed, she displayed so much kindness to Jeanie Deans, (because she herself, being a Merse woman, *marched* with Mid-Lothian, in which Jeanie was born,) shewed such motherly regard to her, and such anxiety for her farther progress, that Jeanie thought herself safe, though by temper sufficiently cautious, in communicating her whole story to her.

Mrs Bickerton raised her hands and eyes at the recital, and exhibited much wonder and pity. But she also gave some effectual good advice.

She required to know the strength of Jeanie's purse, reduced by her deposit at Libberton, and the necessary expense of her journey, to about fifteen pounds. "This," she said, "would do very well, providing she would carry it a' safe to London."

"Safe!" answered Jeanie; "I 'se warrant my carrying it safe, bating the needful expenses."

"Ay, but highwaymen, lassie," said Mrs Bickerton; "for ye are come into a more civilized, that is to say, a more roguish country than the north, and how ye are to get forward, I do not profess to know. If ye could wait here eight days, our waggons would go up, and I would recommend you to Joe Broadwheel, who would see you safe to the Swan and two Necks. And dinna sneeze at Joe, if he should be for drawing up wi' you," (continued Mrs Bickerton, her acquired English mingling with her national or original dialect,) "he 's a handy boy, and a wanter, and no lad better thought o' on the road; and the English make good husbands enough, witness my poor man, Moses Bickerton, as is i' the kirkyard."

Jeanie hastened to say, that she could not possibly wait for the setting forth of Joe Broadwheel; being internally by no means gratified with the idea of becoming the object of his attention during the journey.

"Aweel, lass," answered the good landlady, "then thou must pickle in thine ain poke-nook, and buckle thy girdle thine ain gate. But take my advice, and hide thy gold in thy stays, and keep a piece or two and some silver, in case thou be 'st spoke withal; for there 's as wud lads haunt within a day's walk from hence, as on the braes of Doun in Perthshire. And, lass, thou maunna gang staring through Lunnon, asking wha kens Mrs Glass at the sign o' the Thistle; marry, they would laugh thee to scorn. But gang thou to this honest man," and she put a direction into Jeanie's hand, "he kens maist part of the sponsible Scottish folk in the city, and he will find out your friend for thee."

Jeanie took the little introductory letter with sincere thanks; but, something alarmed on the subject of the highway robbers, her mind recurred to what Ratcliffe had mentioned to her, and briefly relating the circumstances which placed a document so extraordinary in her hands, she put the paper he had given her into the hand of Mrs Bickerton.

The Lady of the Seven Stars did not, indeed ring a bell, because such was not the fashion of the time, but she whistled on a silver-call, which was hung by her side, and a tight serving-maiden entered the room.

"Tell Dick Ostler to come here," said Mrs Bickerton.

Dick Ostler accordingly made his appearance; —a queer, knowing, shambling animal, with a hatchet-face, a squint, a game-arm, and a limp.

"Dick Ostler," said Mrs Bickerton, in a tone of authority that shewed she was (at least by adoption) Yorkshire too, "thou knowest most people and most things o' the road."

"Eye, eye, God help me, mistress," said Dick shrugging his shoulders betwixt a repentant and a knowing expression—"Eye! I ha' know'd a thing or twa i' ma day, mistress." He looked sharp and laughed—looked grave and sighed, as one who was prepared to take the matter either way.

"Kenst thou this wee bit paper amang the rest, man?" said Mrs Bickerton, handing him the protection which Ratcliffe had given Jeanie Deans.

When Dick had looked at the paper, he winked with one eye, extended his grotesque mouth from ear to ear, like a navigable canal, scratched his head powerfully, and then said, "Ken!—ay—maybe we ken summat, an it werena for harm to him, mistress!"

"None in the world," said Mrs Bickerton; "only a dram of Hollands to thyself, man, an thou will 't speak."

"Why, then," said Dick, giving the head-band of his breeches a knowing hoist with one hand, and kicking out one foot behind him to accommodate the adjustment of that important habiliment, "I dares to say the pass will be kend weel eneugh on the road, an that be all."

"But what sort of a lad was he?" said Mrs Bickerton, winking to Jeanie, as proud of her knowing ostler.

"Why, what ken I?—Jim the Rat—why he was Cock o' the North within this twelmonth—he and Scotch Wilson, Handie Dandie, as they called him—but he 's been out o' this country a while, as I rackon; but ony gentleman, as keeps the road o' this side Stamford, will respect Jim's pass."

Without asking farther questions, the landlady filled Dick Ostler a bumper of Hollands. He ducked with his head and shoulders, scraped with his more advanced hoof, bolted the alcohol, to use the learned phrase, and withdrew to his own domains.

"I would advise thee, Jeanie," said Mrs Bickerton, "an thou meetest with ugly customers o' the road, to shew them this bit paper, for it will serve thee, assure thyself."

A neat little supper concluded the evening. The exported Scotswoman, Mrs Bickerton by name, eat heartily of one or two seasoned dishes, drank some sound old ale, and a glass of stiff negus; while she gave Jeanie a history of her gout, admiring how it was possible that she, whose fathers and mothers for many generations had been farmers in Lammermuir, could have come by a disorder so totally unknown to them. Jeanie did not choose to offend her friendly landlady, by speaking her mind on the probable origin of this complaint; but she thought on the flesh-pots of Egypt, and, in spite of all entreaties to better fare, made her evening meal upon vegetables, with a glass of fair water.

Mrs Bickerton assured her, that the acceptance of any reckoning was entirely out of the question, furnished her with credentials to her correspondent in London, and to several inns upon the road where she had some influence or interest, reminded her of the precautions she should adopt for concealing her money, and as she was to depart early in the morning, took leave of her very affectionately, taking her word that she would visit her on her return to Scotland, and tell her how she had managed, and that *summum bonum* for a gossip, "all how and about it." This Jeanie faithfully promised.

CHAPTER XXIX.

> And Need and Misery, Vice and Danger, bind,
> In sad alliance, each degraded mind.

As our traveller set out early on the ensuing morning to prosecute her journey, and was in the act of leaving the inn-yard Dick Ostler, who either had risen early or neglected to go to bed, either circumstance being equally incident to his calling, hollowed out after her,—"The top of the morning to you, Moggie. Have a care o' Gunderby Hill, young one. Robin Hood's dead and gwone, but there be takers yet in the vale of Bever." Jeanie looked at him as if to request a farther explanation, but, with a leer, a shuffle, and a shrug, inimitable, (unless by Emery,) Dick turned again to the raw-boned steed which he was currying, and sung as he employed the comb and brush,—

> "Robin Hood was a yeoman right good,
> And his bow was of trusty yew;
> And if Robin said stand on the King's lea-land,
> Pray, why should not we say so too?"

Jeanie pursued her journey without farther inquiry, for there was nothing in Dick's manner that inclined her to prolong their conference. A painful day's journey brought her to Ferrybridge, the best inn, then and since, upon the great northern road; and an introduction from Mrs Bickerton, added to her own simple and quiet manners, so propitiated the landlady of the Swan in her favour, that the good dame procured her the convenient accommodation of a pillion and post-horse then returning to Tuxford, so that she accomplished, upon the second day after leaving York, the longest journey she had yet made. She was a good deal fatigued by a mode of travelling to which she was less accustomed than to walking, and it was considerably later than usual on the ensuing morning that she felt herself able to resume her pilgrimage. At noon the hundred-armed Trent, and the blackened ruins of Newark Castle, demolished in the great civil war, lay before her. It may easily be supposed, that Jeanie had no curiosity to make antiquarian researches, but, entering the town, went straight to the inn to which she had been directed at Ferrybridge. While she procured some refreshment, she observed the girl who brought it to her, looked at her several times with fixed and peculiar interest, and at last, to her infinite surprise, inquired if her name was not Deans, and if she was not a Scotchwoman, going to London upon justice business. Jeanie, with all her simplicity of character, had some of the caution of her country, and, according to Scottish universal custom, she answered the question by another, requesting the girl would tell her why she asked these questions?

The Maritornes of the Saracen's Head, Newark replied, "Two women had passed that morning, who had made inquiries after one Jeanie Deans, travelling to London on such an errand, and could scarce be persuaded that she had not passed on."

Much surprised, and somewhat alarmed, (for what is inexplicable is usually alarming,) Jeanie questioned the wench about the particular appearance of these two women, but could only learn that the one was aged, and the other young; that the latter was the taller, and that the former spoke most, and seemed to maintain an authority over her companion, and that both spoke with the Scottish accent.

This conveyed no information whatever, and with an indescribable presentiment of evil designed towards her, Jeanie adopted the resolution of taking post-horses for the next stage. In this, however, she could not be gratified; some accidental circumstances had occasioned what is called a run upon the road, and the landlord could not accommodate her with a guide and horses. After waiting some time, in hopes that a pair of horses that had gone southward would return in time for her use, she at length, feeling ashamed at her own pusillanimity, resolved to prosecute her journey in her usual manner.

"It was all plain road," she was assured, "except a high mountain, called Gunnerby Hill, about three miles from Grantham, which was her stage for the night."

"I 'm glad to hear there 's a hill," said Jeanie, "for baith my sight and my very feet are weary o' sic tracts o' level ground — it looks a' the way between this and York as if a' the land had been trenched and levelled, whilk is very wearisome to my Scotch een. When I lost sight of a muckle blue hill they ca' Ingleboro', I thought I hadna a friend left in this strange land."

"As for the matter of that, young woman," said mine host, "an you be so fond o' hill, I carena an thou couldst carry Gunnerby away with thee in thy lap, for it 's a murder to post-horses. But here 's to thy journey, and mayst thou win well through it, for thou is a bold and a canny lass."

So saying, he took a powerful pull at a solemn tankard of home-brewed ale.

"I hope there is nae bad company on the road, sir?" said Jeanie.

"Why, when it 's clean without them I 'll thatch Groby pool wi' pancakes. But there arena sae mony now; and since they hae lost Jim the Rat, they hold together no better than the men of Marsham when they lost their common. Take a drop ere thou goest," he concluded, offering her the tankard; "thou wilt get naething at night save Grantham gruel, nine grots and a gallon of water."

Jeanie courteously declined the tankard, and inquired what was her "lawing?"

"Thy lawing? Heaven help thee, wench! what ca'st thou that?"

"It is — I was wanting to ken what was to pay," replied Jeanie.

"Pay? Lord help thee! — why nought, woman — we hae drawn no liquor but a gill o' beer, and the Saracen's Head can spare a mouthful o' meat to a stranger like o' thee, that cannot speak Christian language. So here 's to thee once more. The same again, quoth Mark of Bellgrave," and he took another profound pull at the tankard.

The travellers who have visited Newark more lately, will not fail to remember the remarkably civil and gentlemanly manners of the person who now keeps the principal inn there, and may find some amusement in contrasting them with those of his more rough predecessor. But we believe it will be found that the polish has worn off none of the real worth of the metal.

Taking leave of her Lincolnshire Gaius, Jeanie resumed her solitary walk, and was somewhat alarmed when evening and twilight overtook her in the open ground which extends to the foot of Gunnerby Hill, and is intersected with patches of copse and with swampy spots. The extensive commons on the north road, most of which are now enclosed, and in general a relaxed state of police, exposed the traveller to a highway robbery in a degree which is now unknown, except in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis. Aware of this circumstance, Jeanie mended her pace when she heard the trampling of a horse behind, and instinctively drew to one side of the road, as if to allow as much room for the rider to pass as might be possible. When the animal came up, she found that it was bearing two women, the one placed on a side-saddle, the other on a pillion behind her, as may still occasionally be seen in England.

"A braw good-night to ye, Jeanie Deans," said the foremost female as the horse passed our heroine; "What think ye o' yon bonny hill yonder, lifting its brow to the moon? Trow ye yon 's the gate to heaven, that ye are sae fain of? — maybe we will win there the night yet, God sain us, though our minny here 's rather driegh in the upgang."

The speaker kept changing her seat in the saddle, and half-stopping the horse, as she brought her body round, while the woman that sate behind her on the pillion seemed to urge her on, in words which Jeanie heard but imperfectly.

"Haud your tongue, ye moon-raised b——! what is your business with ——, or with heaven or hell either?"

"Troth, mither, no muckle wi' heaven, I doubt, considering wha I carry ahint me — and as for hell, it will fight its ain battle at its ain time, I 'se be bound. — Come, naggie, trot awa', man, an as thou wert a broomstick, for a witch rides thee —

'With my curtch on my foot, and my shoe on my hand,
I glance like the wildfire through brugh and through land.'"

The tramp of the horse, and the increasing distance, drowned the rest of her song, but Jeanie heard for some time the inarticulate sounds ring along the waste.

Our pilgrim remained stupified with undefined apprehensions. The being named by her name in so wild a manner, and in a strange country, without farther explanation or communing, by a person who thus strangely flitted forward and disappeared before her, came near to the supernatural sounds in Comus: —

> "The airy tongues, which syllable men's names
> On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses."

And although widely different in features, deportment, and rank, from the Lady of that enchanting masque, the continuation of the passage may be happily applied to Jeanie Deans upon this singular alarm: —

> "These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
> The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
> By a strong siding champion — Conscience."

In fact, it was, with the recollection of the affectionate and dutiful errand on which she was engaged, her right, if such a word could be applicable, to expect protection in a task so meritorious. She had not advanced much farther, with a mind calmed by these reflections, when she was disturbed by a new and more instant subject of terror. Two men, who had been lurking among some copse, started up as she advanced, and met her on the road in a menacing manner. "Stand and deliver," said one of them, a short stout fellow, in a smock-frock, such as are worn by wagoners.

"The woman," said the other, a tall thin figure, "does not understand the words of action. — Your money, my precious, or your life!"

"I have but very little money, gentlemen," said poor Jeanie, tendering that portion which she had separated from her principal stock, and kept apart for such an emergency; "but if you are resolved to have it, to be sure you must have it."

"This won't do, my girl. D—n me, if it shall pass!" said the shorter ruffian; "do ye think gentlemen are to hazard their lives on the road to be cheated in this way? We'll have every farthing you have got, or we will strip you to the skin, curse me."

His companion, who seemed to have something like compassion for the horror which Jeanie's countenance now expressed, said, "No, no, Tom, this is one of the precious sisters, and we'll take her word, for once, without putting her to the stripping proof. — Hark ye, my lass, if you'll look up to heaven, and say, this is the last penny you have about ye, why, hang it, we'll let you pass."

"I am not free," answered Jeanie, "to say what I have about me, gentlemen, for there's life and death depends on my journey; but if you leave me as much as finds me bread and water, I'll be satisfied, and thank you, and pray for you."

"D—n your prayers!" said the shorter fellow, "that's a coin that won't pass with us;" and at the same time made a motion to seize her.

"Stay, gentlemen," Ratcliffe's pass suddenly occurring to her; "perhaps you know this paper."

"What devil is she after now, Frank?" said the more savage ruffian—"Do you look at it, for, d—n me if I could read it if it were for the benefit of my clergy."

"This is a jark from Jim Ratcliffe," said the taller, having looked at the bit of paper. "The wench must pass by our cutter's law."

"I say no," answered his companion; "Rat has left the lay, and turned bloodhound, they say."

"We may need a good turn from him all the same," said the taller ruffian again.

"But what are we to do then?" said the shorter man—"We promised, you know, to strip the wench, and send her begging back to her own beggarly country, and now you are for letting her go on."

"I did not say that," said the other fellow, and whispered to his companion, who replied, "Be alive about it then, and don't keep chattering till some travellers come up to nab us."

"You must follow us off the road, young woman," said the taller.

"For the love of God!" exclaimed Jeanie, "as you were born of woman, dinna ask me to leave the road! rather take all I have in the world."

"What the devil is the wench afraid of?" said the other fellow. "I tell you you shall come to no harm; but if you will not leave the road and come with us, d—n me, but I'll beat your brains out where you stand."

"Thou art a rough bear, Tom," said his companion.—"An ye touch her, I'll give ye a shake by the collar shall make the Leicester beans rattle in thy guts.—Never mind him, girl; I will not allow him to lay a finger on you, if you walk quietly on with us; but if you keep jabbering there, d—n me, but I'll leave him to settle it with you."

This threat conveyed all that is terrible to the imagination of poor Jeanie, who saw in him that "was of milder mood" her only protection from the most brutal treatment. She, therefore, not only followed him, but even held him by the sleeve, lest he should escape from her; and the fellow, hardened as he was, seemed something touched by these marks of confidence, and repeatedly assured her, that he would suffer her to receive no harm.

They conducted their prisoner in a direction leading more and more from the public road, but she observed that they kept a sort of track or by-path, which relieved her from part of her apprehensions, which would have been greatly increased had they not seemed to follow a determined and ascertained route. After about half-an-hour's walking, all three in profound silence, they approached an old barn, which stood on the edge of some cultivated ground, but remote from every thing like a habitation. It was itself, however, tenanted, for there was light in the windows.

One of the footpads scratched at the door, which was opened by a female, and they entered with their unhappy prisoner. An old woman, who was preparing food by the assistance of a stifling fire of lighted charcoal, asked them, in the name of the devil, what they brought the wench there for, and why they did not strip her and turn her abroad on the common?"

"Come, come, Mother Blood," said the tall man, "we'll do what's right to oblige you, and we'll do no more; we are bad enough, but not such as you would make us — devils incarnate."

"She has got a jark from Jim Ratcliffe," said the short fellow, "and Frank here won't hear of our putting her through the mill."

"No, that I will not, by G—d!" answered Frank; "but if old Mother Blood could keep her here for a little while, or send her back to Scotland, without hurting her, why, I see no harm in that — not I."

"I'll tell you what, Frank Levitt," said the old woman, "if you call me Mother Blood again, I'll paint this gully" (and she held a knife up as if about to make good her threat) "in the best blood in your body, my bonny boy."

"The price of ointment must be up in the north," said Frank, "that puts Mother Blood so much out of humour."

Without a moment's hesitation the fury darted her knife at him with the vengeful dexterity of a wild Indian. As he was on his guard, he avoided the missile by a sudden motion of his head, but it whistled past his ear, and stuck deep in the clay wall of a partition behind.

"Come, come, mother," said the robber, seizing her by both wrists, "I shall teach you who's master;" and so saying, he forced the hag backwards by main force, who strove vehemently until she sunk on a bunch of straw, and then letting go her hands, he held up his finger towards her in

the menacing posture by which a maniac is intimidated by his keeper. It appeared to produce the desired effect; for she did not attempt to rise from the seat on which he had placed her, or to resume any measures of actual violence, but wrung her withered hands with impotent rage, and brayed and howled like a demoniac.

"I will keep my promise with you, you old devil," said Frank; "the wench shall not go forward on the London road, but I will not have you touch a hair of her head, if it were but for your insolence."

This intimation seemed to compose in some degree the vehement passion of the old hag; and while her exclamations and howls sunk into a low, maundering, growling tone of voice, another personage was added to this singular party.

"Eh, Frank Levitt," said this new-comer, who entered with a hop, step, and jump, which at once conveyed her from the door into the centre of the party, "were ye killing our mother? or were ye cutting the grunter's weasand that Tam brought in this morning? or have ye been reading your prayers backward, to bring up my auld acquaintance the deil amang ye?"

The tone of the speaker was so particular, that Jeanie immediately recognized the woman who had rode foremost of the pair which passed her just before she met the robbers; a circumstance which greatly increased her terror, as it served to shew that the mischief designed against her was premeditated, though by whom, or for what cause, she was totally at a loss to conjecture. From the style of her conversation, the reader also may probably acknowledge in this female an old acquaintance in the earlier part of our narrative.

"Out, ye mad devil!" said Tom, whom she had disturbed in the middle of a draught of some liquor with which he had found means of accommodating himself; "betwixt your Bess of Bedlam pranks, and your dam's frenzies, a man might live quieter in the devil's ken than here."—And he again resumed the broken jug out of which he had been drinking.

"And wha's this o't?" said the mad woman, dancing up to Jeanie Deans, who, although in great terror, yet watched the scene with a resolution to let nothing pass unnoticed which might be serviceable in assisting her to escape, or informing her as to the true nature of her situation, and the danger attending it,—"Wha's this o't?" again exclaimed Madge Wildfire. "Douce Davie Deans, the auld doited whig body's daughter, in a gipsy's barn, and the night setting in! this is a sight for sair een!—Eh, sirs, the falling off o' the godly!—and the t'other sister's in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh; I am very sorry for her, for my share—it's my mother wusses ill to her, and no me—though maybe I hae as muckle cause."

"Hark ye, Madge," said the taller ruffian, "you have not such a touch of the devil's blood as the hag your mother, who may be his dam for what I know—take this young woman to your kennel, and do not let the devil enter though he should ask in God's name."

"Ou ay; that I will, Frank," said Madge, taking hold of Jeanie by the arm, and pulling her along; "for it's no for decent Christian young leddies, like her and me, to be keeping the like o' you and Tyburn Tam company at this time o' night. Sae gude-e'en t' ye, sirs, and mony o' them; and may ye a' sleep till the hangman wauken ye, and then it will be weel for the country."

She then, as her wild fancy seemed suddenly to prompt her, walked demurely towards her mother, who, seated by the charcoal fire, with the reflection of the red light on her withered and distorted features marked by every evil passion, seemed the very picture of Hecate at her infernal rites; and suddenly dropping on her knees, said, with the manner of a six years' old child, "Mammie, hear me say my prayers before I go to bed, and say God bless my bonny face, as ye used to do lang syne."

"The deil flay the hide o' it to sole his brogues wi'!" said the old lady, aiming a buffet at the supplicant, in answer to her duteous request.

The blow missed Madge, who, being probably acquainted by experience with the mode in which her mother was wont to confer her maternal benedictions, slipt out of arm's length with great dexterity and quickness. The hag then started up, and, seizing a pair of old fire-tongs, would have amended her motion, by beating out the brains either of her daughter or Jeanie, (she did not seem greatly to care which,) when her hand was once more arrested by the man whom they called Frank Levitt, who, seizing her by the shoulder, flung her from him with great violence, exclaiming, "What, Mother Damnable—again, and in my sovereign presence!—Hark ye, Madge of Bedlam, get to your hole with your playfellow, or we shall have the devil to pay here, and nothing to pay him with."

Madge took Levitt's advice, retreating as fast as she could, and dragging Jeanie along with her into a sort of recess, partitioned off from the rest of the barn, and filled with straw, from which it appeared, that it was intended for the purpose of slumber. The moonlight shone, through an open hole, upon a pillion, a pack-saddle, and one or two wallets, the travelling furniture of Madge and her amiable mother.—"Now, saw ye e'er in your life," said Madge, "sae dainty a chamber of deas? see as the moon shines down sae caller on the fresh strae! There 's no a pleasanter cell in Bedlam, for as braw a place as it is on the outside.—Were ye ever in Bedlam?"

"No," answered Jeanie faintly, appalled by the question, and the way in which it was put, yet willing to soothe her insane companion, being in circumstances so unhappily precarious, that even the society of this gibbering madwoman seemed a species of protection.

"Never in Bedlam!" said Madge, as if with some surprise.—"But ye 'll hae been in the cells at Edinburgh?"

"Never," repeated Jeanie.

"Weel, I think thae daft carles the magistrates send naebody to Bedlam but me—thae maun hae an unco respect for me, for whenever I am brought to them, they aye hae me back to Bedlam. But troth, Jeanie," (she said this in a very confidential tone,) "to tell ye my private mind about it, I think ye are at nae great loss; for the keeper 's a cross patch, and he maun hae it a' his ain gate, to be sure, or he makes the place waur than hell. I often tell him he 's the daftest in a' the house.—But what are they making sic a skirling for?—Deil ane o' them's get in here—it wadna be mensefu'; I will sit wi' my back again the door; it winna be that easy stirring me."

"Madge!"—"Madge!"—"Madge Wildfire!"

—"Madge devil! what have ye done with the horse?" was repeatedly asked by the men without.

"He 's e'en at his supper, puir thing," answered Madge; "deil an ye were at yours too, an it were scauding brimstane, and then we wad hae less o' your din."

"His supper!" answered the more sulky ruffian —"What d 'ye mean by that?—Tell me where he is, or I will knock your Bedlam brains out!"

"He 's in Gaffer Gabblewood's wheat-close, an ye maun ken."

"His wheat-close, you crazed jilt!" answered the other, with an accent of great indignation.

"O, dear Tyburn Tam, man, what ill will the blades of the young wheat do to the puir naig?"

"That is not the question," said the other robber; "but what the country will say to us to-morrow, when they see him in such quarters.—Go, Tom, and bring him in; and avoid the soft ground, my lad; leave no hoof-track behind you."

"I think you give me always the fag of it, whatever is to be done," grumbled his companion.

"Leap, Laurence, you 're long enough," said the other; and the fellow left the barn accordingly, without farther remonstrance.

In the meanwhile, Madge had arranged herself for repose on the straw; but still in a half-sitting posture, with her back resting against the door of the hovel, which, as it opened inwards, was in this manner kept shut by the weight of her person.

"There 's mair shifts by stealing, Jeanie," said Madge Wildfire; "though whiles I can hardly get our mother to think sae. Wha wad hae thought but mysell of making a bolt of my ain back-bane! But it 's no sae strong as thae that I hae seen in the Tolbooth at Edinburgh. The hammermen of Edinburgh are to my mind afore the world for making stancheons, ring-bolts, fetter-bolts, bars, and locks. And they arena that bad at girdles for carcakes neither, though the Cu'ross hammermen have the gree for that. My mother had ance a bonny Cu'ross girdle, and I thought to have baked carcakes on it for my puir wean that 's dead and gane nae fair way—but we maun a' dee, ye ken, Jeanie—You Cameronian bodies ken that brawlies; and ye 're for making a hell upon earth that ye may be less unwillin' to part wi' it. But as touching Bedlam that ye were speaking about, I 'se ne 'er recommend it muckle the tae gate or the other, be it right—be it wrang. But ye ken what the sang says." And, pursuing the unconnected and floating wanderings of her mind, she sung aloud—

"In the bonny cells of Bedlam,
Ere I was ane and twenty,
I had hempen bracelets strong,
And merry whips, ding-dong,
And prayer and fasting plenty.

"Weel, Jeanie, I am something herse the night, and I canna sing muckle mair; and troth, I think, I am gaun to sleep."

She drooped her head on her breast, a posture from which Jeanie, who would have given the world for an opportunity of quiet to consider the means and the probability of her escape, was very careful not to disturb her. After nodding, however, for a minute or two, with her eyes half closed, the unquiet and restless spirit of her malady again assailed Madge. She raised her head, and spoke, but with a lowered tone, which was again gradually overcome by drowsiness, to which the fatigue of a day's journey on horseback had probably given unwonted occasion,—"I dinna ken what makes me sae sleepy—I amaist never sleep till my bonny Lady Moon gangs till her bed—mair by token, when she 's at the full, ye ken, rowing aboon us yonder in her grand silver coach—I have danced to her my lane sometimes for very joy—and whiles dead folk came and danced wi' me—the like o' Jock Porteous, or ony body I had kend when I was living—for ye maun ken I was ance dead mysell." Here the poor maniac sung in a low and wild tone,

"My banes are buried in yon kirkyard
Sae far ayont the sea,
And it is but my blithesome ghaist
That 's speaking now to thee.

"But, after a', Jeanie, my woman, naebody kens weel wha 's living and wha 's dead—or wha 's gane to Fairyland—there 's another question. Whiles I think my puir bairn 's dead—ye ken very weel it 's buried—but that signifies naething. I have had it on my knee a hundred times, and a hundred till that, since it was buried—and how could that be were it dead, ye ken;—it 's merely impossible."—And here, some conviction half-overcoming the reveries of her imagination, she burst into a fit of crying and ejaculation, "Wae 's me! wae 's me! wae 's me!" till at length she moaned and sobbed herself into a deep sleep, which was soon intimated by her breathing hard, leaving Jeanie to her own melancholy reflections and observations.

CHAPTER XXX.

Bind her quickly; or, by this steel,
I 'll tell, although I truss for company.
FLETCHER.

THE imperfect light which shone into the window enabled Jeanie to see that there was scarcely any chance of making her escape in that direction; for the aperture was high in the wall, and so narrow, that, could she have climbed up to it, she might well doubt whether it would have permitted her to pass her body through it. An unsuccessful attempt to escape would be sure to draw down worse treatment than she now received, and she, therefore, resolved to watch her opportunity carefully ere making such a perilous effort. For this purpose she applied herself to the ruinous clay partition, which divided the hovel in which she now was from the rest of the waste barn. It was decayed and full of cracks and chinks, one of which she enlarged with her fingers, cautiously and without noise, until she could obtain a plain view of the old hag and the taller ruffian, whom they called Levitt, seated together beside the decayed fire of charcoal, and apparently engaged in close conference. She was at first terrified by the sight, for the features of the old woman had a hideous cast of hardened and inveterate malice and ill-humour, and those of the man, though naturally less unfavourable, were such as corresponded well with licentious habits, and a lawless profession.

"But I remembered," said Jeanie, "my worthy father's tales of a winter evening, how he was confined with the blessed martyr Mr James Renwick, who lifted up the fallen standard of the true

reformed Kirk of Scotland, after the worthy and renowned Daniel Cameron, our last blessed banner-man, had fallen among the swords of the wicked at Airsmoss, and how the very hearts of the wicked malefactors and murderers, whom they were confined withal, were melted like wax at the sound of their doctrine: and I bethought mysell, that the same help that was wi' them in their strait, wad be wi' me in mine, an I could but watch the Lord's time and opportunity for delivering my feet from their snare; and I minded the Scripture of the blessed Psalmist, whilk he insisteth on, as weel in the forty-second as in the forty-third psalm, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'"

Strengthened in a mind naturally calm, sedate, and firm, by the influence of religious confidence, this poor captive was enabled to attend to, and comprehend, a great part of an interesting conversation which passed betwixt those into whose hands she had fallen, notwithstanding that their meaning was partly disguised by the occasional use of cant terms, of which Jeanie knew not the import, by the low tone in which they spoke, and by their mode of supplying their broken phrases by shrugs and signs, as is usual amongst those of their disorderly profession.

The man opened the conversation by saying, "Now, dame, you see I am true to my friend. I have not forgot that you *planked a chury*,[1] which helped me through the bars of the Castle of York, and I came to do your work without asking questions, for one good turn deserves another. But now that Madge, who is as loud as Tom of Lincoln, is somewhat still, and this same Tyburn Neddie is shaking his heels after the old nag, why, you must tell me what all this is about, and what's to be done—for d—n me if I touch the girl, or let her be touched, and she with Jim Rat's pass too."

"Thou art an honest lad, Frank," answered the old woman, "but e'en too kind for thy trade; thy tender heart will get thee into trouble. I will see ye gang up Holborn Hill backward, and a' on the word of some silly loon that could never hae rapped to ye had ye drawn your knife across his weasand."

"You may be baulked there, old one," answered the robber; "I have known many a pretty lad cut short in his first summer upon the road, because he was something hasty with his flats and sharps. Besides, a man would fain live out his two years with a good conscience. So, tell me what all this is about, and what's to be done for you that one can do decently?"

"Why, you must know, Frank—but first taste a snap of right Hollands." She drew a flask from her pocket, and filled the fellow a large bumper, which he pronounced to be the right thing.—"You must know then, Frank—wunna ye mend your hand?" again offering the flask.

"No, no—when a woman wants mischief from you, she always begins by filling you drunk. D—n all Dutch courage. What I do I will do soberly—I 'll last the longer for that too."

"Well, then, you must know," resumed the old woman, without any farther attempts at propitiation, "that this girl is going to London."

Here Jeanie could only distinguish the word sister.

The robber answered in a louder tone, "Fair enough that; and what the devil is your business with it?"

"Business enough, I think. If the b— queers the noose, that silly cull will marry her."

"And who cares if he does?" said the man.

"Who cares, ye donnard Neddie! *I* care; and I will strangle her with my own hands, rather than she should come to Madge's preferment."

"Madge's preferment! Does your old blind eyes see no farther than that? If he is as you say, d'ye think he'll ever marry a moon-calf like Madge? Ecod, that's a good one—Marry Madge Wildfire! —Ha! ha! ha!"

"Hark ye, ye crack-rope padder, born beggar, and bred thief!" replied the hag, "suppose he never marries the wench, is that a reason he should marry another, and that other to hold my daughter's place, and she crazed, and I a beggar, and all along of him? But I know that of him will hang him—I know that of him will hang him, if he had a thousand lives—I know that of him will hang—hang—hang him!"

She grinned as she repeated and dwelt upon the fatal monosyllable, with the emphasis of a vindictive fiend.

"Then why don't you hang—hang—hang him!" said Frank, repeating her words contemptuously. "There would be more sense in that, than in wreaking yourself here upon two wenches that have done you and your daughter no ill."

"No ill?" answered the old woman—"and he to marry this jail-bird, if ever she gets her foot loose!"

"But as there is no chance of his marrying a bird of your brood, I cannot, for my soul, see what you have to do with all this," again replied the robber, shrugging his shoulders. "Where there is aught to be got, I 'll go as far as my neighbours, but I hate mischief for mischief's sake."

"And would you go nae length for revenge?" said the hag—"for revenge, the sweetest morsel to the mouth that ever was cooked in hell!"

"The devil may keep it for his own eating then," said the robber; "for hang me if I like the sauce he dresses it with."

"Revenge!" continued the old woman; "why it is the best reward the devil gives us for our time here and hereafter. I have wrought hard for it—I have suffered for it, and I have sinned for it—and I will have it,—or there is neither justice in heaven nor in hell!"

Levitt had by this time lighted a pipe, and was listening with great composure to the frantic and vindictive ravings of the old hag. He was too much hardened by his course of life to be shocked with them—too indifferent, and probably too stupid, to catch any part of their animation or energy. "But, mother," he said, after a pause, "still I say, that if revenge is your wish, you should take it on the young fellow himself."

"I wish I could," she said, drawing in her breath, with the eagerness of a thirsty person while mimicking the action of drinking—"I wish I could—but no—I cannot—I cannot."

"And why not?—You would think little of peaching and hanging him for this Scotch affair.—Rat me, one might have milled the Bank of England, and less noise about it."

[1] Concealed a knife

"I have nursed him at this withered breast," answered the old woman, folding her hands on her bosom, as if pressing an infant to it, "and though he has proved an adder to me—though he has been the destruction of me and mine—though he has made me company for the devil, if there be a devil, and food for hell, if there be such a place, yet I cannot take his life.—No, I cannot," she continued, with an appearance of rage against herself; "I have thought of it—I have tried it—but, Francis Levitt, I canna gang through wi't—Na, na—he was the first bairn I ever nurst—ill I had been—and man can never ken what woman feels for the bairn she has held first to her bosom!"

"To be sure," said Levitt, "we have no experience; but, mother, they say you ha'n't been so kind to other *bairns*, as you call them, that have come in your way.—Nay, d—n me, never lay your hand on the whittle, for I am captain and leader here, and I will have no rebellion."

The hag, whose first motion had been, upon hearing the question, to grasp the haft of a large knife, now unclosed her hand, stole it away from the weapon, and suffered it to fall by her side, while she proceeded with a sort of smile—"Bairns! ye are joking, lad—wha wad touch bairns? Madge, puir thing, had a misfortune wi' ane—and the t'other"—Here her voice sunk so much, that Jeanie, though anxiously upon the watch, could not catch a word she said, until she raised her tone at the conclusion of the sentence—"So Madge, in her daffin', threw it into the Nor'-Loch, I trow."

Madge, whose slumbers, like those of most who labour under mental malady, had been short, and were easily broken, now made herself heard from her place of repose.

"Indeed, mother, that's a great lie, for I did nae sic thing."

"Hush, thou hellicat devil," said her mother—"By Heaven! the other wench will be waking too!"

"That may be dangerous," said Frank; and he rose and followed Meg Murdockson across the floor.

"Rise," said the hag to her daughter, "or I sall drive the knife between the planks into the Bedlam back of thee!"

Apparently she at the same time seconded her threat by pricking her with the point of a knife, for Madge, with a faint scream, changed her place, and the door opened.

The old woman held a candle in one hand, and a knife in the other. Levitt appeared behind her, whether with a view of preventing, or assisting her in any violence she might meditate, could not be well guessed. Jeanie's presence of mind stood her friend in this dreadful crisis. She had resolution enough to maintain the attitude and manner of one who sleeps profoundly, and to regulate even her breathing, notwithstanding the agitation of instant terror, so as to correspond with her attitude.

The old woman passed the light across her eyes; and although Jeanie's fears were so powerfully awakened by this movement, that she often declared afterwards, that she thought she saw the figures of her destined murderers through her closed eyelids, she had still the resolution to maintain the feint, on which her safety perhaps depended.

Levitt looked at her with fixed attention; he then turned the old woman out of the place, and followed her himself. Having regained the outward apartment, and seated themselves, Jeanie heard the highwayman say, to her no small relief, "She's as fast as if she were in Bedfordshire.—Now, old Meg, d—n me, if I can understand a glim of this story of yours, or what good it will do you to hang the one wench, and torment the other; but, rat me, I will be true to my friend, and serve ye the way ye like it. I see it will be a bad job; but I do think I could get her down to Surfleet on the Wash, and so on board Tom Moonshine's neat lugger, and keep her out of the way three or four weeks, if that will please ye—But d—n me if any one shall harm her, unless they have a mind to choke on a brace of blue plums.—It's a cruel bad job, and I wish you and it, Meg, were both at the devil."

"Never mind, hinny Levitt," said the old woman; "you are a ruffler, and will have a' your ain gate—She shanna gang to heaven an hour sooner for me: I carena whether she live or die—it's her sister—ay, her sister!"

"Well, we'll say no more about it, I hear Tom coming in. We'll couch a hogshead,[1] and so better had you." They retired to repose, accordingly, and all was silent in this asylum of iniquity.

Jeanie lay for a long time awake. At break of day she heard the two ruffians leave the barn, after whispering with the old woman for some time. The sense that she was now guarded only by persons of her own sex gave her some confidence, and irresistible lassitude at length threw her into slumber

When the captive awakened, the sun was high in heaven, and the morning considerably advanced. Madge Wildfire was still in the hovel which had served them for the night, and immediately bid her good-morning, with her usual air of insane glee. "And d'ye ken, lass," said Madge, "there's queer things chanced since ye hae been in the land of Nod. The constables hae been here, woman, and they met wi' my minnie at the door, and they whirl'd her awa to the Justice's about the man's wheat.—Dear! thae English churls think as muckle about a blade of wheat or grass, as a Scotch laird does about his maukins and his muir-poots. Now, lass, if ye like, we'll play them a fine jink; we will awa out and take a walk—they will mak unco wark when they miss us, but we can easily be back by dinner time, or before dark night at ony rate, and it will be some frolic and fresh air.—But maybe ye wad like to take some breakfast, and then lie down again? I ken by mysell, there's whiles I can sit wi' my head in my hand the haill day, and havena a word to cast at a dog—and other whiles, that I canna sit still a moment. That's when the folk think me warst, but I am aye canny eneugh—ye needna be feared to walk wi' me."

Had Madge Wildfire been the most raging lunatic, instead of possessing a doubtful, uncertain, and twilight sort of rationality, varying, probably, from the influence of the most trivial causes, Jeanie would hardly have objected to leave a place of captivity where she had so much to apprehend. She eagerly assured Madge that she had no occasion for farther sleep, no desire whatever for eating; and hoping internally that she was not guilty of sin in doing so, she flattered her keeper's crazy humour for walking in the woods.

"It's no a'thegither for that neither," said poor Madge; "but I am judging ye will wun the better

[1] Lay ourselves down to sleep.

out o' thae folk's hands; no that they are a'thegither bad folk neither, but thay have queer ways wi' them, and I whiles dinna think it has been ever weel wi' my mother and me since we kept sic-like company."

With the haste, the joy, the fear, and the hope of a liberated captive, Jeanie snatched up her little bundle, followed Madge into the free air, and eagerly looked round her for a human habitation; but none was to be seen. The ground was partly cultivated, and partly left in its natural state, according as the fancy of the slovenly agriculturists had decided. In its natural state it was waste, in some places covered with dwarf trees and bushes, in others swamp, and elsewhere firm and dry downs or pasture grounds.

Jeanie's active mind next led her to conjecture which way the high-road lay, whence she had been forced. If she regained that public road, she imagined she must soon meet some person, or arrive at some house, where she might tell her story, and request protection. But after a glance around her, she saw with regret that she had no means whatever of directing her course with any degree of certainty, and that she was still in dependence upon her crazy companion. "Shall we not walk upon the high-road?" said she to Madge, in such a tone as a nurse uses to coax a child. "It's brawer walking on the road than amang thae wild bushes and whins."

Madge, who was walking very fast, stopped at this question, and looked at Jeanie with a sudden and scrutinizing glance, that seemed to indicate complete acquaintance with her purpose. "Aha, lass!" she exclaimed, "are ye gaun to guide us that gate?—Ye'll be for making your heels save your head, I am judging."

Jeanie hesitated for a moment, on hearing her companion thus express herself, whether she had not better take the hint, and try to outstrip and get rid of her. But she knew not in which direction to fly; she was by no means sure that she would prove the swiftest, and perfectly conscious that, in the event of her being pursued and overtaken, she would be inferior to the madwoman in strength. She therefore gave up thoughts for the present of attempting to escape in that manner, and, saying a few words to allay Madge's suspicions, she followed in anxious apprehension the wayward path by which her guide thought proper to lead her. Madge, infirm of purpose, and easily reconciled to the present scene, whatever it was, began soon to talk with her usual diffuseness of ideas.

"It's a dainty thing to be in the woods on a fine morning like this—I like it far better than the town, for there isna a wheen duddie bairns to be crying after ane, as if ane were a warld's wonder, just because ane maybe is a thought bonnier and better put-on than their neighbours—though, Jeanie, ye suld never be proud o' braw claiths, or beauty neither—wae's me! they're but a snare.—I anes thought better o' them, and what came o't?"

"Are ye sure ye ken the way ye are taking us?" said Jeanie, who began to imagine that she was getting deeper into the woods and more remote from the high-road.

"Do I ken the road?—Wasna I mony a day living here, and whatfor shouldna I ken the road?—I might hae forgotten, too, for it was afore my accident; but there are some things ane can never forget, let them try it as muckle as they like."

By this time they had gained the deepest part of a patch of woodland. The trees were a little separated from each other, and at the foot of one of them, a beautiful poplar, was a hillock of moss, such as the poet of Grasmere has described. So soon as she arrived at this spot, Madge Wildfire joining her hands above her head, with a loud scream that resembled laughter, flung herself all at once upon the spot, and remained lying there motionless.

Jeanie's first idea was to take the opportunity of flight; but her desire to escape yielded for a moment to apprehension for the poor insane being, who, she thought, might perish for want of relief. With an effort, which, in her circumstances, might be termed heroic, she stooped down, spoke in a soothing tone, and endeavoured to raise up the forlorn creature. She effected this with difficulty, and, as she placed her against the tree in a sitting posture, she observed with surprise, that her complexion, usually florid, was now deadly pale, and that her face was bathed in tears. Notwithstanding her own extreme danger, Jeanie was affected by the situation of her companion; and the rather, that through the whole train of her wavering and inconsistent state of mind and line of conduct, she discerned a general colour of kindness towards herself, for which she felt gratitude.

"Let me alane!—let me alane!" said the poor young woman, as her paroxysm of sorrow began to abate—"Let me alane—it does me good to weep. I canna shed tears but maybe anes or twice a-year, and I aye come to wet this turf with them, that the flowers may grow fair, and the grass may be green."

"But what is the matter with you?" said Jeanie—"Why do you weep so bitterly?"

"There 's matter enow," replied the lunatic,—"mair than ae puir mind can bear, I trow. Stay a bit, and I 'll tell you a' about it; for I like ye, Jeanie Deans—a'body spoke weel about ye when we lived in the Pleasaunts—And I mind aye the drink o' milk ye gae me yon day, when I had been on Arthur's Seat for four-and-twenty hours, looking for the ship that somebody was sailing in."

These words recalled to Jeanie's recollection, that, in fact, she had been one morning much frightened by meeting a crazy young woman near her father's house at an early hour, and that as she appeared to be harmless, her apprehension had been changed into pity, and she had relieved the unhappy wanderer with some food, which she devoured with the haste of a famished person. The incident, trifling in itself, was at present of great importance, if it should be found to have made a favourable and permanent impression in her favour on the mind of the object of her charity.

"Yes," said Madge, "I 'll tell ye a' about it, for ye are a decent man's daughter—Douce Davie Deans, ye ken—and maybe ye 'll can teach me to find out the narrow way, and the straight path, for I have been burning bricks in Egypt, and walking through the weary wilderness of Sinai, for lang and mony a day. But whenever I think about mine errors, I am like to cover my lips for shame."—Here she looked up and smiled.—"It's a strange thing now—I hae spoke mair gude words to you in ten minutes, than I wad speak to my mother in as mony years—it 's no that I dinna think on them

—and whiles they are just at my tongue's end, but then comes the Devil, and brushes my lips with his black wing, and lays his broad black loof on my mouth — for a black loof it is, Jeanie — and sweeps away a' my gude thoughts, and dits up my gude words, and pits a wheen fule sangs and idle vanities in their place."

"Try, Madge," said Jeanie, — "try to settle your mind and make your breast clean, and you 'll find your heart easier — Just resist the devil, and he will flee from you — and mind that, as my worthy father tells me, there is nae devil sae deceitfu' as our ain wandering thoughts."

"And that 's true too, lass," said Madge, starting up; "and I 'll gang a gate where the devil daurna follow me; and it 's a gate that you will like dearly to gang — but I 'll keep a fast haud o' your arm, for fear Apollyon should stride across the path, as he did in the Pilgrim's Progress."

Accordingly she got up, and, taking Jeanie by the arm, began to walk forward at a great pace; and soon, to her companion's no small joy, came into a marked path, with the meanders of which she seemed perfectly acquainted. Jeanie endeavoured to bring her back to the confessional, but the fancy was gone by. In fact, the mind of this deranged being resembled nothing so much as a quantity of dry leaves, which may for a few minutes remain still, but are instantly discomposed and put in motion by the first casual breath of air. She had now got John Bunyan's parable into her head, to the exclusion of every thing else, and on she went with great volubility.

"Did ye never read the Pilgrim's Progress? And you shall be the woman Christiana, and I will be the maiden Mercy — for ye ken Mercy was of the fairer countenance, and the more alluring than her companion — and if I had my little messan dog here, it would be Great Heart their guide, ye ken, for he was e'en as bauld, that he wad bark at ony thing twenty times his size; and that was e'en the death of him, for he bit Corporal MacAlpine's heels ae morning when they were hauling me to the guard-house, and Corporal MacAlpine killed the bit faithfu' thing wi' his Lochaber axe — deil pike the Highland banes o' him!"

"O fie, Madge," said Jeanie, "ye should not speak such words."

"It 's very true," said Madge, shaking her head; "but then I maunna think o' my puir bit doggie, Snap, when I saw it lying dying in the gutter. But it 's just as weel, for it suffered baith cauld and hunger when it was living, and in the grave there is rest for a things — rest for the doggie, and my puir bairn, and me."

"Your bairn?" said Jeanie, conceiving that by speaking on such a topic, supposing it to be a real one, she could not fail to bring her companion to a more composed temper.

She was mistaken, however, for Madge coloured, and replied with some anger, "*My* bairn? ay, to be sure, my bairn. Whatfor shouldna I hae a bairn, and lose a bairn too, as weel as your bonny tittie, the Lily of St Leonard's?"

The answer struck Jeanie with some alarm, and she was anxious to soothe the irritation she had unwittingly given occasion to. "I am very sorry for your misfortune——"

"Sorry? what wad ye be sorry for?" answered Madge. "The bairn was a blessing — that is, Jeanie, it wad hae been a blessing if it hadna been for my mother; but my mother 's a queer woman. — Ye see, there was an auld carle wi' a bit land, and a gude clat o' siller besides, just the very picture of old Mr Feeblemind or Mr Ready-to-halt, that Great-heart delivered from Slaygood the giant, when he was rifling him and about to pick his bones, for Slaygood was of the nature of the flesh-eaters — and Great-heart killed Giant Despair too — but I am doubting Giant Despair 's come alive again, for a' the story book — I find him busy at my heart whiles."

"Weel, and so the auld carle," — said Jeanie, for she was painfully interested in getting to the truth of Madge's history, which she could not but suspect was in some extraordinary way linked and entwined with the fate of her sister. She was also desirous, if possible, to engage her companion in some narrative which might be carried on in a lower tone of voice, for she was in great apprehension lest the elevated notes of Madge's conversation should direct her mother or the robbers in search of them.

"And so the auld carle," said Madge, repeating her words — "I wish ye had seen him stoiting about, aff ae leg on to the other, wi' a kind o' dot-and-go-one sort o' motion, as if ilk ane o' his twa legs had belanged to sindry folk — but Gentle George could take him aff brawly — Eh, as I used to laugh to see George gang hip-hop like him! — I dinna ken, I think I laughed heartier then than what I do now, though maybe no just sae muckle."

"And who was Gentle George?" said Jeanie, endeavouring to bring her back to her story.

"O, he was Geordie Robertson, ye ken, when he was in Edinburgh; but that 's no his right name neither — His name is —— But what is your business wi' his name?" said she, as if upon sudden recollection. "What have ye to do asking for folk's names? — Have ye a mind I should scour my knife between your ribs, as my mother says?"

As this was spoken with a menacing tone and gesture, Jeanie hastened to protest her total innocence of purpose in the accidental question which she had asked, and Madge Wildfire went on, somewhat pacified.

"Never ask folk's names, Jeanie — it 's no civil — I hae seen half a dozen o' folk in my mother's at anes, and ne'er ane o' them ca'd the ither by his name; and Daddie Ratton says, it is the most uncivil thing may be, because the bailie bodies are aye asking fashious questions, when ye saw sic a man, or sic a man; and if ye dinna ken their names, ye ken there can be nae mair speer'd about it."

In what strange school, thought Jeanie to herself, has this poor creature been bred up, where such remote precautions are taken against the pursuits of justice? What would my father or Reuben Butler think, if I were to tell them there are sic folk in the world? And to abuse the simplicity of this demented creature! Oh, that I were but safe at hame amang mine ain leal and true people! and I 'll bless God, while I have breath, that placed me amongst those who live in His fear, and under the shadow of His wing."

She was interrupted by the insane laugh of Madge Wildfire, as she saw a magpie hop across the path.

"See there! — that was the gait my auld joe used to cross the country, but no just sae lightly — he hadna wings to help his auld legs, I trow; but I behoved to have married him for a' that, Jeanie,

or my mother wad hae been the dead o' me. But then came in the story of my poor bairn, and my mother thought he wad be deaved wi' its skirling, and she pat it away in below the bit bourock of turf yonder, just to be out o' the gate; and I think she buried my best wits with it, for I have never been just mysell since. And only think, Jeanie, after my mother had been at a' this pains, the auld doited body Johny Drottle turned up his nose, and wadna hae aught to say to me! But it 's little I care for him, for I have led a merry life ever since, and ne'er a braw gentleman looks at me but ye wad think he was gaun to drop off his horse for mere love of me. I have kend some o' them put their hand in their pocket, and gie me as muckle as sixpence at a time, just for my weel-faurd face."

This speech gave Jeanie a dark insight into Madge's history. She had been courted by a wealthy suitor, whose addresses her mother had favoured, notwithstanding the objection of old age and deformity. She had been seduced by some profligate, and, to conceal her shame and promote the advantageous match she had planned, her mother had not hesitated to destroy the offspring of their intrigue. That the consequence should be the total derangement of a mind which was constitutionally unsettled by giddiness and vanity, was extremely natural; and such was, in fact, the history of Madge Wildfire's insanity.

CHAPTER XXXI.

> So free from danger, free from fear,
> They cross'd the court—right glad they were.
> CHRISTABEL.

Pursuing the path which Madge had chosen, Jeanie Deans observed, to her no small delight, that marks of more cultivation appeared, and the thatched roofs of houses, with their blue smoke arising in little columns, were seen embosomed in a tuft of trees at some distance. The track led in that direction, and Jeanie, therefore, resolved, while Madge continued to pursue it, that she would ask her no questions; having had the penetration to observe, that by doing so she ran the risk of irritating her guide, or awakening suspicions, to the impressions of which, persons in Madge's unsettled state of mind are particularly liable.

Madge, therefore, uninterrupted, went on with the wild disjointed chat which her rambling imagination suggested; a mood in which she was much more communicative respecting her own history, and that of others, than when there was any attempt made, by direct queries, or cross-examinations, to extract information on these subjects.

"It 's a queer thing," she said, "but whiles I can speak about the bit bairn and the rest of it, just as if it had been another body's, and no my ain; and whiles I am like to break my heart about it—Had you ever a bairn, Jeanie?"

Jeanie replied in the negative.

"Ay; but your sister had, though—and I ken what came o 't too."

"In the name of heavenly mercy," said Jeanie, forgetting the line of conduct which she had hitherto adopted, "tell me but what became of that unfortunate babe, and——"

Madge stopped, looked at her gravely and fixedly, and then broke into a great fit of laughing—"Aha, lass,—catch me if you can—I think it's easy to gar you trow ony thing.—How suld I ken ony thing o' your sister's wean? Lasses suld hae naething to do wi' weans till they are married—and then a' the gossips and cummers come in and feast as if it were the blithest day in the warld.—They say maidens' bairns are weel guided. I wot that wasna true of your tittie's and mine; but these are sad tales to tell—I maun just sing a bit to keep up my heart—It's a sang that Gentle George made on me lang syne, when I went with him to Lockington wake, to see him act upon a stage, in fine clothes, with the player folk. He might hae dune waur than married me that night as he promised—better wed over the mixen[1] as over the moor, as they say in Yorkshire—he may gang farther and fare waur—but that 's a' ane to the sang,——

> "I 'm Madge of the country, I 'm Madge of the town,
> And I 'm Madge of the lad I am blithest to own—
> The Lady of Beever in diamonds may shine,
> But has not a heart half so lightsome as mine.
>
> "I am Queen of the Wake, and I 'm Lady of May,
> And I lead the blithe ring round the May-pole to-day;
> The wild-fire that flashes so fair and so free,
> Was never so bright, or so bonny, as me.

"I like that the best o' a' my sangs," continued the maniac, "because *he* made it. I am often singing it, and that 's maybe the reason folk ca' me Madge Wildfire. I aye answer to the name, though it 's no my ain, for what 's the use of making a fash?"

"But ye shouldna sing upon the Sabbath at least," said Jeanie, who, amid all her distress and anxiety, could not help being scandalized at the deportment of her companion, especially as they now approached near to the little village.

"Ay! is this Sunday?" said Madge. "My mother leads sic a life, wi' turning night into day, that ane loses a' count o' the days o' the week, and disna ken Sunday frae Saturday. Besides, it 's a' your whiggery—in England, folk sings when they like—And then, ye ken, you are Christiana and I am Mercy—and ye ken, as they went on their way, they sang."—And she immediately raised one of John Bunyan's ditties:—

> "He that is down need fear no fall,
> He that is low no pride,
> He that is humble ever shall
> Have God to be his guide.
>
> "Fulness to such a burthen is
> That go on pilgrimage;
> Here little, and hereafter bliss,
> Is best from age to age.

"And do ye ken, Jeanie, I think there 's much truth in that book, the Pilgrim's Progress. The boy that sings that song was feeding his father's sheep in the Valley of Humiliation, and Mr Great-heart says, that he lived a merrier life, and had more of the herb called heart's-ease in his bosom, than they that wear silk and velvet like me, and are as bonny as I am."

Jeanie Deans had never read the fanciful and delightful parable to which Madge alluded. Bunyan was, indeed, a rigid Calvinist, but then he was also a member of a Baptist congregation, so that his

[1] A homely proverb, signifying, better wed a neighbour than one fetched from a distance.—Mixen signifies dunghill.

works had no place on David Deans's shelf of divinity. Madge, however, at some time of her life, had been well acquainted, as it appeared, with the most popular of his performances, which, indeed, rarely fails to make a deep impression upon children, and people of the lower rank.

"I am sure," she continued, "I may weel say I am come out of the city of Destruction, for my mother is Mrs Bat's-eyes, that dwells at Deadman's corner; and Frank Levitt, and Tyburn Tam, they may be likened to Mistrust and Guilt, that came galloping up, and struck the poor pilgrim to the ground with a great club, and stole a bag of silver, which was most of his spending money, and so have they done to many, and will do to more. But now we will gang to the Interpreter's house, for I ken a man that will play the Interpreter right weel; for he has eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth written on his lips, and he stands as if he pleaded wi' men—Oh, if I had minded what he had said to me, I had never been the cast-away creature that I am!—But it is all over now.—But we 'll knock at the gate, and then the keeper will admit Christiana, but Mercy will be left out—and then I 'll stand at the door trembling and crying, and then Christiana—that 's you, Jeanie—will intercede for me; and then Mercy—that 's me, ye ken—will faint; and then the Interpreter—yes, the Interpreter, that 's Mr Staunton himself, will come out and take me—that 's poor, lost, demented me—by the hand, and give me a pomegranate, and a piece of honeycomb, and a small bottle of spirits, to stay my fainting—and then the good times will come back again, and we 'll be the happiest folk you ever saw."

In the midst of the confused assemblage of ideas indicated in this speech, Jeanie thought she saw a serious purpose on the part of Madge, to endeavour to obtain the pardon and countenance of some one whom she had offended; an attempt the most likely of all others to bring them once more into contact with law and legal protection. She, therefore, resolved to be guided by her while she was in so hopeful a disposition, and act for her own safety according to circumstances.

They were now close by the village, one of those beautiful scenes which are so often found in merry England, where the cottages, instead of being built in two direct lines on each side of a dusty high-road, stand in detached groups, interspersed not only with large oaks and elms, but with fruit-trees, so many of which were at this time in flourish, that the grove seemed enamelled with their crimson and white blossoms. In the centre of the hamlet stood the parish church, and its little Gothic tower, from which at present was heard the Sunday chime of bells.

"We will wait here until the folk are a' in the church—they ca' the kirk a church in England, Jeanie, be sure you mind that—for if I was gaun forward amang them, a' the gaitts o' boys and lasses wad be crying at Madge Wildfire's tail, the little hell-rakers! and the beadle would be as hard upon us as if it was our fault. I like their skirling as ill as he does, I can tell him; I 'm sure I often wish there was a het peat doun their throats when they set them up that gate."

Conscious of the disorderly appearance of her own dress after the adventure of the preceding night, and of the grotesque habit and demeanour of her guide, and sensible how important it was to secure an attentive and patient audience to her strange story from some one who might have the means to protect her, Jeanie readily acquiesced in Madge's proposal to rest under the trees, by which they were still somewhat screened, until the commencement of service should give them an opportunity of entering the hamlet without attracting a crowd around them. She made the less opposition, that Madge had intimated that this was not the village where her mother was in custody, and that the two squires of the pad were absent in a different direction.

She sate herself down, therefore, at the foot of an oak, and by the assistance of a placid fountain, which had been dammed up for the use of the villagers, and which served her as a natural mirror, she began—no uncommon thing with a Scottish maiden of her rank—to arrange her toilette in the open air, and bring her dress, soiled and disordered as it was, into such order as the place and circumstances admitted.

She soon perceived reason, however, to regret that she had set about this task, however decent and necessary, in the present time and society. Madge Wildfire, who, among other indications of insanity, had a most overweening opinion of those charms, to which, in fact, she had owed her misery, and whose mind like a raft upon a lake, was agitated and driven about at random by each fresh impulse, no sooner beheld Jeanie begin to arrange her hair, place her bonnet in order, rub the dust from her shoes and clothes, adjust her neck-handkerchief and mittans, and so forth, than with imitative zeal she began to bedizen and trick herself out with shreds and remnants of beggarly finery, which she took out of a little bundle, and which, when disposed around her person, made her appearance ten times more fantastic and apish than it had been before.

Jeanie groaned in spirit, but dared not interfere in a matter so delicate. Across the man's cap or riding hat which she wore, Madge placed a broken and soiled white feather, intersected with one which had been shed from the train of a peacock. To her dress, which was a kind of riding-habit, she stitched, pinned, and otherwise secured, a large furbelow of artificial flowers, all crushed, wrinkled, and dirty, which had first bedecked a lady of quality, then descended to her Abigail, and dazzled the inmates of the servants'-hall. A tawdry scarf of yellow silk, trimmed with tinsel and spangles, which had seen as hard service, and boasted as honourable a transmission, was next flung over one shoulder, and fell across her person in the manner of a shoulder-belt, or baldrick. Madge then stripped off the coarse ordinary shoes which she wore, and replaced them by a pair of dirty satin ones, spangled and embroidered to match the scarf, and furnished with very high heels. She had cut a willow switch in her morning's walk, almost as long as a boy's fishing-rod. This she set herself seriously to peel, and when it was transformed into such a wand as the Treasurer or High Steward bears on public occasions, she told Jeanie that she thought they now looked decent, as young women should do upon the Sunday morning, and that as the bells had done ringing, she was willing to conduct her to the Interpreter's house.

Jeanie sighed heavily, to think it should be her lot on the Lord's day, and during kirk-time too, to parade the street of an inhabited village with so very grotesque a comrade; but necessity had no law, since, without a positive quarrel with the madwoman, which, in the circumstances, would have been very unadvisable, she could see no means of shaking herself free of her society.

As for poor Madge, she was completely elated with personal vanity, and the most perfect satisfaction concerning her own dazzling dress, and superior appearance. They entered the hamlet without being observed, except by one old woman, who, being nearly "high-gravel blind," was only conscious that something very fine and glittering was passing by, and dropped as deep a reverence to Madge as she would have done to a countess. This filled up the measure of Madge's self-approbation. She minced, she ambled, she smiled, she simpered, and waved Jeanie Deans forward with the condescension of a noble *chaperone*, who has undertaken the charge of a country miss on her first journey to the capital.

Jeanie followed in patience, and with her eyes fixed on the ground, that she might save herself the mortification of seeing her companion's absurdities; but she started when, ascending two or three steps, she found herself in the churchyard, and saw that Madge was making straight for the door of the church. As Jeanie had no mind to enter the congregation in such company, she walked aside from the pathway, and said in a decided tone, "Madge, I will wait here till the church comes out — you may go in by yourself if you have a mind."

As she spoke these words, she was about to seat herself upon one of the gravestones.

Madge was a little before Jeanie when she turned aside; but suddenly changing her course, she followed her with long strides, and, with every feature inflamed with passion, overtook and seized her by the arm. "Do ye think, ye ungratefu' wretch, that I am gaun to let you sit doun upon my father's grave? The deil settle ye doun, if ye dinna rise and come into the Interpreter's house, that 's the house of God, wi' me, but I 'll rive every dud aff your back!"

She adapted the action to the phrase; for with one clutch she stripped Jeanie of her straw bonnet and a handful of her hair to boot, and threw it up into an old yew tree, where it stuck fast. Jeanie's first impulse was to scream, but conceiving she might receive deadly harm before she could obtain the assistance of any one, notwithstanding the vicinity of the church, she thought it wiser to follow the madwoman into the congregation, where she might find some means of escape from her, or at least be secured against her violence. But when she meekly intimated her consent to follow Madge, her guide's uncertain brain had caught another train of ideas. She held Jeanie fast with one hand, and with the other pointed to the inscription on the gravestone, and commanded her to read it. Jeanie obeyed, and read these words:—

"This Monument was erected to the Memory of Donald Murdockson of the King's xxvi., or Cameronian Regiment, a sincere Christian, a brave Soldier, and a faithful Servant, by his grateful and sorrowing Master, Robert Staunton."

"It's very weel read, Jeanie; it's just the very words," said Madge, whose ire had now faded into deep melancholy, and with a step which, to Jeanie's great joy, was uncommonly quiet and mournful, she led her companion towards the door of the church.

It was one of those old-fashioned Gothic parish churches which are frequent in England, the most cleanly, decent, and reverential places of worship that are, perhaps, anywhere to be found in the Christian world. Yet, notwithstanding the decent solemnity of its exterior, Jeanie was too faithful to the directory of the presbyterian kirk to have entered a prelatic place of worship, and would, upon any other occasion, have thought that she beheld in the porch the venerable figure of her father waving her back from the entrance, and pronouncing in a solemn tone, "Cease, my child, to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge." But in her present agitating and alarming situation, she looked for safety to this forbidden place of assembly, as the hunted animal will sometimes seek shelter from imminent danger in the human habitation, or in other places of refuge most alien to its nature and habits. Not even the sound of the organ, and of one or two flutes which accompanied the psalmody, prevented her from following her guide into the chancel of the church.

No sooner had Madge put her foot upon the pavement, and become sensible that she was the object of attention to the spectators, than she resumed all the fantastic extravagance of deportment which some transient touch of melancholy had banished for an instant. She swam rather than walked up the centre aisle, dragging Jeanie after her, whom she held fast by the hand. She would, indeed, have fain slipped aside into the pew nearest to the door, and left Madge to ascend in her own manner and alone to the high places of the synagogue; but this was impossible, without a degree of violent resistance, which seemed to her inconsistent with the time and place, and she was accordingly led in captivity up the whole length of the church by her grotesque conductress, who, with half-shut eyes, a prim smile upon her lips, and a mincing motion with her hands, which corresponded with the delicate and affected pace at which she was pleased to move, seemed to take the general stare of the congregation, which such an exhibition necessarily excited, as a high compliment, and which she returned by nods and half curtsies to individuals amongst the audience, whom she seemed to distinguish as acquaintances. Her absurdity was enhanced in the eyes of the spectators by the strange contrast which she formed to her companion, who, with dishevelled hair, downcast eyes, and a face glowing with shame, was dragged, as it were, in triumph after her.

Madge's airs were at length fortunately cut short by her encountering in her progress the looks of the clergyman, who fixed upon her a glance, at once steady, compassionate, and admonitory. She hastily opened an empty pew which happened to be near her, and entered, dragging in Jeanie after her. Kicking Jeanie on the shins, by way of hint that she should follow her example, she sunk her head upon her hand for the space of a minute. Jeanie, to whom this posture of mental devotion was entirely new, did not attempt

to do the like, but looked round her with a bewildered stare, which her neighbours, judging from the company in which they saw her, very naturally ascribed to insanity. Every person in their immediate vicinity drew back from this extraordinary couple as far as the limits of their pew permitted; but one old man could not get beyond Madge's reach, ere she had snatched the prayer-book from his hand, and ascertained the lesson of the day. She then turned up the ritual, and, with the most overstrained enthusiasm of gesture and manner, shewed Jeanie the passages as they were read in the service, making, at the same time, her own responses so loud as to be heard above those of every other person.

Notwithstanding the shame and vexation which Jeanie felt in being thus exposed in a place of worship, she could not and durst not omit rallying her spirits so as to look around her, and consider to whom she ought to appeal for protection so soon as the service should be concluded. Her first ideas naturally fixed upon the clergyman, and she was confirmed in the resolution by observing that he was an aged gentleman, of a dignified appearance and deportment, who read the service with an undisturbed and decent gravity, which brought back to becoming attention those younger members of the congregation who had been disturbed by the extravagant behaviour of Madge Wildfire. To the clergyman, therefore, Jeanie resolved to make her appeal when the service was over.

It is true she felt disposed to be shocked at his surplice, of which she had heard so much, but which she had never seen upon the person of a preacher of the word. Then she was confused by the change of posture adopted in different parts of the ritual, the more so as Madge Wildfire, to whom they seemed familiar, took the opportunity to exercise authority over her, pulling her up and pushing her down with a bustling assiduity, which Jeanie felt must make them both the objects of painful attention. But, notwithstanding these prejudices, it was her prudent resolution, in this dilemma, to imitate as nearly as she could what was done around her. The prophet, she thought, permitted Naaman the Syrian to bow even in the house of Rimmon. Surely if I, in this streight, worship the God of my fathers in mine own language, although the manner thereof be strange to me, the Lord will pardon me in this thing.

In this resolution she became so much confirmed, that, withdrawing herself from Madge as far as the pew permitted, she endeavoured to evince, by serious and composed attention to what was passing, that her mind was composed to devotion. Her tormentor would not long have permitted her to remain quiet, but fatigue overpowered her, and she fell fast asleep in the other corner of the pew.

Jeanie, though her mind in her own despite sometimes reverted to her situation, compelled herself to give attention to a sensible, energetic, and well-composed discourse, upon the practical doctrines of Christianity, which she could not help approving, although it was every word written down and read by the preacher, and although it was delivered in a tone and gesture very different from those of Boanerges Stormheaven, who was her father's favourite preacher. The serious and placid attention with which Jeanie listened, did not escape the clergyman. Madge Wildfire's entrance had rendered him apprehensive of some disturbance, to provide against which, as far as possible, he often turned his eyes to the part of the church where Jeanie and she were placed, and became soon aware that, although the loss of her head-gear, and the awkwardness of her situation, had given an uncommon and anxious air to the features of the former, yet she was in a state of mind very different from that of her companion. When he dismissed the congregation, he observed her look around with a wild and terrified look, as if uncertain what course she ought to adopt, and noticed that she approached one or two of the most decent of the congregation, as if to address them, and then shrunk back timidly, on observing that they seemed to shun and to avoid her. The clergyman was satisfied there must be something extraordinary in all this, and as a benevolent man, as well as a good Christian pastor, he resolved to inquire into the matter more minutely.

CHAPTER XXXII.

——There govern'd in that year
A stern, stout churl—an angry overseer.
CRABBE.

WHILE Mr Staunton, for such was this worthy clergyman's name, was laying aside his gown in the vestry, Jeanie was in the act of coming to an open rupture with Madge.

"We must return to Mummer's barn directly," said Madge; "we 'll be ower late, and my mother will be angry."

"I am not going back with you, Madge," said Jeanie, taking out a guinea, and offering it to her; "I am much obliged to you, but I maun gang my ain road."

"And me coming a' this way out o' my gate to pleasure you, ye ungratefu' cutty," answered Madge; "and me to be brained by my mother when I gang hame, and a' for your sake!—But I will gar ye as good"——

"For God's sake," said Jeanie to a man who stood beside them, "keep her off!—she is mad."

"Ey, ey," answered the boor; "I hae some guess of that, and I trow thou be 'st a bird of the same feather.—Howsomever, Madge, I redd thee keep hand off her, or I 'se lend thee a whister-poop."

Several of the lower class of the parishioners now gathered round the strangers, and the cry arose among the boys, that "there was a-going to be a fite between mad Madge Murdockson and another Bess of Bedlam." But while the fry assembled with the humane hope of seeing as much of the fun as possible, the laced cocked-hat of the beadle was discerned among the multitude, and all made way for that person of awful authority. His first address was to Madge.

"What 's brought thee back again, thou silly donnot, to plague this parish? Hast thou brought ony more bastards wi' thee to lay to honest men's doors? or does thou think to burden us with this goose, that 's as gare-brained as thysell, as if rates were no up enow? Away wi' thee to thy thief of a mother; she 's fast in the stocks at Barkston town-

end—Away wi' ye out o' the parish, or I 'se be at ye with the ratan."

Madge stood sulky for a minute; but she had been too often taught submission to the beadle's authority by ungentle means, to feel courage enough to dispute it.

"And my mother—my puir auld mother, is in the stocks at Barkston!—This is a' your wyte, Miss Jeanie Deans; but I 'll be upsides wi' you, as sure as my name 's Madge Wildfire—I mean Murdockson—God help me, I forget my very name in this confused waste."

So saying, she turned upon her heel, and went off, followed by all the mischievous imps of the village, some crying, "Madge, canst thou tell thy name yet?" some pulling the skirts of her dress, and all to the best of their strength and ingenuity, exercising some new device or other to exasperate her into frenzy.

Jeanie saw her departure with infinite delight, though she wished, that, in some way or other, she could have requited the service Madge had conferred upon her.

In the meantime, she applied to the beadle to know, whether "there was any house in the village, where she could be civilly entertained for her money, and whether she could be permitted to speak to the clergyman?"

"Ay, ay, we 'se ha' reverend care on thee; and I think," answered the man of constituted authority, "that, unless thou answer the Rector all the better, we 'se spare thy money, and gie thee lodging at the parish charge, young woman."

"Where am I to go then?" said Jeanie, in some alarm.

"Why, I am to take thee to his Reverence, in the first place, to gie an account o' thysell, and to see thou comena to be a burden upon the parish."

"I do not wish to burden any one," replied Jeanie; "I have enough for my own wants, and only wish to get on my journey safely."

"Why that 's another matter," replied the beadle, "an if it be true—and I think thou dost not look so polrumptious as thy playfellow yonder—Thou wouldst be a mettle lass enow, an thou wert snog and snod a bit better. Come thou away, then—the Rector is a good man."

"Is that the minister," said Jeanie, "who preached——"

"The minister? Lord help thee! What kind o' presbyterian art thou?—Why, 'tis the Rector—the Rector's sell, woman, and there isna the like o' him in the county, nor the four next to it. Come away—away with thee—we maunna bide here."

"I am sure I am very willing to go to see the minister," said Jeanie; "for, though he read his discourse, and wore that surplice, as they call it here, I canna but think he must be a very worthy God-fearing man, to preach the root of the matter in the way he did."

The disappointed rabble, finding that there was like to be no farther sport, had by this time dispersed, and Jeanie, with her usual patience, followed her consequential and surly, but not brutal, conductor towards the rectory.

This clerical mansion was large and commodious, for the living was an excellent one, and the advowson belonged to a very wealthy family in the neighbourhood, who had usually bred up a son or nephew to the church, for the sake of inducting him, as opportunity offered, into this very comfortable provision. In this manner the rectory of Willingham had always been considered as a direct and immediate appanage of Willingham-hall; and as the rich baronets to whom the latter belonged had usually a son, or brother, or nephew, settled in the living, the utmost care had been taken to render their habitation not merely respectable and commodious, but even dignified and imposing.

It was situated about four hundred yards from the village, and on a rising ground which sloped gently upward, covered with small enclosures, or closes, laid out irregularly, so that the old oaks and elms, which were planted in hedge-rows, fell into perspective, and were blended together in beautiful irregularity. When they approached nearer to the house, a handsome gateway admitted them into a lawn, of narrow dimensions, indeed, but which was interspersed with large sweet-chesnut trees and beeches, and kept in handsome order. The front of the house was irregular. Part of it seemed very old, and had, in fact, been the residence of the incumbent in Romish times. Successive occupants had made considerable additions and improvements, each in the taste of his own age, and without much regard to symmetry. But these incongruities of architecture were so graduated and happily mingled, that the eye, far from being displeased with the combinations of various styles, saw nothing but what was interesting in the varied and intricate pile which they displayed. Fruit-trees displayed on the southern wall, outer stair-cases, various places of entrance, a combination of roofs and chimneys of different ages, united to render the front, not indeed beautiful or grand, but intricate, perplexed, or, to use Mr Price's appropriated phrase, picturesque. The most considerable addition was that of the present Rector, who, "being a bookish man," as the beadle was at the pains to inform Jeanie, to augment, perhaps, her reverence for the person before whom she was to appear, had built a handsome library and parlour, and no less than two additional bedrooms.

"Mony men would hae scrupled such expense," continued the parochial officer, "seeing as the living mun go as it pleases Sir Edmund to will it; but his Reverence has a canny bit land of his own, and need not look on two sides of a penny."

Jeanie could not help comparing the irregular yet extensive and commodious pile of building before her, to the "Manses," in her own country, where a set of penurious heritors, professing all the while the devotion of their lives and fortunes to the presbyterian establishment, strain their inventions to discover what may be nipped, and clipped, and pared from a building which forms but a poor accommodation even for the present incumbent, and, despite the superior advantage of stone-masonry, must, in the course of forty or fifty years, again burden their descendants with an expense, which, once liberally and handsomely employed, ought to have freed their estates from a recurrence of it for more than a century at least.

Behind the Rector's house the ground sloped down to a small river, which, without possessing the romantic vivacity and rapidity of a northern stream, was, nevertheless, by its occasional appearance through the ranges of willows and poplars that crowned its banks, a very pleasing accompaniment to the landscape. "It was the best trouting stream,"

said the beadle, whom the patience of Jeanie, and especially the assurance that she was not about to become a burden to the parish, had rendered rather communicative, "the best trouting stream in all Lincolnshire; for when you got lower, there was nought to be done wi' fly-fishing."

Turning aside from the principal entrance, he conducted Jeanie towards a sort of portal connected with the older part of the building, which was chiefly occupied by servants, and knocking at the door, it was opened by a servant in grave purple livery, such as befitted a wealthy and dignified clergyman.

"How dost do, Tummas?" said the beadle—"and how's yeung Measter Staunton?"

"Why, but poorly—but poorly, Measter Stubbs.—Are you wanting to see his reverence?"

"Ay, ay, Tummas; please to say I ha' brought up the young woman as came to service to-day with mad Madge Murdockson—she seems to be a decentish koind o' body; but I ha' asked her never a question. Only I can tell his Reverence that she is a Scotch-woman, I judge, and as flat as the fens of Holland."

Tummas honoured Jeanie Deans with such a stare, as the pampered domestics of the rich, whether spiritual or temporal, usually esteem it part of their privilege to bestow upon the poor, and then desired Mr Stubbs and his charge to step in till he informed his master of their presence.

The room into which he shewed them was a sort of steward's parlour, hung with a county map or two, and three or four prints of eminent persons connected with the county, as Sir William Monson, James York the blacksmith of Lincoln, and the famous Peregrine, Lord Willoughby, in complete armour, looking as when he said, in the words of the legend below the engraving,—

"Stand to it, noble pikemen,
And face ye well about;
And shoot ye sharp, bold bowmen,
And we will keep them out.
Ye musquet and calliver-men,
Do you prove true to me,
I 'll be the foremost man in fight,
Said brave Lord Willoughbee."

When they had entered this apartment, Tummas as a matter of course offered, and as a matter of course Mr Stubbs accepted, a "summat" to eat and drink, being the respectable relics of a gammon of bacon, and a *whole whiskin*, or black pot of sufficient double ale. To these eatables Mr Beadle seriously inclined himself, and (for we must do him justice) not without an invitation to Jeanie, in which Tummas joined, that his prisoner or charge would follow his good example. But although she might have stood in need of refreshment, considering she had tasted no food that day, the anxiety of the moment, her own sparing and abstemious habits, and a bashful aversion to eat in company of the two strangers, induced her to decline their courtesy. So she sate in a chair apart, while Mr Stubbs and Mr Tummas, who had chosen to join his friend in consideration that dinner was to be put back till after the afternoon service, made a hearty luncheon, which lasted for half an hour, and might not then have concluded, had not his Reverence rung his bell, so that Tummas was obliged to attend his master. Then, and no sooner, to save himself the labour of a second journey to the other end of the house, he announced to his master the arrival of Mr Stubbs, with the other madwoman, as he chose to designate Jeanie, as an event which had just taken place. He returned with an order that Mr Stubbs and the young woman should be instantly ushered up to the library.

The beadle bolted in haste his last mouthful of fat bacon, washed down the greasy morsel with the last rinsings of the pot of ale, and immediately marshalled Jeanie through one or two intricate passages which led from the ancient to the more modern buildings, into a handsome little hall, or anteroom, adjoining to the library, and out of which a glass door opened to the lawn.

"Stay here," said Stubbs, "till I tell his Reverence you are come."

So saying, he opened a door and entered the library.

Without wishing to hear their conversation, Jeanie, as she was circumstanced, could not avoid it; for as Stubbs stood by the door, and his Reverence was at the upper end of a large room, their conversation was necessarily audible in the anteroom.

"So you have brought the young woman here at last, Mr Stubbs. I expected you some time since. You know I do not wish such persons to remain in custody a moment without some inquiry into their situation."

"Very true, your Reverence," replied the beadle; "but the young woman had eat nought to-day, and so Measter Tummas did set down a drap of drink and a morsel, to be sure."

"Thomas was very right, Mr Stubbs; and what has become of the other most unfortunate being?"

"Why," replied Mr Stubbs, "I did think the sight on her would but vex your Reverence, and soa I did let her go her ways back to her mother, who is in trouble in the next parish."

"In trouble!—that signifies in prison, I suppose?" said Mr Staunton.

"Ay, truly; something like it, an it like your Reverence."

"Wretched, unhappy, incorrigible woman!" said the clergyman. "And what sort of person is this companion of hers?"

"Why, decent enow, an it like your Reverence," said Stubbs; "for aught I sees of her, there 's no harm of her, and she says she has cash enow to carry her out of the county."

"Cash! that is always what you think of, Stubbs—But, has she sense?—has she her wits?—has she the capacity of taking care of herself?"

"Why, your Reverence," replied Stubbs, "I cannot just say—I will be sworn she was not born at Witt-ham;[1] for Gaffer Gibbs looked at her all the time of service, and he says she could not turn up a single lesson like a Christian, even though she had Madge Murdockson to help her—but then, as to fending for hersell, why, she 's a bit of a Scotch woman, your Reverence, and they say the worst donnot of them can look out for their own turn—and she is decently put on enow, and not bechounched like t' other."

"Send her in here, then, and do you remain below, Mr Stubbs."

This colloquy had engaged Jeanie's attention so deeply, that it was not until it was over that she observed that the sashed door, which, we have said,

[1] A proverbial and punning expression in that county, to intimate that a person is not very clever.

led from the anteroom into the garden, was opened, and that there entered, or rather was borne in by two assistants, a young man, of a very pale and sickly appearance, whom they lifted to the nearest couch, and placed there, as if to recover from the fatigue of an unusual exertion. Just as they were making this arrangement, Stubbs came out of the library, and summoned Jeanie to enter it. She obeyed him, not without tremor; for, besides the novelty of the situation to a girl of her secluded habits, she felt also as if the successful prosecution of her journey was to depend upon the impression she should be able to make on Mr Staunton.

It is true, it was difficult to suppose on what pretext a person travelling on her own business, and at her own charge, could be interrupted upon her route. But the violent detention she had already undergone, was sufficient to shew that there existed persons at no great distance who had the interest, the inclination, and the audacity, forcibly to stop her journey, and she felt the necessity of having some countenance and protection, at least till she should get beyond their reach. While these things passed through her mind, much faster than our pen and ink can record, or even the reader's eye collect the meaning of its traces, Jeanie found herself in a handsome library, and in presence of the Rector of Willingham. The well-furnished presses and shelves which surrounded the large and handsome apartment, contained more books than Jeanie imagined existed in the world, being accustomed to consider as an extensive collection two fir shelves, each about three feet long, which contained her father's treasured volumes, the whole pith and marrow, as he used sometimes to boast, of modern divinity. An orrery, globes, a telescope, and some other scientific implements, conveyed to Jeanie an impression of admiration and wonder not unmixed with fear; for, in her ignorant apprehension, they seemed rather adapted for magical purposes than any other; and a few stuffed animals (as the Rector was fond of natural history) added to the impressive character of the apartment.

Mr Staunton spoke to her with great mildness. He observed, that, although her appearance at church had been uncommon, and in strange, and, he must add, discreditable society, and calculated, upon the whole, to disturb the congregation during divine worship, he wished, nevertheless, to hear her own account of herself before taking any steps which his duty might seem to demand. He was a justice of peace, he informed her, as well as a clergyman.

"His honour" (for she would not say his reverence) "was very civil and kind," was all that poor Jeanie could at first bring out.

"Who are you, young woman?" said the clergyman, more peremptorily — "and what do you do in this country, and in such company? — We allow no strollers or vagrants here."

"I am not a vagrant or a stroller, sir," said Jeanie, a little roused by the supposition. "I am a decent Scots lass, travelling through the land on my own business and my own expenses; and I was so unhappy as to fall in with bad company, and was stopped a' night on my journey. And this puir creature, who is something light-headed, let me out in the morning."

"Bad company!" said the clergyman. "I am afraid, young woman, you have not been sufficiently anxious to avoid them."

"Indeed, sir," returned Jeanie, "I have been brought up to shun evil communication. But these wicked people were thieves, and stopped me by violence and mastery."

"Thieves!" said Mr Staunton; "then you charge them with robbery, I suppose?"

"No, sir; they did not take so much as a boddle from me," answered Jeanie; "nor did they use me ill, otherwise than by confining me."

The clergyman inquired into the particulars of her adventure, which she told him from point to point.

"This is an extraordinary, and not a very probable tale, young woman," resumed Mr Staunton. "Here has been, according to your account, a great violence committed without any adequate motive. Are you aware of the law of this country — that if you lodge this charge, you will be bound over to prosecute this gang?"

Jeanie did not understand him, and he explained, that the English law, in addition to the inconvenience sustained by persons who have been robbed or injured, has the goodness to intrust to them the care and the expense of appearing as prosecutors.

Jeanie said, "that her business at London was express; all she wanted was, that any gentleman would, out of Christian charity, protect her to some town where she could hire horses and a guide; and, finally," she thought, "it would be her father's mind that she was not free to give testimony in an English court of justice, as the land was not under a direct gospel dispensation."

Mr Staunton stared a little, and asked if her father was a Quaker.

"God forbid, sir," said Jeanie — "He is nae schismatic nor sectary, nor ever treated for sic black commodities as theirs, and that's weel kend o' him."

"And what is his name, pray?" said Mr Staunton.

"David Deans, sir, the cowfeeder at Saint Leonard's Crags, near Edinburgh."

A deep groan from the anteroom prevented the Rector from replying, and, exclaiming, "Good God! that unhappy boy!" he left Jeanie alone, and hastened into the outer apartment.

Some noise and bustle was heard, but no one entered the library for the best part of an hour.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

> Fantastic passions' maddening brawl!
> And shame and terror over all!
> Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
> Which, all confused, I could not know
> Whether I suffer'd or I did,
> For all seem'd guilt, remorse, or woe,
> My own, or others, still the same
> Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame.
>
> COLERIDGE.

During the interval while she was thus left alone, Jeanie anxiously revolved in her mind what course was best for her to pursue. She was impatient to continue her journey, yet she feared she could not safely adventure to do so while the old hag and her assistants were in the neighbourhood, without risking a repetition of their violence. She thought she could collect from the conversation which she had partly overheard, and also from the wild confessions

of Madge Wildfire, that her mother had a deep and revengeful motive for obstructing her journey if possible. And from whom could she hope for assistance if not from Mr Staunton? His whole appearance and demeanour seemed to encourage her hopes. His features were handsome, though marked with a deep cast of melancholy; his tone and language were gentle and encouraging; and, as he had served in the army for several years during his youth, his air retained that easy frankness which is peculiar to the profession of arms. He was, besides, a minister of the gospel; and although a worshipper, according to Jeanie's notions, in the court of the Gentiles, and so benighted as to wear a surplice; although he read the Common Prayer, and wrote down every word of his sermon before delivering it; and although he was, moreover, in strength of lungs, as well as pith and marrow of doctrine, vastly inferior to Boanerges Stormheaven, Jeanie still thought he must be a very different person from Curate Kiltstoup, and other prelatical divines of her father's earlier days, who used to get drunk in their canonical dress, and hound out the dragoons against the wandering Cameronians. The house seemed to be in some disturbance, but as she could not suppose she was altogether forgotten, she thought it better to remain quiet in the apartment where she had been left, till some one should take notice of her.

The first who entered was, to her no small delight, one of her own sex, a motherly-looking aged person of a housekeeper. To her Jeanie explained her situation in a few words, and begged her assistance.

The dignity of a housekeeper did not encourage too much familiarity with a person who was at the Rectory on justice-business, and whose character might seem in her eyes somewhat precarious; but she was civil, although distant.

"Her young master," she said, "had had a bad accident by a fall from his horse, which made him liable to fainting fits; he had been taken very ill just now, and it was impossible his Reverence could see Jeanie for some time; but that she need not fear his doing all that was just and proper in her behalf the instant he could get her business attended to."—She concluded by offering to shew Jeanie a room, where she might remain till his Reverence was at leisure.

Our heroine took the opportunity to request the means of adjusting and changing her dress.

The housekeeper, in whose estimation order and cleanliness ranked high among personal virtues, gladly complied with a request so reasonable; and the change of dress which Jeanie's bundle furnished made so important an improvement in her appearance, that the old lady hardly knew the soiled and disordered traveller, whose attire shewed the violence she had sustained, in the neat, clean, quiet-looking little Scotchwoman, who now stood before her. Encouraged by such a favourable alteration in her appearance, Mrs Dalton ventured to invite Jeanie to partake of her dinner, and was equally pleased with the decent propriety of her conduct during the meal.

"Thou canst read this book, canst thou, young woman?" said the old lady, when their meal was concluded, laying her hand upon a large Bible.

"I hope sae, madam," said Jeanie, surprised at the question; "my father wad hae wanted mony a thing, ere I had wanted *that* schuling."

"The better sign of him, young woman. There are men here, well to pass in the world, would not want their share of a Leicester plover, and that 's a bag-pudding, if fasting for three hours would make all their poor children read the Bible from end to end. Take thou the book, then, for my eyes are something dazed, and read where thou listest—it 's the only book thou canst not happen wrong in."

Jeanie was at first tempted to turn up the parable of the good Samaritan, but her conscience checked her, as if it were a use of Scripture, not for her own edification, but to work upon the mind of others for the relief of her worldly afflictions; and under this scrupulous sense of duty, she selected, in preference, a chapter of the prophet Isaiah, and read it, notwithstanding her northern accent and tone, with a devout propriety, which greatly edified Mrs Dalton.

"Ah," she said, "an all Scotchwomen were sic as thou!—but it was our luck to get born devils of thy country, I think—every one worse than t' other. If thou knowest of any tidy lass like thysell, that wanted a place, and could bring a good character, and would not go laiking about to wakes and fairs, and wore shoes and stockings all the day round—why, I 'll not say but we might find room for her at the Rectory. Hast no cousin or sister, lass, that such an offer would suit?"

This was touching upon a sore point, but Jeanie was spared the pain of replying by the entrance of the same man-servant she had seen before.

"Measter wishes to see the young woman from Scotland," was Tummas's address.

"Go to his Reverence, my dear, as fast as you can, and tell him all your story—his Reverence is a kind man," said Mrs Dalton. "I will fold down the leaf, and make you a cup of tea, with some nice muffin, against you come down, and that 's what you seldom see in Scotland, girl."

"Measter's waiting for the young woman," said Tummas, impatiently.

"Well, Mr Jack-Sauce, and what is your business to put in your oar?—And how often must I tell you to call Mr Staunton his Reverence, seeing as he is a dignified clergyman, and not be measteringing, measteringing him, as if he were a little petty squire?"

As Jeanie was now at the door, and ready to accompany Tummas, the footman said nothing till he got into the passage, when he muttered, "There are moe masters than one in this house, and I think we shall have a mistress too, an Dame Dalton carries it thus."

Tummas led the way through a more intricate range of passages than Jeanie had yet threaded, and ushered her into an apartment which was darkened by the closing of most of the window-shutters, and in which was a bed with the curtains partly drawn.

"Here is the young woman, sir," said Tummas.

"Very well," said a voice from the bed, but not that of his Reverence; "be ready to answer the bell, and leave the room."

"There is some mistake," said Jeanie, confounded at finding herself in the apartment of an invalid; "the servant told me that the minister——"

"Don't trouble yourself," said the invalid, "there is no mistake. I know more of your affairs than my father, and I can manage them better.—Leave the room, Tom." The servant obeyed.—"We must not," said the invalid, "lose time, when

we have little to lose. Open the shutters of that window."

She did so, and, as he drew aside the curtain of his bed, the light fell on his pale countenance, as, turban'd with bandages, and dressed in a night-gown, he lay, seemingly exhausted, upon the bed.

"Look at me," he said, "Jeanie Deans; can you not recollect me?"

"No, sir," said she, full of surprise. "I was never in this country before."

"But I may have been in yours. Think — recollect. I should faint did I name the name you are most dearly bound to loathe and to detest. Think — remember!"

A terrible recollection flashed on Jeanie, which every tone of the speaker confirmed, and which his next words rendered certainty.

"Be composed — remember Muschat's Cairn, and the moonlight night!"

Jeanie sunk down on a chair, with clasped hands, and gasped in agony.

"Yes, here I lie," he said, "like a crushed snake, writhing with impatience at my incapacity of motion — here I lie, when I ought to have been in Edinburgh, trying every means to save a life that is dearer to me than my own. — How is your sister? — how fares it with her? — condemned to death, I know it, by this time! O, the horse that carried me safely on a thousand errands of folly and wickedness, that he should have broke down with me on the only good mission I have undertaken for years! But I must rein in my passion — my frame cannot endure it, and I have much to say. Give me some of the cordial which stands on that table. — Why do you tremble? But you have too good cause. — Let it stand — I need it not."

Jeanie, however reluctant, approached him with the cup into which she had poured the draught, and could not forbear saying, "There is a cordial for the mind, sir, if the wicked will turn from their transgressions, and seek to the Physician of souls."

"Silence!" he said sternly — "and yet I thank you. But tell me, and lose no time in doing so, what you are doing in this country? Remember, though I have been your sister's worst enemy, yet I will serve her with the best of my blood, and I will serve you for her sake; and no one can serve you to such purpose, for no one can know the circumstances so well — so speak without fear."

"I am not afraid, sir," said Jeanie, collecting her spirits. "I trust in God; and if it pleases Him to redeem my sister's captivity, it is all I seek, whosoever be the instrument. But, sir, to be plain with you, I dare not use your counsel, unless I were enabled to see that it accords with the law which I must rely upon."

"The devil take the puritan!" cried George Staunton, for so we must now call him, — "I beg your pardon; but I am naturally impatient, and you drive me mad! What harm can it possibly do to tell me in what situation your sister stands, and your own expectations of being able to assist her? It is time enough to refuse my advice when I offer any which you may think improper. I speak calmly to you, though 'tis against my nature; but don't urge me to impatience — it will only render me incapable of serving Effie."

There was in the looks and words of this unhappy young man a sort of restrained eagerness and impetuosity which seemed to prey upon itself, as the impatience of a fiery steed fatigues itself with churning upon the bit. After a moment's consideration, it occurred to Jeanie that she was not entitled to withhold from him, whether on her sister's account or her own, the fatal account of the consequences of the crime which he had committed, nor to reject such advice, being in itself lawful and innocent, as he might be able to suggest in the way of remedy. Accordingly, in as few words as she could express it, she told the history of her sister's trial and condemnation, and of her own journey as far as Newark. He appeared to listen in the utmost agony of mind, yet repressed every violent symptom of emotion, whether by gesture or sound, which might have interrupted the speaker, and, stretched on his couch like the Mexican monarch on his bed of live coals, only the contortions of his cheek, and the quivering of his limbs, gave indication of his sufferings. To much of what she said he listened with stifled groans, as if he were only hearing those miseries confirmed, whose fatal reality he had known before; but when she pursued her tale through the circumstances which had interrupted her journey, extreme surprise and earnest attention appeared to succeed to the symptoms of remorse which he had before exhibited. He questioned Jeanie closely concerning the appearance of the two men, and the conversation which she had overheard between the taller of them and the woman.

When Jeanie mentioned the old woman having alluded to her foster-son — "It is too true," he said; "and the source from which I derived food, when an infant, must have communicated to me the wretched — the fated — propensity to vices that were strangers in my own family. — But go on."

Jeanie passed slightly over her journey in company with Madge, having no inclination to repeat what might be the effect of mere raving on the part of her companion, and therefore her tale was now closed.

Young Staunton lay for a moment in profound meditation, and at length spoke with more composure than he had yet displayed during their interview. — "You are a sensible, as well as a good young woman, Jeanie Deans, and I will tell you more of my story than I have told to any one. — Story did I call it? — it is a tissue of folly, guilt, and misery. — But take notice — I do it because I desire your confidence in return — that is, that you will act in this dismal matter by my advice and direction. Therefore do I speak."

"I will do what is fitting for a sister, and a daughter, and a Christian woman to do," said Jeanie; "but do not tell me any of your secrets. — It is not good that I should come into your counsel, or listen to the doctrine which causeth to err."

"Simple fool!" said the young man. "Look at me. My head is not horned, my foot is not cloven, my hands are not garnished with talons; and, since I am not the very devil himself, what interest can any one else have in destroying the hopes with which you comfort or fool yourself? Listen to me patiently, and you will find that, when you have heard my counsel, you may go to the seventh heaven with it in your pocket, if you have a mind, and not feel yourself an ounce heavier in the ascent."

At the risk of being somewhat heavy, as explanations usually prove, we must here endeavour to combine into a distinct narrative, information which

the invalid communicated in a manner at once too circumstantial, and too much broken by passion, to admit of our giving his precise words. Part of it, indeed, he read from a manuscript, which he had perhaps drawn up for the information of his relations after his decease.

"To make my tale short — this wretched hag — this Margaret Murdockson, was the wife of a favourite servant of my father — she had been my nurse — her husband was dead — she resided in a cottage near this place — she had a daughter who grew up, and was then a beautiful but very giddy girl; her mother endeavoured to promote her marriage with an old and wealthy churl in the neighbourhood — the girl saw me frequently — She was familiar with me, as our connection seemed to permit — and I — in a word, I wronged her cruelly — It was not so bad as your sister's business, but it was sufficiently villainous — her folly should have been her protection. Soon after this I was sent abroad — To do my father justice, if I have turned out a fiend it is not his fault — he used the best means. When I returned, I found the wretched mother and daughter had fallen into disgrace, and were chased from this country. — My deep share in their shame and misery was discovered — my father used very harsh language — we quarreled. I left his house, and led a life of strange adventure, resolving never again to see my father or my father's home.

"And now comes the story! — Jeanie, I put my life into your hands, and not only my own life, which, God knows, is not worth saving, but the happiness of a respectable old man, and the honour of a family of consideration. My love of low society, as such propensities as I was cursed with are usually termed, was, I think, of an uncommon kind, and indicated a nature, which, if not depraved by early debauchery, would have been fit for better things. I did not so much delight in the wild revel, the low humour, the unconfined liberty of those with whom I associated, as in the spirit of adventure, presence of mind in peril, and sharpness of intellect which they displayed in prosecuting their maraudings upon the revenue, or similar adventures. —— Have you looked round this rectory? — is it not a sweet and pleasant retreat?"

Jeanie, alarmed at this sudden change of subject, replied in the affirmative.

"Well! I wish it had been ten thousand fathoms under ground, with its church-lands, and tithes, and all that belongs to it. Had it not been for this cursed rectory, I should have been permitted to follow the bent of my own inclinations and the profession of arms, and half the courage and address that I have displayed among smugglers and deer-stealers would have secured me an honourable rank among my contemporaries. Why did I not go abroad when I left this house! — Why did I leave it at all! — why — But it came to that point with me that it is madness to look back, and misery to look forward!"

He paused, and then proceeded with more composure.

"The chances of a wandering life brought me unhappily to Scotland, to embroil myself in worse and more criminal actions than I had yet been concerned in. It was now I became acquainted with Wilson, a remarkable man in his station of life; quiet, composed, and resolute, firm in mind, and uncommonly strong in person, gifted with a sort of rough eloquence which raised him above his companions. Hitherto I had been

> 'As dissolute as desperate, yet through both
> Were seen some sparkles of a better hope.'

But it was this man's misfortune, as well as mine, that, notwithstanding the difference of our rank and education, he acquired an extraordinary and fascinating influence over me, which I can only account for by the calm determination of his character being superior to the less sustained impetuosity of mine. Where he led I felt myself bound to follow; and strange was the courage and address which he displayed in his pursuits. While I was engaged in desperate adventures, under so strange and dangerous a preceptor, I became acquainted with your unfortunate sister at some sports of the young people in the suburbs, which she frequented by stealth — and her ruin proved an interlude to the tragic scenes in which I was now deeply engaged. Yet this let me say — the villainy was not premeditated, and I was firmly resolved to do her all the justice which marriage could do, so soon as I should be able to extricate myself from my unhappy course of life, and embrace some one more suited to my birth. I had wild visions — visions of conducting her as if to some poor retreat, and introducing her at once to rank and fortune she never dreamt of. A friend, at my request, attempted a negotiation with my father, which was protracted for some time, and renewed at different intervals. At length, and just when I expected my father's pardon, he learned by some means or other my infamy, painted in even exaggerated colours, which was, God knows, unnecessary. He wrote me a letter — how it found me out, I know not — enclosing me a sum of money, and disowning me for ever. I became desperate — I became frantic — I readily joined Wilson in a perilous smuggling adventure in which we miscarried, and was willingly blinded by his logic to consider the robbery of the officer of the customs in Fife as a fair and honourable reprisal. Hitherto I had observed a certain line in my criminality, and stood free of assaults upon personal property, but now I felt a wild pleasure in disgracing myself as much as possible.

"The plunder was no object to me. I abandoned that to my comrades, and only asked the post of danger. I remember well, that when I stood with my drawn sword guarding the door while they committed the felony, I had not a thought of my own safety. I was only meditating on my sense of supposed wrong from my family, my impotent thirst of vengeance, and how it would sound in the haughty ears of the family of Willingham, that one of their descendants, and the heir apparent of their honours, should perish by the hands of the hangman for robbing a Scottish gauger of a sum not equal to one-fifth part of the money I had in my pocket-book. We were taken — I expected no less. We were condemned — that also I looked for. But Death, as he approached nearer, looked grimly; and the recollection of your sister's destitute condition determined me on an effort to save my life. — I forgot to tell you, that in Edinburgh I again met the woman Murdockson and her daughter. She had followed the camp when young, and had now, under pretence of a trifling traffic, resumed predatory habits, with which she had already been too familiar.

Our first meeting was stormy; but I was liberal of what money I had, and she forgot, or seemed to forget, the injury her daughter had received. The unfortunate girl herself seemed hardly even to know her seducer, far less to retain any sense of the injury she had received. Her mind is totally alienated, which, according to her mother's account, is sometimes the consequence of an unfavourable confinement. But it was *my doing*. Here was another stone knitted round my neck to sink me into the pit of perdition. Every look — every word of this poor creature — her false spirits — her imperfect recollections — her allusions to things which she had forgotten, but which were recorded in my conscience, were stabs of a poniard — stabs did I say? — they were tearing with hot pincers, and scalding the raw wound with burning sulphur — they were to be endured however, and they *were* endured. — I return to my prison thoughts.

"It was not the least miserable of them that your sister's time approached. I knew her dread of you and of her father. She often said she would die a thousand deaths ere you should know her shame — yet her confinement must be provided for. I knew this woman Murdockson was an infernal hag, but I thought she loved me, and that money would make her true. She had procured a file for Wilson, and a spring-saw for me; and she undertook readily to take charge of Effie during her illness, in which she had skill enough to give the necessary assistance. I gave her the money which my father had sent me. It was settled that she should receive Effie into her house in the meantime, and wait for farther directions from me, when I should effect my escape. I communicated this purpose, and recommended the old hag to poor Effie by a letter, in which I recollect that I endeavoured to support the character of Macheath under condemnation — a fine, gay, bold-faced ruffian, who is game to the last. Such, and so wretchedly poor, was my ambition! Yet I had resolved to forsake the courses I had been engaged in, should I be so fortunate as to escape the gibbet. My design was to marry your sister, and go over to the West Indies. I had still a considerable sum of money left, and I trusted to be able, in one way or other, to provide for myself and my wife.

"We made the attempt to escape, and by the obstinacy of Wilson, who insisted upon going first, it totally miscarried. The undaunted and self-denied manner in which he sacrificed himself to redeem his error, and accomplish my escape from the Tolbooth Church, you must have heard of — all Scotland rang with it. It was a gallant and extraordinary deed — All men spoke of it — all men, even those who most condemned the habits and crimes of this self-devoted man, praised the heroism of his friendship. I have many vices, but cowardice, or want of gratitude, are none of the number. I resolved to requite his generosity, and even your sister's safety became a secondary consideration with me for the time. To effect Wilson's liberation was my principal object, and I doubted not to find the means.

"Yet I did not forget Effie neither. The bloodhounds of the law were so close after me, that I dared not trust myself near any of my old haunts, but old Murdockson met me by appointment, and informed me that your sister had happily been delivered of a boy. I charged the hag to keep her patient's mind easy, and let her want for nothing that money could purchase, and I retreated to Fife, where, among my old associates of Wilson's gang, I hid myself in those places of concealment where the men engaged in that desperate trade are used to find security for themselves and their uncustomed goods. Men who are disobedient both to human and divine laws are not always insensible to the claims of courage and generosity. We were assured that the mob of Edinburgh, strongly moved with the hardship of Wilson's situation, and the gallantry of his conduct, would back any bold attempt that might be made to rescue him even from the foot of the gibbet. Desperate as the attempt seemed, upon my declaring myself ready to lead the onset on the guard, I found no want of followers who engaged to stand by me, and returned to Lothian, soon followed by some steady associates, prepared to act whenever the occasion might require.

"I have no doubt I should have rescued him from the very noose that dangled over his head," he continued with animation, which seemed a flash of the interest which he had taken in such exploits; "but amongst other precautions, the magistrates had taken one, suggested as we afterwards learned, by the unhappy wretch Porteous, which effectually disconcerted my measures. They anticipated, by half an hour, the ordinary period for execution; and, as it had been resolved amongst us, that, for fear of observation from the officers of justice, we should not shew ourselves upon the street until the time of action approached, it followed, that all was over before our attempt at a rescue commenced. It did commence, however, and I gained the scaffold and cut the rope with my own hand. It was too late! The bold, stout-hearted, generous criminal was no more — and vengeance was all that remained to us — a vengeance, as I then thought, doubly due from my hand, to whom Wilson had given life and liberty when he could as easily have secured his own."

"O, sir," said Jeanie, "did the Scripture never come into your mind, 'Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it?'"

"Scripture! Why, I had not opened a Bible for five years," answered Staunton.

"Wae's me, sirs," said Jeanie — "and a minister's son too!"

"It is natural for you to say so; yet do not interrupt me, but let me finish my most accursed history. The beast, Porteous, who kept firing on the people long after it had ceased to be necessary, became the object of their hatred for having overdone his duty, and of mine for having done it too well. We — that is, I and the other determined friends of Wilson, resolved to be avenged — but caution was necessary. I thought I had been marked by one of the officers, and therefore continued to lurk about the vicinity of Edinburgh, but without daring to venture within the walls. At length I visited, at the hazard of my life, the place where I hoped to find my future wife and my son — they were both gone. Dame Murdockson informed me, that so soon as Effie heard of the miscarriage of the attempt to rescue Wilson, and the hot pursuit after me, she fell into a brain fever; and that being one day obliged to go out on some necessary business and leave her alone, she had taken that opportunity to escape, and she had not seen her since. I loaded her with reproaches,

to which she listened with the most provoking and callous composure; for it is one of her attributes, that, violent and fierce as she is upon most occasions, there are some in which she shews the most imperturbable calmness. I threatened her with justice; she said I had more reason to fear justice than she had. I felt she was right, and was silenced. I threatened her with vengeance; she replied in nearly the same words, that, to judge by injuries received, I had more reason to fear her vengeance, than she to dread mine. She was again right, and I was left without an answer. I flung myself from her in indignation, and employed a comrade to make inquiry in the neighbourhood of Saint Leonard's concerning your sister; but ere I received his answer, the opening quest of a well-scented terrier of the law drove me from the vicinity of Edinburgh, to a more distant and secluded place of concealment. A secret and trusty emissary at length brought me the account of Porteous's condemnation, and of your sister's imprisonment on a criminal charge; thus astounding one of mine ears, while he gratified the other.

"I again ventured to the Pleasance—again charged Murdockson with treachery to the unfortunate Effie and her child, though I could conceive no reason, save that of appropriating the whole of the money I had lodged with her. Your narrative throws light on this, and shews another motive, not less powerful because less evident—the desire of wreaking vengeance on the seducer of her daughter,—the destroyer at once of her reason and reputation. Great God! how I wish that, instead of the revenge she made choice of, she had delivered me up to the cord!"

"But what account did the wretched woman give of Effie and the bairn?" said Jeanie, who, during this long and agitating narrative, had firmness and discernment enough to keep her eye on such points as might throw light on her sister's misfortunes.

"She would give none," said Staunton; "she said the mother made a moonlight flitting from her house, with the infant in her arms—that she had never seen either of them since—that the lass might have thrown the child into the North Loch or the Quarry Holes for what she knew, and it was like enough she had done so."

"And how came you to believe that she did not speak the fatal truth?" said Jeanie, trembling.

"Because, on this second occasion, I saw her daughter, and I understood from her, that, in fact, the child had been removed or destroyed during the illness of the mother. But all knowledge to be got from her is so uncertain and indirect, that I could not collect any farther circumstances. Only the diabolical character of old Murdockson makes me augur the worst."

"The last account agrees with that given by my poor sister," said Jeanie; "but gang on wi' your ain tale, sir."

"Of this I am certain," said Staunton, "that Effie, in her senses, and with her knowledge, never injured living creature—But what could I do in her exculpation?—Nothing—and, therefore, my whole thoughts were turned toward her safety. I was under the cursed necessity of suppressing my feelings towards Murdockson; my life was in the hag's hand—that I cared not for; but on my life hung that of your sister. I spoke the wretch fair; I appeared to confide in her; and to me, so far as I was personally concerned, she gave proofs of extraordinary fidelity. I was at first uncertain what measures I ought to adopt for your sister's liberation, when the general rage excited among the citizens of Edinburgh on account of the reprieve of Porteous, suggested to me the daring idea of forcing the jail, and at once carrying off your sister from the clutches of the law, and bringing to condign punishment a miscreant, who had tormented the unfortunate Wilson, even in the hour of death, as if he had been a wild Indian taken captive by an hostile tribe. I flung myself among the multitude in the moment of fermentation—so did others among Wilson's mates, who had, like me, been disappointed in the hope of glutting their eyes with Porteous's execution. All was organized, and I was chosen for the captain. I felt not—I do not now feel, compunction for what was to be done, and has since been executed."

"O God forgive ye, sir, and bring ye to a better sense of your ways!" exclaimed Jeanie, in horor at the avowal of such violent sentiments.

"Amen," replied Staunton, "if my sentiments are wrong. But I repeat, that, although willing to aid the deed, I could have wished them to have chosen another leader; because I foresaw that the great and general duty of the night would interfere with the assistance which I proposed to render Effie. I gave a commission, however, to a trusty friend to protect her to a place of safety, so soon as the fatal procession had left the jail. But for no persuasions which I could use in the hurry of the moment, or which my comrade employed at more length, after the mob had taken a different direction, could the unfortunate girl be prevailed upon to leave the prison. His arguments were all wasted upon the infatuated victim, and he was obliged to leave her in order to attend to his own safety. Such was his account; but, perhaps, he persevered less steadily in his attempt to persuade her than I would have done."

"Effie was right to remain," said Jeanie; "and I love her the better for it."

"Why will you say so?" said Staunton.

"You cannot understand my reasons, sir, if I should render them," answered Jeanie, composedly; "they that thirst for the blood of their enemies have no taste for the well-spring of life."

"My hopes," said Staunton, "were thus a second time disappointed. My next efforts were to bring her through her trial by means of yourself. How I urged it, and where, you cannot have forgotten. I do not blame you for your refusal; it was founded, I am convinced, on principle, and not on indifference to your sister's fate. For me, judge of me as a man frantic; I knew not what hand to turn to, and all my efforts were unavailing. In this condition, and close beset on all sides, I thought of what might be done by means of my family, and their influence. I fled from Scotland—I reached this place—my miserably wasted and unhappy appearance procured me from my father that pardon, which a parent finds it so hard to refuse, even to the most undeserving son. And here I have awaited in anguish of mind, which the condemned criminal might envy, the event of your sister's trial."

"Without taking any steps for her relief?" said Jeanie.

"To the last I hoped her case might terminate more favourably; and it is only two days since that the fatal tidings reached me. My resolution was instantly taken. I mounted my best horse with the purpose of making the utmost haste to London, and there compounding with Sir Robert Walpole for your sister's safety, by surrendering to him, in the person of the heir of the family of Willingham, the notorious George Robertson, the accomplice of Wilson, the breaker of the Tolbooth prison, and the well-known leader of the Porteous mob."

"But would that save my sister?" said Jeanie, in astonishment.

"It would, as I should drive my bargain," said Staunton. "Queens love revenge as well as their subjects—Little as you seem to esteem it, it is a poison which pleases all palates, from the prince to the peasant. Prime ministers love no less the power of gratifying sovereigns by gratifying their passions.—The life of an obscure village girl! Why, I might ask the best of the crown-jewels for laying the head of such an insolent conspiracy at the foot of her majesty, with a certainty of being gratified. All my other plans have failed, but this could not—Heaven is just, however, and would not honour me with making this voluntary atonement for the injury I have done your sister. I had not rode ten miles, when my horse, the best and most sure-footed animal in this country, fell with me on a level piece of road, as if he had been struck by a cannon-shot. I was greatly hurt, and was brought back here in the condition in which you now see me."

As young Staunton had come to the conclusion, the servant opened the door, and, with a voice which seemed intended rather for a signal, than merely the announcing of a visit, said, "His Reverence, sir, is coming up stairs to wait upon you."

"For God's sake, hide yourself, Jeanie," exclaimed Staunton, "in that dressing closet!"

"No, sir," said Jeanie; "as I am here for nae ill, I canna take the shame of hiding mysell frae the master o' the house."

"But, good Heavens!" exclaimed George Staunton, "do but consider——"

Ere he could complete the sentence his father entered the apartment.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

> And now, will pardon, comfort, kindness, draw
> The youth from vice? will honour, duty, law?
> CRABBE.

JEANIE arose from her seat, and made her quiet reverence, when the elder Mr Staunton entered the apartment. His astonishment was extreme at finding his son in such company.

"I perceive, madam, I have made a mistake respecting you, and ought to have left the task of interrogating you, and of righting your wrongs, to this young man, with whom, doubtless, you have been formerly acquainted."

"It 's unwitting on my part that I am here," said Jeanie; "the servant told me his master wished to speak with me."

"There goes the purple coat over my ears," murmured Tummas. "D—n her, why must she needs speak the truth, when she could have as well said any thing else she had a mind?"

"George," said Mr Staunton, "if you are still—as you have ever been—lost to all self-respect, you might at least have spared your father, and your father's house, such a disgraceful scene as this."

"Upon my life—upon my soul, sir!" said George, throwing his feet over the side of the bed, and starting from his recumbent posture.

"Your life, sir!" interrupted his father, with melancholy sternness,—"What sort of life has it been?—Your soul! alas! what regard have you ever paid to it? Take care to reform both ere offering either as pledges of your sincerity."

"On my honour, sir, you do me wrong," answered George Staunton; "I have been all that you can call me that 's bad, but in the present instance you do me injustice. By my honour you do!"

"Your honour!" said his father, and turned from him, with a look of the most upbraiding contempt, to Jeanie. "From you, young woman, I neither ask nor expect any explanation; but as a father alike and as a clergyman, I request your departure from this house. If your romantic story has been other than a pretext to find admission into it, (which, from the society in which you first appeared, I may be permitted to doubt,) you will find a justice of peace within two miles, with whom, more properly than with me, you may lodge your complaint."

"This shall not be," said George Staunton, starting up to his feet. "Sir, you are naturally kind and humane—you shall not become cruel and inhospitable on my account. Turn out that eavesdropping rascal," pointing to Thomas, "and get what hartshorn drops, or what better receipt you have against fainting, and I will explain to you in two words the connection betwixt this young woman and me. She shall not lose her fair character through me. I have done too much mischief to her family already, and I know too well what belongs to the loss of fame."

"Leave the room, sir," said the Rector to the servant; and when the man had obeyed, he carefully shut the door behind him. Then addressing his son, he said sternly, "Now, sir, what new proof of your infamy have you to impart to me?"

Young Staunton was about to speak, but it was one of those moments when those, who, like Jeanie Deans, possess the advantage of a steady courage and unruffled temper, can assume the superiority over more ardent but less determined spirits.

"Sir," she said to the elder Staunton, "ye have an undoubted right to ask your ain son to render a reason of his conduct. But respecting me, I am but a wayfaring traveller, no ways obligated or indebted to you, unless it be for the meal of meat which, in my ain country, is willingly gien by rich or poor, according to their ability, to those who need it; and for which, forby that, I am willing to make payment, if I didna think it would be an affront to offer siller in a house like this—only I dinna ken the fashions of the country."

"This is all very well, young woman," said the Rector, a good deal surprised, and unable to conjecture whether to impute Jeanie's language to simplicity or impertinence—"this may be all very well—but let me bring it to a point. Why do you

stop this young man's mouth, and prevent his communicating to his father and his best friend, an explanation (since he says he has one) of circumstances which seem in themselves not a little suspicious ?"

"He may tell of his ain affairs what he likes," answered Jeanie; "but my family and friends have nae right to hae ony stories told anent them without their express desire; and, as they canna be here to speak for themselves, I entreat ye wadna ask Mr George Rob — I mean Staunton, or whatever his name is, ony questions anent me or my folk; for I maun be free to tell you, that he will neither have the bearing of a Christian or a gentleman, if he answers you against my express desire."

"This is the most extraordinary thing I ever met with," said the Rector, as, after fixing his eyes keenly on the placid, yet modest countenance of Jeanie, he turned them suddenly upon his son. "What have you to say, sir ?"

"That I feel I have been too hasty in my promise, sir," answered George Staunton; "I have no title to make any communications respecting the affairs of this young person's family without her assent."

The elder Mr Staunton turned his eyes from one to the other with marks of surprise.

"This is more, and worse, I fear," he said, addressing his son, "than one of your frequent and disgraceful connections — I insist upon knowing the mystery."

"I have already said, sir," replied his son rather sullenly, "that I have no title to mention the affairs of this young woman's family without her consent."

"And I hae nae mysteries to explain, sir," said Jeanie, "but only to pray you, as a preacher of the gospel and a gentleman, to permit me to go safe to the next public house on the Lunnon road."

"I shall take care of your safety," said young Staunton; "you need ask that favour from no one."

"Do you say so before my face ?" said the justly-incensed father. "Perhaps, sir, you intend to fill up the cup of disobedience and profligacy by forming a low and disgraceful marriage ? But let me bid you beware."

"If you were feared for sic a thing happening wi' me, sir," said Jeanie, "I can only say, that not for all the land that lies between the twa ends of the rainbow wad I be the woman that should wed your son."

"There is something very singular in all this," said the elder Staunton; "follow me into the next room, young woman."

"Hear me speak first," said the young man. "I have but one word to say. I confide entirely in your prudence; tell my father as much or as little of these matters as you will, he shall know neither more nor less from me."

His father darted at him a glance of indignation, which softened into sorrow as he saw him sink down on the couch, exhausted with the scene he had undergone. He left the apartment, and Jeanie followed him, George Staunton raising himself as she passed the door-way, and pronouncing the word, "Remember !" in a tone as monitory as it was uttered by Charles I. upon the scaffold. The elder Staunton led the way into a small parlour, and shut the door.

"Young woman," said he, "there is something in your face and appearance that marks both sense and simplicity, and, if I am not deceived, innocence also — Should it be otherwise, I can only say, you are the most accomplished hypocrite I have ever seen. — I ask to know no secret that you have unwillingness to divulge, least of all those which concern my son. His conduct has given me too much unhappiness to permit me to hope comfort or satisfaction from him. If you are such as I suppose you, believe me, that whatever unhappy circumstances may have connected you with George Staunton, the sooner you break them through the better."

"I think I understand your meaning, sir," replied Jeanie; "and as ye are sae frank as to speak o' the young gentleman in sic a way, I must needs say that it is but the second time of my speaking wi' him in our lives, and what I hae heard frae him on these twa occasions has been such that I never wish to hear the like again."

"Then it is your real intention to leave this part of the country, and proceed to London ?" said the Rector.

"Certainly, sir; for I may say, in one sense, that the avenger of blood is behind me; and if I were but assured against mischief by the way ——"

"I have made inquiry," said the clergyman, "after the suspicious characters you described. They have left their place of rendezvous; but as they may be lurking in the neighbourhood, and as you say you have special reason to apprehend violence from them, I will put you under the charge of a steady person, who will protect you as far as Stamford, and see you into a light coach, which goes from thence to London."

"A coach is not for the like of me, sir," said Jeanie; to whom the idea of a stage-coach was unknown, as, indeed, they were then only used in the neighbourhood of London.

Mr Staunton briefly explained that she would find that mode of conveyance more commodious, cheaper, and more safe, than travelling on horseback. She expressed her gratitude with so much singleness of heart, that he was induced to ask her whether she wanted the pecuniary means of prosecuting her journey. She thanked him, but said she had enough for her purpose; and, indeed, she had husbanded her stock with great care. This reply served also to remove some doubts, which naturally enough still floated in Mr Staunton's mind, respecting her character and real purpose, and satisfied him, at least, that money did not enter into her scheme of deception, if an impostor she should prove. He next requested to know what part of the city she wished to go to.

"To a very decent merchant, a cousin o' my ain, a Mrs Glass, sir, that sells snuff and tobacco, at the sign o' the Thistle, somegate in the town."

Jeanie communicated this intelligence with a feeling that a connection so respectable ought to give her consequence in the eyes of Mr Staunton; and she was a good deal surprised when he answered.

"And is this woman your only acquaintance in London, my poor girl ? and have you really no better knowledge where she is to be found ?"

"I was gaun to see the Duke of Argyle, forby Mrs Glass," said Jeanie; "and if your honour thinks it would be best to go there first, and

get some of his Grace's folk to shew me my cousin's shop ——"

"Are you acquainted with any of the Duke of Argyle's people?" said the Rector.

"No, sir."

"Her brain must be something touched after all, or it would be impossible for her to rely on such introductions.—Well," said he aloud, "I must not inquire into the cause of your journey, and so I cannot be fit to give you advice how to manage it. But the landlady of the house where the coach stops is a very decent person; and as I use her house sometimes, I will give you a recommendation to her."

Jeanie thanked him for his kindness with her best courtesy, and said, "That with his honour's line, and ane from worthy Mrs Bickerton, that keeps the Seven Stars at York, she did not doubt to be well taken out in Lunnon."

"And now," said he, "I presume you will be desirous to set out immediately."

"If I had been in an inn, sir, or any suitable resting-place," answered Jeanie, "I wad not have presumed to use the Lord's day for travelling; but as I am on a journey of mercy, I trust my doing so will not be imputed."

"You may, if you choose, remain with Mrs Dalton for the evening; but I desire you will have no farther correspondence with my son, who is not a proper counsellor for a person of your age, whatever your difficulties may be."

"Your honour speaks ower truly in that," said Jeanie; "it was not with my will that I spoke wi' him just now, and—not to wish the gentleman ony thing but gude—I never wish to see him between the een again."

"If you please," added the Rector, "as you seem to be a seriously disposed young woman, you may attend family worship in the hall this evening."

"I thank your honour," said Jeanie; "but I am doubtful if my attendance would be to edification."

"How!" said the Rector; "so young, and already unfortunate enough to have doubts upon the duties of religion!"

"God forbid, sir," replied Jeanie; "it is not for that; but I have been bred in the faith of the suffering remnant of the presbyterian doctrine in Scotland, and I am doubtful if I can lawfully attend upon your fashion of worship, seeing it has been testified against by many precious souls of our kirk, and specially by my worthy father."

"Well, my good girl," said the Rector, with a good-humoured smile, "far be it from me to put any force upon your conscience; and yet you ought to recollect that the same divine grace dispenses its streams to other kingdoms as well as to Scotland. As it is as essential to our spiritual, as water to our earthly wants, its springs, various in character, yet alike efficacious in virtue, are to be found in abundance throughout the Christian world."

"Ah, but," said Jeanie, "though the waters may be alike, yet, with your worship's leave, the blessing upon them may not be equal. It would have been in vain for Naaman the Syrian leper to have bathed in Pharpar and Abana, rivers of Damascus, when it was only the waters of Jordan that were sanctified for the cure."

"Well," said the Rector, "we will not enter upon the great debate betwixt our national churches at present. We must endeavour to satisfy you that, at least, amongst our errors, we preserve Christian charity, and a desire to assist our brethren."

He then ordered Mrs Dalton into his presence, and consigned Jeanie to her particular charge, with directions to be kind to her, and with assurances, that, early in the morning, a trusty guide and a good horse should be ready to conduct her to Stamford. He then took a serious and dignified, yet kind leave of her, wishing her full success in the objects of her journey, which he said he doubted not were laudable, from the soundness of thinking which she had displayed in conversation.

Jeanie was again conducted by the housekeeper to her own apartment. But the evening was not destined to pass over without farther torment from young Staunton. A paper was slipped into her hand by the faithful Tummas, which intimated his young master's desire, or rather demand, to see her instantly, and assured her he had provided against interruption.

"Tell your young master," said Jeanie, openly, and regardless of all the winks and signs by which Tummas strove to make her comprehend that Mrs Dalton was not to be admitted into the secret of the correspondence, "that I promised faithfully to his worthy father that I would not see him again."

"Tummas," said Mrs Dalton, "I think you might be much more creditably employed, considering the coat you wear, and the house you live in, than to be carrying messages between your young master and girls that chance to be in this house."

"Why, Mrs Dalton, as to that, I was hired to carry messages, and not to ask any questions about them; and it 's not for the like of me to refuse the young gentleman's bidding, if he were a little wildish or so. If there was harm meant, there 's no harm done, you see."

"However," said Mrs Dalton, "I gie you fair warning, Tummas Ditton, that an I catch thee at this work again, his Reverence shall make a clear house of you."

Thomas retired, abashed and in dismay. The rest of the evening passed away without any thing worthy of notice.

Jeanie enjoyed the comforts of a good bed and a sound sleep with grateful satisfaction, after the perils and hardships of the preceding day; and such was her fatigue, that she slept soundly until six o'clock, when she was awakened by Mrs Dalton, who acquainted her that her guide and horse were ready, and in attendance. She hastily rose, and, after her morning devotions, was soon ready to resume her travels. The motherly care of the housekeeper had provided an early breakfast, and, after she had partaken of this refreshment, she found herself safe seated on a pillion behind a stout Lincolnshire peasant, who was, besides, armed with pistols, to protect her against any violence which might be offered.

They trudged along in silence for a mile or two along a country road, which conducted them, by hedge and gate-way, into the principal highway, a little beyond Grantham. At length her master of the horse asked her whether her name was not Jean, or Jane, Deans. She answered in the affirmative, with some surprise. "Then here 's a bit of a note as concerns you," said the man, handing it over his left shoulder. "It 's from young master, as I judge, and every man about Willingham is fain to pleasure him either for love or fear; for he 'll come to be landlord at last, let them say what they like."

Jeanie broke the seal of the note, which was addressed to her, and read as follows:

"You refuse to see me. I suppose you are shocked at my character: but, in painting myself such as I am, you should give me credit for my sincerity. I am, at least, no hypocrite. You refuse, however, to see me, and your conduct may be natural—but is it wise? I have expressed my anxiety to repair your sister's misfortunes at the expense of my honour,—my family's honour—my own life; and you think me too debased to be admitted even to sacrifice what I have remaining of honour, fame, and life, in her cause. Well, if the offerer be despised, the victim is still equally at hand; and perhaps there may be justice in the decree of Heaven, that I shall not have the melancholy credit of appearing to make this sacrifice out of my own free good-will. You, as you have declined my concurrence, must take the whole upon yourself. Go, then, to the Duke of Argyle, and, when other arguments fail you, tell him you have it in your power to bring to condign punishment the most active conspirator in the Porteous mob. He will hear you on this topic, should he be deaf to every other. Make your own terms, for they will be at your own making. You know where I am to be found; and you may be assured I will not give you the dark side of the hill, as at Muschat's Cairn; I have no thoughts of stirring from the house I was born in; like the hare, I shall be worried in the seat I started from. I repeat it—make your own terms. I need not remind you to ask your sister's life, for that you will do of course; but make terms of advantage for yourself—ask wealth and reward—office and income for Butler—ask any thing—you will get any thing—and all for delivering to the hands of the executioner a man most deserving of his office;—one who, though young in years, is old in wickedness, and whose most earnest desire is, after the storms of an unquiet life, to sleep and be at rest."

This extraordinary letter was subscribed with the initials G. S.

Jeanie read it over once or twice with great attention, which the slow pace of the horse, as he stalked through a deep lane, enabled her to do with facility.

When she had perused this billet, her first employment was to tear it into as small pieces as possible, and disperse these pieces in the air by a few at a time, so that a document containing so perilous a secret might not fall into any other person's hand.

The question how far, in point of extremity, she was entitled to save her sister's life by sacrificing that of a person who, though guilty towards the state, had done her no injury, formed the next earnest and most painful subject of consideration. In one sense, indeed, it seemed as if denouncing the guilt of Staunton, the cause of her sister's errors and misfortunes, would have been an act of just, and even providential retribution. But Jeanie, in the strict and severe tone of morality in which she was educated, had to consider not only the general aspect of a proposed action, but its justness and fitness in relation to the actor, before she could be, according to her own phrase, free to enter upon it. What right had she to make a barter between the lives of Staunton and of Effie, and to sacrifice the one for the safety of the other? His guilt—that guilt for which he was amenable to the laws—was a crime against the public indeed, but it was not against her.

Neither did it seem to her that his share in the death of Porteous, though her mind revolted at the idea of using violence to any one, was in the relation of a common murder, against the perpetrator of which every one is called to aid the public magistrate. That violent action was blended with many circumstances, which, in the eyes of those in Jeanie's rank of life, if they did not altogether deprive it of the character of guilt, softened, at least, its most atrocious features. The anxiety of the government to obtain conviction of some of the offenders, had but served to increase the public feeling which connected the action, though violent and irregular, with the idea of ancient national independence. The rigorous measures adopted or proposed against the city of Edinburgh, the ancient metropolis of Scotland—the extremely unpopular and injudicious measure of compelling the Scottish clergy, contrary to their principles and sense of duty, to promulgate from the pulpit the reward offered for the discovery of the perpetrators of this slaughter, had produced on the public mind the opposite consequences from what were intended; and Jeanie felt conscious, that whoever should lodge information concerning that event, and for whatsoever purpose it might be done, it would be considered as an act of treason against the independence of Scotland. With the fanaticism of the Scottish presbyterians, there was always mingled a glow of national feeling, and Jeanie trembled at the idea of her name being handed down to posterity with that of the "fause Monteath," and one or two others, who, having deserted and betrayed the cause of their country, are damned to perpetual remembrance and execration among its peasantry. Yet, to part with Effie's life once more, when a word spoken might save it, pressed severely on the mind of her affectionate sister.

"The Lord support and direct me!" said Jeanie, "for it seems to be His will to try me with difficulties far beyond my ain strength."

While this thought passed through Jeanie's mind, her guard, tired of silence, began to shew some inclination to be communicative. He seemed a sensible, steady peasant, but not having more delicacy or prudence than is common to those in his situation, he, of course, chose the Willingham family as the subject of his conversation. From this man Jeanie learned some particulars of which she had hitherto been ignorant, and which we will briefly recapitulate for the information of the reader.

The father of George Staunton had been bred a soldier, and during service in the West Indies, had married the heiress of a wealthy planter. By this lady he had an only child, George Staunton, the unhappy young man who has been so often mentioned in this narrative. He passed the first part of his early youth under the charge of a doting mother, and in the society of negro slaves, whose study it was to gratify his every caprice. His father was a man of worth and sense; but as he alone retained tolerable health among the officers of the regiment he belonged to, he was much engaged with his duty. Besides, Mrs Staunton was beautiful and wilful, and enjoyed but delicate health; so that it was difficult for a man of affection, humanity, and a quiet disposition, to struggle with her on the point of her over-indulgence to an only child. Indeed, what Mr Staunton did do towards counterac-

ting the baneful effects of his wife's system, only tended to render it more pernicious; for every restraint imposed on the boy in his father's presence, was compensated by treble licence during his absence. So that George Staunton acquired, even in childhood, the habit of regarding his father as a rigid censor, from whose severity he was desirous of emancipating himself as soon and absolutely as possible.

When he was about ten years old, and when his mind had received all the seeds of those evil weeds which afterwards grew apace, his mother died, and his father, half heart-broken, returned to England. To sum up her imprudence and unjustifiable indulgence, she had contrived to place a considerable part of her fortune at her son's exclusive control or disposal, in consequence of which management, George Staunton had not been long in England till he learned his independence, and how to abuse it. His father had endeavoured to rectify the defects of his education by placing him in a well-regulated seminary. But although he shewed some capacity for learning, his riotous conduct soon became intolerable to his teachers. He found means (too easily afforded to all youths who have certain expectations) of procuring such a command of money as enabled him to anticipate in boyhood the frolics and follies of a more mature age, and, with these accomplishments, he was returned on his father's hands as a profligate boy, whose example might ruin a hundred.

The elder Mr Staunton, whose mind, since his wife's death, had been tinged with a melancholy, which certainly his son's conduct did not tend to dispel, had taken orders, and was inducted by his brother Sir William Staunton into the family living of Willingham. The revenue was a matter of consequence to him, for he derived little advantage from the estate of his late wife; and his own fortune was that of a younger brother.

He took his son to reside with him at the rectory, but he soon found that his disorders rendered him an intolerable inmate. And as the young men of his own rank would not endure the purse-proud insolence of the Creole, he fell into that taste for low society, which is worse than "pressing to death, whipping, or hanging." His father sent him abroad, but he only returned wilder and more desperate than before. It is true, this unhappy youth was not without his good qualities. He had lively wit, good temper, reckless generosity, and manners which, while he was under restraint, might pass well in society. But all these availed him nothing. He was so well acquainted with the turf, the gaming-table, the cock-pit, and every worse rendezvous of folly and dissipation, that his mother's fortune was spent before he was twenty-one, and he was soon in debt and in distress. His early history may be concluded in the words of our British Juvenal, when describing a similar character:—

> Headstrong, determined in his own career,
> He thought reproof unjust, and truth severe,
> The soul's disease was to its crisis come,
> He first abused, and then abjured his home;
> And when he chose a vagabond to be,
> He made his shame his glory, "I'll be free!"

"And yet 'tis pity on Measter George, too," continued the honest boor, "for he has an open hand, and winna let a poor body want an he has it."

The virtue of profuse generosity, by which, indeed, they themselves are most directly advantaged, is readily admitted by the vulgar as a cloak for many sins.

At Stamford our heroine was deposited in safety by her communicative guide. She obtained a place in the coach, which, although termed a light one, and accommodated with no fewer than six horses, only reached London on the afternoon of the second day. The recommendation of the elder Mr Staunton procured Jeanie a civil reception at the inn where the carriage stopped, and, by the aid of Mrs Bickerton's correspondent, she found out her friend and relative Mrs Glass, by whom she was kindly received and hospitably entertained.

CHAPTER XXXV.

> My name is Argyle, you may well think it strange,
> To live at the court and never to change.
> *Ballad.*

Few names deserve more honourable mention in the history of Scotland, during this period, than that of John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich. His talents as a statesman and a soldier were generally admitted; he was not without ambition, but "without the illness that attends it" — without that irregularity of thought and aim, which often excites great men, in his peculiar situation, (for it was a very peculiar one,) to grasp the means of raising themselves to power, at the risk of throwing a kingdom into confusion. Pope has distinguished him as

> "Argyle, the state's whole thunder born to wield,
> And shake alike the senate and the field."

He was alike free from the ordinary vices of statesmen, falsehood, namely, and dissimulation; and from those of warriors, inordinate and violent thirst after self-aggrandisement.

Scotland, his native country, stood at this time in a very precarious and doubtful situation. She was indeed united to England, but the cement had not had time to acquire consistence. The irritation of ancient wrongs still subsisted, and betwixt the fretful jealousy of the Scottish, and the supercilious disdain of the English, quarrels repeatedly occurred, in the course of which the national league, so important to the safety of both, was in the utmost danger of being dissolved. Scotland had, besides, the disadvantage of being divided into intestine factions, which hated each other bitterly, and waited but a signal to break forth into action.

In such circumstances, another man, with the talents and rank of Argyle, but without a mind so happily regulated, would have sought to rise from the earth in the whirlwind, and direct its fury. He chose a course more safe and more honourable.

Soaring above the petty distinctions of faction, his voice was raised, whether in office or opposition, for those measures which were at once just and lenient. His high military talents enabled him, during the memorable year 1715, to render such services to the house of Hanover, as, perhaps, were too great to be either acknowledged or repaid. He had employed, too, his utmost influence in softening the consequences of that insurrection to the unfortunate gentlemen, whom a mistaken sense of

loyalty had engaged in the affair, and was rewarded by the esteem and affection of his country in an uncommon degree. This popularity, with a discontented and warlike people, was supposed to be a subject of jealousy at court, where the power to become dangerous is sometimes of itself obnoxious, though the inclination is not united with it. Besides, the Duke of Argyle's independent and somewhat haughty mode of expressing himself in Parliament, and acting in public, were ill calculated to attract royal favour. He was, therefore, always respected, and often employed; but he was not a favourite of George the Second, his consort, or his ministers. At several different periods in his life, the Duke might be considered as in absolute disgrace at court, although he could hardly be said to be a declared member of opposition. This rendered him the dearer to Scotland, because it was usually in her cause that he incurred the displeasure of his sovereign; and upon this very occasion of the Porteous mob, the animated and eloquent opposition which he had offered to the severe measures which were about to be adopted towards the city of Edinburgh, was the more gratefully received in that metropolis, as it was understood that the Duke's interposition had given personal offence to Queen Caroline.

His conduct upon this occasion, as, indeed, that of all the Scottish members of the legislature, with one or two unworthy exceptions, had been in the highest degree spirited. The popular tradition, concerning his reply to Queen Caroline, has been given already, and some fragments of his speech against the Porteous bill are still remembered. He retorted upon the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, the insinuation that he had stated himself in this case rather as a party than as a judge:—"I appeal," said Argyle, "to the House—to the nation, if I can be justly branded with the infamy of being a jobber or a partisan. Have I been a briber of votes?—a buyer of boroughs?—the agent of corruption for any purpose, or on behalf of any party?—Consider my life; examine my actions in the field and in the cabinet, and see where there lies a blot that can attach to my honour. I have shewn myself the friend of my country—the loyal subject of my king. I am ready to do so again, without an instant's regard to the frowns or smiles of a court. I have experienced both and am prepared with indifference for either. I have given my reasons for opposing this bill, and have made it appear that it is repugnant to the international treaty of union, to the liberty of Scotland, and, reflectively, to that of England, to common justice, to common sense, and to the public interest. Shall the metropolis of Scotland, the capital of an independent nation, the residence of a long line of monarchs, by whom that noble city was graced and dignified—shall such a city, for the fault of an obscure and unknown body of rioters, be deprived of its honours and its privileges—its gates and its guards?—and shall a native Scotsman tamely behold the havoc? I glory, my Lords, in opposing such unjust rigour, and reckon it my dearest pride and honour to stand up in defence of my native country, while thus laid open to undeserved shame, and unjust spoliation."

Other statesmen and orators, both Scottish and English, used the same arguments, the bill was gradually stripped of its most oppressive and obnoxious clauses, and at length ended in a fine upon the city of Edinburgh in favour of Porteous's widow. So that, as somebody observed at the time, the whole of these fierce debates ended in making the fortune of an old cook-maid, such having been the good woman's original capacity.

The court, however, did not forget the baffle they had received in this affair, and the Duke of Argyle, who had contributed so much to it, was thereafter considered as a person in disgrace. It is necessary to place these circumstances under the reader's observation, both because they are connected with the preceding and subsequent part of our narrative.

The Duke was alone in his study, when one of his gentlemen acquainted him, that a country-girl, from Scotland, was desirous of speaking with his Grace.

"A country-girl, and from Scotland!" said the Duke; "what can have brought the silly fool to London?—Some lover pressed and sent to sea, or some stock sunk in the South-Sea funds, or some such hopeful concern, I suppose, and then nobody to manage the matter but MacCallummore.—Well, this same popularity has its inconveniences.—However, shew our countrywoman up, Archibald—it is ill manners to keep her in attendance."

A young woman of rather low stature, and whose countenance might be termed very modest and pleasing in expression, though sun-burnt, somewhat freckled, and not possessing regular features, was ushered into the splendid library. She wore the tartan plaid of her country, adjusted so as partly to cover her head, and partly to fall back over her shoulders. A quantity of fair hair, disposed with great simplicity and neatness, appeared in front of her round and good-humoured face, to which the solemnity of her errand, and her sense of the Duke's rank and importance, gave an appearance of deep awe, but not of slavish fear, or fluttered bashfulness. The rest of Jeanie's dress was in the style of Scottish maidens of her own class; but arranged with that scrupulous attention to neatness and cleanliness, which we often find united with that purity of mind, of which it is a natural emblem.

She stopped near the entrance of the room, made her deepest reverence, and crossed her hands upon her bosom, without uttering a syllable. The Duke of Argyle advanced towards her; and, if she admired his graceful deportment and rich dress, decorated with the orders which had been deservedly bestowed on him, his courteous manner, and quick and intelligent cast of countenance, he on his part was not less, or less deservedly, struck with the quiet simplicity and modesty expressed in the dress, manners, and countenance of his humble countrywoman.

"Did you wish to speak with me, my bonny lass?" said the Duke, using the encouraging epithet which at once acknowledged the connection betwixt them as country-folk; "or, did you wish to see the Duchess?"

"My business is with your honour, my Lord—I mean your Lordship's Grace."

"And what is it, my good girl?" said the Duke, in the same mild and encouraging tone of voice. Jeanie looked at the attendant. "Leave us, Archibald," said the Duke, "and wait in the anteroom." The domestic retired. "And now sit down, my good lass," said the Duke; "take your breath—take your time, and tell me what you have got to say. I guess by your dress, you are just come up

from poor Scotland—Did you come through the streets in your tartan plaid?"

"No, sir," said Jeanie; "a friend brought me in ane o' their street coaches—a very decent woman," she added, her courage increasing as she became familiar with the sound of her own voice in such a presence; "your Lordship's Grace kens her—it 's Mrs Glass, at the sign o' the Thistle."

"O, my worthy snuff-merchant—I have always a chat with Mrs Glass when I purchase my Scots high-dried.—Well, but your business, my bonny woman—time and tide, you know, wait for no one."

"Your honour—I beg your Lordship's pardon—I mean your Grace,"—for it must be noticed, that this matter of addressing the Duke by his appropriate title had been anxiously inculcated upon Jeanie by her friend Mrs Glass, in whose eyes it was a matter of such importance, that her last words, as Jeanie left the coach, were, "Mind to say your Grace;" and Jeanie, who had scarce ever in her life spoke to a person of higher quality than the Laird of Dumbiedikes, found great difficulty in arranging her language according to the rules of ceremony.

The Duke, who saw her embarrassment, said, with his usual affability, "Never mind my grace, lassie; just speak out a plain tale, and shew you have a Scots tongue in your head."

"Sir, I am muckle obliged—Sir, I am the sister of that poor unfortunate criminal, Effie Deans, who is ordered for execution at Edinburgh."

"Ah!" said the Duke, "I have heard of that unhappy story, I think—a case of child-murder, under a special act of parliament—Duncan Forbes mentioned it at dinner the other day."

"And I was come up frae the north, sir, to see what could be done for her in the way of getting a reprieve or pardon, sir, or the like of that."

"Alas! my poor girl," said the Duke, "you have made a long and a sad journey to very little purpose—Your sister is ordered for execution."

"But I am given to understand that there is law for reprieving her, if it is in the king's pleasure," said Jeanie.

"Certainly there is," said the Duke; "but that is purely in the king's breast. The crime has been but too common—the Scots crown-lawyers think it is right there should be an example. Then the late disorders in Edinburgh have excited a prejudice in government against the nation at large, which they think can only be managed by measures of intimidation and severity. What argument have you, my poor girl, except the warmth of your sisterly affection, to offer against all this!—What is your interest?—What friends have you at court?"

"None, excepting God and your Grace," said Jeanie, still keeping her ground resolutely, however.

"Alas!" said the Duke, "I could almost say with old Ormond, that there could not be any, whose influence was smaller with kings and ministers. It is a cruel part of our situation, young woman—I mean of the situation of men in my circumstances, that the public ascribe to them influence which they do not possess; and that individuals are led to expect from them assistance which we have no means of rendering. But candour and plain dealing is in the power of every one, and I must not let you imagine you have resources in my influence, which do not exist, to make your distress the heavier—I have no means of averting your sister's fate—She must die."

"We must a' die, sir," said Jeanie; "it is our common doom for our father's transgression; but we shouldna hasten ilk other out o' the world, that 's what your honour kens better than me."

"My good young woman," said the Duke, mildly, "we are all apt to blame the law under which we immediately suffer; but you seem to have been well educated in your line of life, and you must know that it is alike the law of God and man, that the murderer shall surely die."

"But, sir, Effie—that is, my poor sister, sir—canna be proved to be a murderer; and if she be not, and the law take her life notwithstanding, wha is it that is the murderer then?"

"I am no lawyer," said the Duke; "and I own I think the statute a very severe one."

"You are a law-maker, sir, with your leave; and, therefore, ye have power over the law," answered Jeanie.

"Not in my individual capacity," said the Duke; "though, as one of a large body, I have a voice in the legislation. But that cannot serve you—nor have I at present, I care not who knows it, so much personal influence with the sovereign, as would entitle me to ask from him the most insignificant favour. What could tempt you, young woman, to address yourself to me?"

"It was yoursell, sir."

"Myself?" he replied—"I am sure you have never seen me before."

"No, sir; but a' the world kens that the Duke of Argyle is his country's friend; and that ye fight for the right, and speak for the right, and that there 's nane like you in our present Israel, and so they that think themselves wranged draw to refuge under your shadow; and if ye wunna stir to save the blood of an innocent country-woman of your ain, what should we expect frae southerns and strangers? And maybe I had another reason for troubling your honour."

"And what is that?" asked the Duke.

"I hae understood from my father, that your honour's house, and especially your gudesire and his father, laid down their lives on the scaffold in the persecuting time. And my father was honoured to gie his testimony baith in the cage and in the pillory, as is specially mentioned in the books of Peter Walker the packman, that your honour, I dare say, kens, for he uses maist partly the west-land of Scotland. And, sir, there 's ane that takes concern in me, that wished me to gang to your Grace's presence, for his gudesire had done your gracious gudesire some good turn, as ye will see frae these papers."

With these words, she delivered to the Duke the little parcel which she had received from Butler. He opened it, and, in the envelop, read with some surprise, "'Muster-roll of the men serving in the troop of that godly gentleman, Captain Salathiel Bang-text.—Obadiah Muggleton, Sin-Despise Double-knock, Stand-fast-in-faith Gipps, Turn-to-the-right Thwack-away'—What the deuce is this? A list of Praise-God Barebones's Parliament I think, or of old Noll's evangelical army—that last fellow should understand his wheelings to judge by his name.—But what does all this mean, my girl?"

"It was the other paper, sir," said Jeanie, somewhat abashed at the mistake.

"O, this is my unfortunate grandfather's hand sure enough—'To all who may have friendship for the house of Argyle, these are to certify, that Benjamin Butler, of Monk's regiment of dragoons, having been, under God, the means of saving my life from four English troopers who were about to slay me, I, having no other present means of recompense in my power, do give him this acknowledgment, hoping that it may be useful to him or his during these troublesome times; and do conjure my friends, tenants, kinsmen, and whoever will do aught for me, either in the Highlands or Lowlands, to protect and assist the said Benjamin Butler, and his friends or family, on their lawful occasions, giving them such countenance, maintenance, and supply, as may correspond with the benefit he hath bestowed on me; witness my hand—

'LORNE.'

"This is a strong injunction—This Benjamin Butler was your grandfather, I suppose?—You seem too young to have been his daughter."

"He was nae akin to me, sir—he was grandfather to ane—to a neighbour's son—to a sincere weel-wisher of mine, sir," dropping her little curtsey as she spoke.

"O, I understand," said the Duke—"a true-love affair. He was the grandsire of one you are engaged to?"

"One I *was* engaged to, sir," said Jeanie, sighing; "but this unhappy business of my poor sister——"

"What!" said the Duke hastily,—"he has not deserted you on that account, has he?"

"No, sir; he wad be the last to leave a friend in difficulties," said Jeanie; "but I maun think for him, as weel as for mysell. He is a clergyman, sir, and it would not beseem him to marry the like of me, wi' this disgrace on my kindred."

"You are a singular young woman," said the Duke. "You seem to me to think of every one before yourself. And have you really come up from Edinburgh on foot, to attempt this hopeless solicitation for your sister's life?"

"It was not a' thegether on foot, sir," answered Jeanie; "for I sometimes got a cast in a waggon, and I had a horse from Ferrybridge, and then the coach——"

"Well, never mind all that," interrupted the Duke.—"What reason have you for thinking your sister innocent?"

"Because she has not been proved guilty, as will appear from looking at these papers."

She put into his hand a note of the evidence, and copies of her sister's declaration. These papers Butler had procured after her departure, and Saddletree had them forwarded to London, to Mrs Glass's care, so that Jeanie found the documents, so necessary for supporting her suit, lying in readiness at her arrival.

"Sit down in that chair, my good girl," said the Duke, "until I glance over the papers."

She obeyed, and watched with the utmost anxiety each change in his countenance as he cast his eye through the papers briefly, yet with attention, and making memoranda as he went along. After reading them hastily over, he looked up, and seemed about to speak, yet changed his purpose, as if afraid of committing himself by giving too hasty an opinion, and read over again several passages which he had marked as being most important. All this he did in shorter time than can be supposed by men of ordinary talents; for his mind was of that acute and penetrating character which discovers, with the glance of intuition, what facts bear on the particular point that chances to be subjected to consideration. At length he rose, after a few minutes' deep reflection.—"Young woman," said he, "your sister's case must certainly be termed a hard one."

"God bless you, sir, for that very word!" said Jeanie.

"It seems contrary to the genius of British law," continued the Duke, "to take that for granted which is not proved, or to punish with death for a crime, which, for aught the prosecutor has been able to shew, may not have been committed at all."

"God bless you, sir!" again said Jeanie, who had risen from her seat, and, with clasped hands, eyes glittering through tears, and features which trembled with anxiety, drank in every word which the Duke uttered.

"But, alas! my poor girl," he continued, "what good will my opinion do you, unless I could impress it upon those in whose hands your sister's life is placed by the law? Besides, I am no lawyer; and I must speak with some of our Scottish gentlemen of the gown about the matter."

"O but, sir, what seems reasonable to your honour, will certainly be the same to them," answered Jeanie.

"I do not know that," replied the Duke; "ilka man buckles his belt his ain gate—you know our old Scots proverb?—But you shall not have placed this reliance on me altogether in vain. Leave these papers with me, and you shall hear from me to-morrow or next day. Take care to be at home at Mrs Glass's, and ready to come to me at a moment's warning. It will be unnecessary for you to give Mrs Glass the trouble to attend you;—and, by the by, you will please to be dressed just as you are at present."

"I wad hae putten on a cap, sir," said Jeanie, "but your honour kens it isna the fashion of my country for single women; and I judged that being sae mony hundred miles frae hame, your Grace's heart wad warm to the tartan," looking at the corner of her plaid.

"You judged quite right," said the Duke. "I know the full value of the snood; and MacCallummore's heart will be as cold as death can make it, when it does *not* warm to the tartan. Now, go away, and don't be out of the way when I send."

Jeanie replied,—"There is little fear of that, sir, for I have little heart to go to see sights amang this wilderness of black houses. But if I might say to your gracious honour, that if ye ever condescend to speak to ony ane that is of greater degree than yoursell, though maybe it isna civil in me to say sae, just if you would think there can be nae sic odds between you and them, as between poor Jeanie Deans from Saint Leonard's and the Duke of Argyle; and so dinna be chappit back or cast down wi' the first rough answer."

"I am not apt," said the Duke, laughing, "to mind rough answers much—Do not you hope too much from what I have promised. I will do my best, but God has the hearts of Kings in his own hand."

Jeanie curtseyed reverently and withdrew, attended by the Duke's gentleman, to her hackney-coach, with a respect which her appearance did not

demand, but which was perhaps paid to the length of the interview with which his master had honoured her.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

——— Ascend,
While radiant summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful Shene! Here let us sweep
The boundless landscape.

THOMSON.

FROM her kind and officious, but somewhat gossiping friend, Mrs Glass, Jeanie underwent a very close catechism on their road to the Strand, where the Thistle of the good lady flourished in full glory, and, with its legend of *Nemo me impune*, distinguished a shop then well known to all Scottish folk of high and low degree.

"And were you sure aye to say *your Grace* to him?" said the good old lady; "for ane should make a distinction between MacCallummore and the bits o' southern bodies that they ca' lords here—there are as mony o' them, Jeanie, as would gar ane think they maun cost but little fash in the making—some of them I wadna trust wi' six pennies-worth of black rappee—some of them I wadna gie mysell the trouble to put up a hapnyworth in brown paper for—But I hope you snewed your breeding to the Duke of Argyle, for what sort of folk would he think your friends in London, if you had been lording him, and him a Duke?"

"He didna seem muckle to mind," said Jeanie; "he kend that I was landward bred."

"Weel, weel," answered the good lady. "His Grace kens me weel; so I am the less anxious about it. I never fill his snuff-box but he says, 'How d'ye do, good Mrs Glass!—How are all our friends in the North?' or it may be—'Have ye heard from the North lately?' And you may be sure, I make my best curtsey, and answer, 'My Lord Duke, I hope your Grace's noble Duchess, and your Grace's young ladies, are well; and I hope the snuff continues to give your Grace satisfaction.' And then ye will see the people in the shop begin to look about them; and if there's a Scotsman, as there may be three or half-a-dozen, aff go the hats, and mony a look after him, and 'there goes the Prince of Scotland, God bless him!' But ye have not told me yet the very words he said t' ye."

Jeanie had no intention to be quite so communicative. She had, as the reader may have observed, some of the caution and shrewdness, as well as of the simplicity, of her country. She answered generally, that the Duke had received her very compassionately, and had promised to interest himself in her sister's affair, and to let her hear from him in the course of the next day, or the day after. She did not choose to make any mention of his having desired her to be in readiness to attend him, far less of his hint, that she should not bring her landlady. So that honest Mrs Glass was obliged to remain satisfied with the general intelligence above mentioned, after having done all she could to extract more.

It may easily be conceived, that, on the next day, Jeanie declined all invitations and inducements, whether of exercise or curiosity, to walk abroad, and continued to inhale the close, and somewhat professional atmosphere of Mrs Glass's small parlour. The latter flavour it owed to a certain cupboard, containing, among other articles, a few canisters of real Havannah, which, whether from respect to the manufacture, or out of a reverend fear of the exciseman, Mrs Glass did not care to trust in the open shop below, and which communicated to the room a scent, that, however fragrant to the nostrils of the connoisseur, was not very agreeable to those of Jeanie.

"Dear sirs," she said to herself, "I wonder how my cousin's silk manty, and her gowd watch, or ony thing in the world, can be worth sitting sneezing all her life in this little stifling room, and might walk on green braes if she liked."

Mrs Glass was equally surprised at her cousin's reluctance to stir abroad, and her indifference to the fine sights of London. "It would always help to pass away the time," she said, "to have something to look at, though ane was in distress." But Jeanie was unpersuadable.

The day after her interview with the Duke was spent in that "hope delayed, which maketh the heart sick." Minutes glided after minutes—hours fled after hours—it became too late to have any reasonable expectation of hearing from the Duke that day; yet the hope which she disowned, she could not altogether relinquish, and her heart throbbed, and her ears tingled, with every casual sound in the shop below. It was in vain. The day wore away in the anxiety of protracted and fruitless expectation.

The next morning commenced in the same manner. But before noon, a well-dressed gentleman entered Mrs Glass's shop, and requested to see a young woman from Scotland.

"That will be my cousin, Jeanie Deans, Mr Archibald," said Mrs Glass, with a curtsey of recognizance. "Have you any message for her from his Grace the Duke of Argyle, Mr Archibald? I will carry it to her in a moment."

"I believe I must give her the trouble of stepping down, Mrs Glass."

"Jeanie—Jeanie Deans!" said Mrs Glass, screaming at the bottom of the little staircase, which ascended from the corner of the shop to the higher regions. "Jeanie—Jeanie Deans, I say! come down stairs instantly; here is the Duke of Argyle's groom of the chambers desires to see you directly." This was announced in a voice so loud, as to make all who chanced to be within hearing aware of the important communication.

It may easily be supposed, that Jeanie did not tarry long in adjusting herself to attend the summons, yet her feet almost failed her as she came down stairs.

"I must ask the favour of your company a little way," said Archibald, with civility.

"I am quite ready, sir," said Jeanie.

"Is my cousin going out, Mr Archibald? then I will hae to go wi' her, no doubt.—James Rasper—Look to the shop, James.—Mr Archibald," pushing a jar towards him, "you take his Grace's mixture, I think. Please to fill your box, for old acquaintance sake, while I get on my things."

Mr Archibald transferred a modest parcel of snuff from the jar to his own mull, but said he was obliged to decline the pleasure of Mrs Glass's company, as his message was particularly to the young person.

"Particularly to the young person?" said Mrs

Glass; "is not that uncommon, Mr Archibald? But his Grace is the best judge; and you are a steady person, Mr Archibald. It is not every one that comes from a great man's house I would trust my cousin with.—But, Jeanie, you must not go through the streets with Mr Archibald with your tartan what-d'-ye-call-it there upon your shoulders, as if you had come up with a drove of Highland cattle. Wait till I bring down my silk cloak. Why we 'll have the mob after you!"

"I have a hackney-coach in waiting, madam," said Mr Archibald, interrupting the officious old lady, from whom Jeanie might otherwise have found it difficult to escape, "and, I believe, I must not allow her time for any change of dress."

So saying, he hurried Jeanie into the coach, while she internally praised and wondered at the easy manner in which he shifted off Mrs Glass's officious offers and inquiries, without mentioning his master's orders, or entering into any explanation.

On entering the coach, Mr Archibald seated himself in the front seat, opposite to our heroine, and they drove on in silence. After they had driven nearly half an hour, without a word on either side, it occurred to Jeanie, that the distance and time did not correspond with that which had been occupied by her journey on the former occasion, to and from the residence of the Duke of Argyle. At length she could not help asking her taciturn companion, "Whilk way they were going?"

"My Lord Duke will inform you himself, madam," answered Archibald, with the same solemn courtesy which marked his whole demeanour. Almost as he spoke, the hackney-coach drew up, and the coachman dismounted and opened the door. Archibald got out, and assisted Jeanie to get down. She found herself in a large turnpike road, without the bounds of London, upon the other side of which road was drawn up a plain chariot and four horses, the panels without arms, and the servants without liveries.

"You have been punctual, I see, Jeanie," said the Duke of Argyle, as Archibald opened the carriage door. "You must be my companion for the rest of the way. Archibald will remain here with the hackney-coach till your return."

Ere Jeanie could make answer, she found herself, to her no small astonishment, seated by the side of a duke, in a carriage which rolled forward at a rapid yet smooth rate, very different in both particulars from the lumbering, jolting vehicle which she had just left; and which, lumbering and jolting as it was, conveyed to one who had seldom been in a coach before, a certain feeling of dignity and importance.

"Young woman," said the Duke, "after thinking as attentively on your sister's case as is in my power, I continue to be impressed with the belief that great injustice may be done by the execution of her sentence. So are one or two liberal and intelligent lawyers of both countries whom I have spoken with.—Nay, pray hear me out before you thank me.—I have already told you my personal conviction is of little consequence, unless I could impress the same upon others. Now I have done for you, what I would certainly not have done to serve any purpose of my own—I have asked an audience of a lady whose interest with the king is deservedly very high. It has been allowed me, and I am desirous that you should see her and speak for yourself. You have no occasion to be abashed; tell your story simply as you did to me."

"I am much obliged to your Grace," said Jeanie, remembering Mrs Glass's charge, "and I am sure since I have had the courage to speak to your Grace, in poor Effie's cause, I have less reason to be shame-faced in speaking to a leddy. But, sir, I would like to ken what to ca' her, whether your grace, or your honour, or your leddyship, as we say to lairds and leddies in Scotland, and I will take care to mind it; for I ken leddies are full mair particular than gentlemen about their titles of honour."

"You have no occasion to call her any thing but Madam. Just say what you think is likely to make the best impression — look at me from time to time — if I put my hand to my cravat so — (shewing her the motion) — you will stop; but I shall only do this when you say any thing that is not likely to please."

"But, sir, your Grace," said Jeanie, "if it wasna ower muckle trouble, wad it no be better to tell me what I should say, and I could get it by heart?"

"No, Jeanie, that would not have the same effect — that would be like reading a sermon, you know, which we good presbyterians think has less unction than when spoken without book," replied the Duke. "Just speak as plainly and boldly to this lady, as you did to me the day before yesterday; and if you can gain her consent, I 'll wad ye a plack, as we say in the north, that you get the pardon from the king."

As he spoke, he took a pamphlet from his pocket, and began to read. Jeanie had good sense and tact, which constitute betwixt them that which is called natural good breeding. She interpreted the Duke's manœuvre as a hint that she was to ask no more questions, and she remained silent accordingly.

The carriage rolled rapidly onwards through fertile meadows, ornamented with splendid old oaks, and catching occasionally a glance of the majestic mirror of a broad and placid river. After passing through a pleasant village, the equipage stopped on a commanding eminence, where the beauty of English landscape was displayed in its utmost luxuriance. Here the Duke alighted, and desired Jeanie to follow him. They paused for a moment on the brow of a hill, to gaze on the unrivalled landscape which it presented. A huge sea of verdure, with crossing and intersecting promontories of massive and tufted groves, was tenanted by numberless flocks and herds, which seemed to wander unrestrained and unbounded through the rich pastures. The Thames, here turreted with villas, and there garlanded with forests, moved on slowly and placidly, like the mighty monarch of the scene, to whom all its other beauties were but accessories, and bore on its bosom an hundred barks and skiffs, whose white sails and gaily fluttering pennons gave life to the whole.

The Duke of Argyle was, of course, familiar with this scene; but to a man of taste it must be always new. Yet, as he paused and looked on this inimitable landscape, with the feeling of delight which it must give to the bosom of every admirer of nature, his thoughts naturally reverted to his own more grand, and scarce less beautiful, domains

of Inverary. —"This is a fine scene," he said to his companion, curious, perhaps, to draw out her sentiments; "we have nothing like it in Scotland."

"It's braw rich feeding for the cows, and they have a fine breed o' cattle here," replied Jeanie; "but I like just as weel to look at the craigs of Arthur's Seat, and the sea coming in ayont them, as at a' thae muckle trees."

The Duke smiled at a reply equally professional and national, and made a signal for the carriage to remain where it was. Then adopting an unfrequented foot-path, he conducted Jeanie, through several complicated mazes, to a postern-door in a high brick wall. It was shut; but as the Duke tapped slightly at it, a person in waiting within, after reconnoitring through a small iron-grate contrived for the purpose, unlocked the door and admitted them. They entered, and it was immediately closed and fastened behind them. This was all done quickly, the door so instantly closing, and the person who opened it so suddenly disappearing, that Jeanie could not even catch a glimpse of his exterior.

They found themselves at the extremity of a deep and narrow alley, carpeted with the most verdant and close-shaven turf, which felt like velvet under their feet, and screened from the sun by the branches of the lofty elms which united over the path, and caused it to resemble, in the solemn obscurity of the light which they admitted, as well as from the range of columnar stems, and intricate anion of their arched branches, one of the narrow side aisles in an ancient Gothic cathedral.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

——— I beseech you—
These tears beseech you, and these chaste hands woo you,
That never yet were heaved but to things holy—
Things like yourself—You are a God above us;
Be as a God, then, full of saving mercy!
The Bloody Brother.

ENCOURAGED as she was by the courteous manners of her noble countryman, it was not without a feeling of something like terror that Jeanie felt herself in a place apparently so lonely, with a man of such high rank. That she should have been permitted to wait on the Duke in his own house, and have been there received to a private interview, was in itself an uncommon and distinguished event in the annals of a life so simple as hers; but to find herself his travelling companion in a journey, and then suddenly to be left alone with him in so secluded a situation, had something in it of awful mystery. A romantic heroine might have suspected and dreaded the power of her own charms; but Jeanie was too wise to let such a silly thought intrude on her mind. Still, however, she had a most eager desire to know where she now was, and to whom she was to be presented.

She remarked that the Duke's dress, though still such as indicated rank and fashion, (for it was not the custom of men of quality at that time to dress themselves like their own coachmen or grooms,) was nevertheless plainer than that in which she had seen him upon a former occasion, and was divested, in particular, of all those badges of external decoration which intimated superior consequence. In short, he was attired as plainly as any gentleman of fashion could appear in the streets of London in a morning; and this circumstance helped to shake an opinion which Jeanie began to entertain, that, perhaps, he intended she should plead her cause in the presence of royalty itself. "But, surely," said she to herself, "he wad hae putten on his braw star and garter, an he had thought o' coming before the face of Majesty—and after a,' this is mair like a gentleman's policy than a royal palace."

There was some sense in Jeanie's reasoning; yet she was not sufficiently mistress either of the circumstances of etiquette, or the particular relations which existed betwixt the government and the Duke of Argyle, to form an accurate judgment. The Duke, as we have said, was at this time in open opposition to the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, and was understood to be out of favour with the royal family, to whom he had rendered such important services. But it was a maxim of Queen Caroline, to bear herself towards her political friends with such caution, as if there was a possibility of their one day being her enemies, and towards political opponents with the same degree of circumspection, as if they might again become friendly to her measures. Since Margaret of Anjou, no queen-consort had exercised such weight in the political affairs of England, and the personal address which she displayed on many occasions, had no small share in reclaiming from their political heresy many of those determined tories, who, after the reign of the Stewarts had been extinguished in the person of Queen Anne, were disposed rather to transfer their allegiance to her brother the Chevalier de St George, than to acquiesce in the settlement of the crown on the Hanover family. Her husband, whose most shining quality was courage in the field of battle, and who endured the office of King of England, without ever being able to acquire English habits, or any familiarity with English dispositions, found the utmost assistance from the address of his partner, and while he jealously affected to do every thing according to his own will and pleasure, was in secret prudent enough to take and follow the advice of his more adroit consort. He intrusted to her the delicate office of determining the various degrees of favour necessary to attach the wavering, or to confirm such as were already friendly, or to regain those whose good-will had been lost.

With all the winning address of an elegant, and, according to the times, an accomplished woman, Queen Caroline possessed the masculine soul of the other sex. She was proud by nature, and even her policy could not always temper her expressions of displeasure, although few were more ready at repairing any false step of this kind, when her prudence came up to the aid of her passions. She loved the real possession of power, rather than the show of it, and whatever she did herself that was either wise or popular, she always desired that the king should have the full credit as well as the advantage of the measure, conscious that, by adding to his respectability, she was most likely to maintain her own. And so desirous was she to comply with all his tastes, that, when threatened with the gout, she had repeatedly had recourse to checking the fit, by the use of the cold bath, thereby endan-

gering her life, that she might be able to attend the king in his walks.

It was a very consistent part of Queen Caroline's character, to keep up many private correspondences with those to whom in public she seemed unfavourable, or who, for various reasons, stood ill with the court. By this means she kept in her hands the thread of many a political intrigue, and, without pledging herself to any thing, could often prevent discontent from becoming hatred, and opposition from exaggerating itself into rebellion. If by any accident her correspondence with such persons chanced to be observed or discovered, which she took all possible pains to prevent, it was represented as a mere intercourse of society, having no reference to politics; an answer with which even the prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, was compelled to remain satisfied, when he discovered that the Queen had given a private audience to Pulteney, afterwards Earl of Bath, his most formidable and most inveterate enemy.

In thus maintaining occasional intercourse with several persons who seemed most alienated from the crown, it may readily be supposed, that Queen Caroline had taken care not to break entirely with the Duke of Argyle. His high birth, his great talents, the estimation in which he was held in his own country, the great services which he had rendered the house of Brunswick in 1715, placed him high in that rank of persons who were not to be rashly neglected. He had, almost by his single and unassisted talents, stopped the irruption of the banded force of all the Highland chiefs; there was little doubt, that, with the slightest encouragement, he could put them all in motion, and renew the civil war; and it was well known that the most flattering overtures had been transmitted to the Duke from the court of St Germains. The character and temper of Scotland was still little known, and it was considered as a volcano, which might, indeed, slumber for a series of years, but was still liable, at a moment the least expected, to break out into a wasteful eruption. It was, therefore, of the highest importance to retain some hold over so important a personage as the Duke of Argyle, and Caroline preserved the power of doing so by means of a lady, with whom, as wife of George II., she might have been supposed to be on less intimate terms.

It was not the least instance of the Queen's address, that she had contrived that one of her principal attendants, Lady Suffolk, should unite in her own person the two apparently inconsistent characters, of her husband's mistress, and her own very obsequious and complaisant confident. By this dexterous management the Queen secured her power against the danger which might most have threatened it—the thwarting influence of an ambitious rival; and if she submitted to the mortification of being obliged to connive at her husband's infidelity, she was at least guarded against what she might think its most dangerous effects, and was besides at liberty, now and then, to bestow a few civil insults upon "her good Howard," whom, however, in general, she treated with great decorum.[1] Lady Suffolk lay under strong obligations to the Duke of Argyle, for reasons which may be collected from Horace Walpole's Reminiscences of that reign, and through her means the Duke had some occasional correspondence with Queen Caroline, much interrupted, however, since the part he had taken in the debate concerning the Porteous mob, an affair which the Queen, though somewhat unreasonably, was disposed to resent, rather as an intended and premeditated insolence to her own person and authority, than as a sudden ebullition of popular vengeance. Still, however, the communication remained open betwixt them, though it had been of late disused on both sides. These remarks will be found necessary to understand the scene which is about to be presented to the reader.

From the narrow alley which they had traversed, the Duke turned into one of the same character, but broader and still longer. Here, for the first time since they had entered these gardens, Jeanie saw persons approaching them.

They were two ladies; one of whom walked a little behind the other, yet not so much as to prevent her from hearing and replying to whatever observation was addressed to her by the lady who walked foremost, and that without her having the trouble to turn her person. As they advanced very slowly, Jeanie had time to study their features and appearance. The Duke also slackened his pace, as if to give her time to collect herself, and repeatedly desired her not to be afraid. The lady who seemed the principal person had remarkably good features, though somewhat injured by the small-pox, that venomous scourge which each village Esculapius (thanks to Jenner) can now tame as easily as their tutelary deity subdued the Python. The lady's eyes were brilliant, her teeth good, and her countenance formed to express at will either majesty or courtesy. Her form, though rather *embonpoint*, was nevertheless graceful; and the elasticity and firmness of her step gave no room to suspect, what was actually the case, that she suffered occasionally from a disorder the most unfavourable to pedestrian exercise. Her dress was rather rich than gay, and her manner commanding and noble.

Her companion was of lower stature, with light-brown hair and expressive blue eyes. Her features, without being absolutely regular, were perhaps more pleasing than if they had been critically handsome. A melancholy, or at least a pensive expression, for which her lot gave too much cause, predominated when she was silent, but gave way to a pleasing and good-humoured smile when she spoke to any one.

When they were within twelve or fifteen yards of these ladies, the Duke made a sign that Jeanie should stand still, and stepping forward himself, with the grace which was natural to him, made a profound obeisance, which was formally, yet in a dignified manner, returned by the personage whom he approached.

"I hope," she said, with an affable and condescending smile, "that I see so great a stranger at court, as the Duke of Argyle has been of late, in as good health as his friends there and elsewhere could wish him to enjoy."

The Duke replied, "That he had been perfectly well;" and added, "that the necessity of attending to the public business before the House, as well as the time occupied by a late journey to Scotland, had rendered him less assiduous in paying

[1] See Horace Walpole's Reminiscences.

his duty at the levee and drawing-room than he could have desired."

"When your Grace *can* find time for a duty so frivolous," replied the Queen, "you are aware of your title to be well received. I hope my readiness to comply with the wish which you expressed yesterday to Lady Suffolk, is a sufficient proof that one of the royal family, at least, has not forgotten ancient and important services, in resenting something which resembles recent neglect." This was said apparently with great good-humour, and in a tone which expressed a desire of conciliation.

The Duke replied, "That he would account himself the most unfortunate of men, if he could be supposed capable of neglecting his duty, in modes and circumstances when it was expected, and would have been agreeable. He was deeply gratified by the honour which her Majesty was now doing to him personally; and he trusted she would soon perceive that it was in a matter essential to his Majesty's interest, that he had the boldness to give her this trouble."

"You cannot oblige me more, my Lord Duke," replied the Queen, "than by giving me the advantage of your lights and experience on any point of the King's service. Your Grace is aware, that I can only be the medium through which the matter is subjected to his Majesty's superior wisdom; but if it is a suit which respects your Grace personally, it shall lose no support by being preferred through me."

"It is no suit of mine, madam," replied the Duke; "nor have I any to prefer for myself personally, although I feel in full force my obligation to your Majesty. It is a business which concerns his Majesty, as a lover of justice and of mercy, and which, I am convinced, may be highly useful in conciliating the unfortunate irritation which at present subsists among his Majesty's good subjects in Scotland."

There were two parts of this speech disagreeable to Caroline. In the first place, it removed the flattering notion she had adopted, that Argyle designed to use her personal intercession in making his peace with the administration, and recovering the employments of which he had been deprived; and next, she was displeased that he should talk of the discontents in Scotland as irritations to be conciliated, rather than suppressed.

Under the influence of these feelings, she answered hastily, "That his Majesty has good subjects in England, my Lord Duke, he is bound to thank God and the laws—that he has subjects in Scotland, I think he may thank God and his sword."

The Duke, though a courtier, coloured slightly, and the Queen, instantly sensible of her error, added, without displaying the least change of countenance, and as if the words had been an original branch of the sentence—"And the swords of those real Scotchmen who are friends to the House of Brunswick, particularly that of his Grace of Argyle."

"My sword, madam," replied the Duke, "like that of my fathers, has been always at the command of my lawful king, and of my native country—I trust it is impossible to separate their real rights and interests. But the present is a matter of more private concern, and respects the person of an obscure individual."

"What is the affair, my Lord?" said the Queen. "Let us find out what we are talking about, lest we should misconstrue and misunderstand each other."

"The matter, madam," answered the Duke of Argyle, "regards the fate of an unfortunate young woman in Scotland, now lying under sentence of death, for a crime of which I think it highly probable that she is innocent. And my humble petition to your Majesty is, to obtain your powerful intercession with the King for a pardon."

It was now the Queen's turn to colour, and she did so over cheek and brow, neck and bosom. She paused a moment, as if unwilling to trust her voice with the first expression of her displeasure; and on assuming an air of dignity and an austere regard of control, she at length replied, "My Lord Duke, I will not ask your motives for addressing to me a request, which circumstances have rendered such an extraordinary one. Your road to the King's closet, as a peer and a privy-councillor, entitled to request an audience, was open, without giving me the pain of this discussion. *I*, at least, have had enough of Scotch pardons."

The Duke was prepared for this burst of indignation, and he was not shaken by it. He did not attempt a reply while the Queen was in the first heat of displeasure, but remained in the same firm, yet respectful posture, which he had assumed during the interview. The Queen, trained from her situation to self-command, instantly perceived the advantage she might give against herself by yielding to passion; and added, in the same condescending and affable tone in which she had opened the interview, "You must allow me some of the privileges of the sex, my Lord; and do not judge uncharitably of me, though I am a little moved at the recollection of the gross insult and outrage done in your capital city to the royal authority, at the very time when it was vested in my unworthy person. Your Grace cannot be surprised that I should both have felt it at the time, and recollected it now."

"It is certainly a matter not speedily to be forgotten," answered the Duke. "My own poor thoughts of it have been long before your Majesty, and I must have expressed myself very ill if I did not convey my detestation of the murder which was committed under such extraordinary circumstances. I might, indeed, be so unfortunate as to differ with his Majesty's advisers on the degree in which it was either just or politic to punish the innocent instead of the guilty. But I trust your Majesty will permit me to be silent on a topic in which my sentiments have not the good fortune to coincide with those of more able men."

"We will not prosecute a topic on which we may probably differ," said the Queen. "One word, however, I may say in private—you know our good Lady Suffolk is a little deaf—the Duke of Argyle, when disposed to renew his acquaintance with his master and mistress, will hardly find many topics on which we should disagree."

"Let me hope," said the Duke, bowing profoundly to so flattering an intimation, "that I shall not be so unfortunate as to have found one on the present occasion."

"I must first impose on your Grace the duty of confession," said the Queen, "before I grant you absolution. What is your particular interest in this young woman? She does not seem" (and she

scanned Jeanie, as she said this, with the eye of a connoisseur) "much qualified to alarm my friend the Duchess's jealousy."

"I think your Majesty," replied the Duke, smiling in his turn, "will allow my taste may be a pledge for me on that score."

"Then, though she has not much the air *d'une grande dame*, I suppose she is some thirtieth cousin in the terrible chapter of Scottish genealogy?"

"No, madam," said the Duke; "but I wish some of my nearer relations had half her worth, honesty, and affection."

"Her name must be Campbell, at least?" said Queen Caroline.

"No, madam; her name is not quite so distinguished, if I may be permitted to say so," answered the Duke.

"Ah! but she comes from Inverary or Argyleshire?" said the Sovereign.

"She has never been farther north in her life than Edinburgh, madam."

"Then my conjectures are all ended," said the Queen, "and your Grace must yourself take the trouble to explain the affair of your protegée."

With that precision and easy brevity which is only acquired by habitually conversing in the higher ranks of society, and which is the diametrical opposite of that protracted style of disquisition,

"Which squires call potter, and which men call prose,"

the Duke explained the singular law under which Effie Deans had received sentence of death, and detailed the affectionate exertions which Jeanie had made in behalf of a sister, for whose sake she was willing to sacrifice all but truth and conscience.

Queen Caroline listened with attention; she was rather fond, it must be remembered, of an argument, and soon found matter in what the Duke told her for raising difficulties to his request.

"It appears to me, my Lord," she replied, "that this is a severe law. But still it is adopted upon good grounds, I am bound to suppose, as the law of the country, and the girl has been convicted under it. The very presumptions which the law construes into a positive proof of guilt exist in her case; and all that your Grace has said concerning the possibility of her innocence may be a very good argument for annulling the Act of Parliament, but cannot, while it stands good, be admitted in favour of any individual convicted upon the statute."

The Duke saw and avoided the snare, for he was conscious, that, by replying to the argument, he must have been inevitably led to a discussion, in the course of which the Queen was likely to be hardened in her own opinion, until she became obliged, out of mere respect to consistency, to let the criminal suffer. "If your Majesty," he said, "would condescend to hear my poor countrywoman herself, perhaps she may find an advocate in your own heart, more able than I am, to combat the doubts suggested by your understanding."

The Queen seemed to acquiesce, and the Duke made a signal for Jeanie to advance from the spot where she had hitherto remained watching countenances, which were too long accustomed to suppress all apparent signs of emotion, to convey to her any interesting intelligence. Her Majesty could not help smiling at the awe-struck manner in which the quiet demure figure of the little Scotchwoman advanced towards her, and yet more at the first sound of her broad northern accent. But Jeanie had a voice low and sweetly toned, an admirable thing in woman, and eke besought "her Leddyship to have pity on a poor misguided young creature," in tones so affecting, that, like the notes of some of her native songs, provincial vulgarity was lost in pathos.

"Stand up, young woman," said the Queen, but in a kind tone, "and tell me what sort of a barbarous people your countryfolk are, where child-murder is become so common as to require the restraint of laws like yours?"

"If your Leddyship pleases," answered Jeanie, "there are mony places besides Scotland where mothers are unkind to their ain flesh and blood."

It must be observed, that the disputes between George the Second, and Frederick, Prince of Wales, were then at the highest, and that the good-natured part of the public laid the blame on the Queen. She coloured highly, and darted a glance of a most penetrating character first at Jeanie, and then at the Duke. Both sustained it unmoved; Jeanie from total unconsciousness of the offence she had given, and the Duke from his habitual composure. But in his heart he thought, My unlucky protegée has with this luckless answer, shot dead, by a kind of chance-medley, her only hope of success.

Lady Suffolk, good-humouredly and skilfully, interposed in this awkward crisis. "You should tell this lady," she said to Jeanie, "the particular causes which render this crime common in your country."

"Some thinks it 's the Kirk-Session — that is — it 's the — it 's the cutty-stool, if your Leddyship pleases," said Jeanie, looking down, and curtseying.

"The what?" said Lady Suffolk, to whom the phrase was new, and who besides was rather deaf.

"That 's the stool of repentance, madam, if it please your Leddyship," answered Jeanie, "for light life and conversation, and for breaking the seventh command." Here she raised her eyes to the Duke, saw his hand at his chin, and, totally unconscious of what she had said out of joint, gave double effect to the innuendo, by stopping short and looking embarrassed.

As for Lady Suffolk, she retired like a covering party which, having interposed betwixt their retreating friends and the enemy, have suddenly drawn on themselves a fire unexpectedly severe.

The deuce take the lass, thought the Duke of Argyle to himself; there goes another shot — and she has hit with both barrels right and left!

Indeed the Duke had himself his share of the confusion, for, having acted as master of ceremonies to this innocent offender, he felt much in the circumstances of a country squire, who, having introduced his spaniel into a well-appointed drawing-room, is doomed to witness the disorder and damage which arises to china and to dress-gowns, in consequence of its untimely frolics. Jeanie's last chance-hit, however, obliterated the ill impression which had arisen from the first; for her Majesty had not so lost the feelings of a wife in those of a Queen, but that she could enjoy a jest at the expense of "her good Suffolk." She turned towards the Duke of Argyle with a smile, which marked that she enjoyed the triumph, and observed, "the Scotch are a rigidly moral people." Then again applying herself to Jeanie, she asked, how she travelled up from Scotland.

"Upon my foot mostly, madam," was the reply.

"What, all that immense way upon foot?—How far can you walk in a day?"

"Five-and-twenty miles and a bittock."

"And a what?" said the Queen, looking towards the Duke of Argyle.

"And about five miles more," replied the Duke.

"I thought I was a good walker," said the Queen, "but this shames me sadly."

"May your Leddyship never hae sae weary a heart, that ye canna be sensible of the weariness of the limbs," said Jeanie.

That came better off, thought the Duke; it 's the first thing she has said to the purpose.

"And I didna just a'thegither walk the hail way neither, for I had whiles the cast of a cart; and I had the cast of a horse from Ferrybridge—and divers other easements," said Jeanie, cutting short her story, for she observed the Duke made the sign he had fixed upon.

"With all these accommodations," answered the Queen, "you must have had a very fatiguing journey, and, I fear, to little purpose; since, if the King were to pardon your sister, in all probability it would do her little good, for I suppose your people of Edinburgh would hang her out of spite."

She will sink herself now outright, thought the Duke.

But he was wrong. The shoals on which Jeanie had touched in this delicate conversation lay under ground, and were unknown to her; this rock was above water, and she avoided it.

"She was confident," she said, "that baith town and country wad rejoice to see his Majesty taking compassion on a poor unfriended creature."

"His Majesty has not found it so in a late instance," said the Queen; "but I suppose, my Lord Duke would advise him to be guided by the votes of the rabble themselves, who should be hanged and who spared?"

"No, madam," said the Duke; "but I would advise his Majesty to be guided by his own feelings, and those of his royal consort; and then, I am sure, punishment will only attach itself to guilt, and even then with cautious reluctance."

"Well, my Lord," said her Majesty, "all these fine speeches do not convince me of the propriety of so soon shewing any mark of favour to your—I suppose I must not say rebellious?—but, at least, your very disaffected and intractable metropolis. Why, the whole nation is in a league to screen the savage and abominable murderers of that unhappy man; otherwise, how is it possible but that, of so many perpetrators, and engaged in so public an action for such a length of time, one at least must have been recognized? Even this wench, for aught I can tell, may be a depository of the secret.—Hark you, young woman, had you any friends engaged in the Porteous mob?"

"No, madam," answerd Jeanie, happy that the question was so framed that she could, with a good conscience, answer it in the negative.

"But I suppose," continued the Queen, "if you were possessed of such a secret, you would hold it a matter of conscience to keep it to yourself?"

"I would pray to be directed and guided what was the line of duty, madam," answered Jeanie.

"Yes, and take that which suited your own inclinations," replied her Majesty.

"If it like you, madam," said Jeanie, "I would hae gaen to the end of the earth to save the life of John Porteous, or any other unhappy man in his condition; but I might lawfully doubt how far I am called upon to be the avenger of his blood, though it may become the civil magistrate to do so. He is dead and gane to his place, and they that have slain him must answer for their ain act. But my sister—my puir sister Effie, still lives, though her days and hours are numbered!—She still lives, and a word of the King's mouth might restore her to a broken-hearted auld man, that never, in his daily and nightly exercise, forgot to pray that his Majesty might be blessed with a long and a prosperous reign, and that his throne, and the throne of his posterity, might be established in righteousness. O, madam, if ever ye kend what it was to sorrow for and with a sinning and a suffering creature, whose mind is sae tossed that she can be neither ca'd fit to live or die, have some compassion on our misery!—Save an honest house from dishonour, and an unhappy girl, not eighteen years of age, from an early and dreadful death! Alas! it is not when we sleep soft and wake merrily ourselves that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our ain wrangs and fighting our ain battles. But when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body—and seldom may it visit your Leddyship—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—lang and late may it be yours!—Oh, my Leddy, then it isna what we hae dune for oursells, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly. And the thoughts that ye hae intervened to spare the puir thing's life will be sweeter in that hour, come when it may, than if a word of your mouth could hang the haill Porteous mob at the tail of ae tow."

Tear followed tear down Jeanie's cheeks, as, her features glowing and quivering with emotion, she pleaded her sister's cause with a pathos which was at once simple and solemn.

"This is eloquence," said her Majesty to the Duke of Argyle. "Young woman," she continued, addressing herself to Jeanie, "*I* cannot grant a pardon to your sister—but you shall not want my warm intercession with his Majesty. Take this housewife case," she continued, putting a small embroidered needle-case into Jeanie's hands; "do not open it now, but at your leisure—you will find something in it which will remind you that you have had an interview with Queen Caroline."

Jeanie, having her suspicions thus confirmed, dropped on her knees, and would have expanded herself in gratitude; but the Duke, who was upon thorns lest she should say more or less than just enough, touched his chin once more.

"Our business is, I think, ended for the present, my Lord Duke," said the Queen, "and, I trust, to your satisfaction. Hereafter I hope to see your Grace more frequently, both at Richmond and St James's.—Come, Lady Suffolk, we must wish his Grace good-morning."

They exchanged their parting reverences, and the Duke, so soon as the ladies had turned their backs, assisted Jeanie to rise from the ground, and conducted her back through the avenue, which she trode with the feeling of one who walks in her sleep.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

So soon as I can win the offended King,
I will be known your advocate.
Cymbeline.

The Duke of Argyle led the way in silence to the small postern by which they had been admitted into Richmond Park, so long the favourite residence of Queen Caroline. It was opened by the same half-seen janitor, and they found themselves beyond the precincts of the royal demesne. Still not a word was spoken on either side. The Duke probably wished to allow his rustic protegée time to recruit her faculties, dazzled and sunk with colloquy sublime; and betwixt what she had guessed, had heard, and had seen, Jeanie Deans's mind was too much agitated to permit her to ask any questions.

They found the carriage of the Duke in the place where they had left it; and when they resumed their places, soon began to advance rapidly on their return to town.

"I think, Jeanie," said the Duke, breaking silence, "you have every reason to congratulate yourself on the issue of your interview with her Majesty."

"And that leddy *was* the Queen hersell?" said Jeanie; "I misdoubted it when I saw that your honour didna put on your hat—And yet I can hardly believe it, even when I heard her speak it hersell."

"It was certainly Queen Caroline," replied the Duke. "Have you no curiosity to see what is in the little pocket-book?"

"Do you think the pardon will be in it, sir?" said Jeanie, with the eager animation of hope.

"Why, no," replied the Duke; "that is unlikely. They seldom carry these things about them, unless they were likely to be wanted; and, besides, her Majesty told you it was the King, not she, who was to grant it."

"That is true too," said Jeanie; "but I am so confused in my mind — But does your honour think there is a certainty of Effie's pardon then?" continued she, still holding in her hand the unopened pocket-book.

"Why, kings are kittle cattle to shoe behind, as we say in the north," replied the Duke; "but his wife knows his trim, and I have not the least doubt that the matter is quite certain."

"O God be praised! God be praised!" ejaculated Jeanie; "and may the gude leddy never want the heart's ease she has gien me at this moment!—And God bless you too, my Lord! without your help I wad ne'er hae won near her."

The Duke let her dwell upon this subject for a considerable time, curious, perhaps, to see how long the feelings of gratitude would continue to supersede those of curiosity. But so feeble was the latter feeling in Jeanie's mind, that his Grace, with whom, perhaps, it was for the time a little stronger, was obliged once more to bring forward the subject of the Queen's present. It was opened accordingly. In the inside of the case were the usual assortment of silk and needles, with scissors, tweezers, &c.; and in the pocket was a bank-bill for fifty pounds.

The Duke had no sooner informed Jeanie of the value of this last document, for she was unaccustomed to see notes for such sums, than she expressed her regret at the mistake which had taken place, "For the hussy itsell," she said, "was a very valuable thing for a keepsake, with the Queen's name written in the inside with her ain hand doubtless — *Caroline* — as plain as could be, and a crown drawn aboon it."

She therefore tendered the bill to the Duke, requesting him to find some mode of returning it to the royal owner.

"No, no, Jeanie," said the Duke, "there is no mistake in the case. Her Majesty knows you have been put to great expense, and she wishes to make it up to you."

"I am sure she is even ower gude," said Jeanie, "and it glads me muckle that I can pay back Dumbiedikes his siller, without distressing my father, honest man."

"Dumbiedikes? What, a freeholder of Mid-Lothian, is he not?" said his Grace, whose occasional residence in that county made him acquainted with most of the heritors, as landed persons are termed in Scotland — "He has a house not far from Dalkeith, wears a black wig and a laced hat?"

"Yes, sir," answered Jeanie, who had her reasons for being brief in her answers upon this topic.

"Ah, my old friend Dumbie!" said the Duke; "I have thrice seen him fou, and only once heard the sound of his voice — Is he a cousin of yours, Jeanie?"

"No, sir, — my Lord."

"Then he must be a well-wisher, I suspect?"

"Ye — yes, — my Lord, sir," answered Jeanie, blushing, and with hesitation.

"Aha! then, if the Laird starts, I suppose my friend Butler must be in some danger?"

"O no, sir," answered Jeanie much more readily, but at the same time blushing much more deeply.

"Well, Jeanie," said the Duke, "you are a girl may be safely trusted with your own matters, and I shall inquire no farther about them. But as to this same pardon, I must see to get it passed through the proper forms; and I have a friend in office who will, for auld lang syne, do me so much favour And then, Jeanie, as I shall have occasion to send an express down to Scotland, who will travel with it safer and more swiftly than you can do, I will take care to have it put into the proper channel; meanwhile, you may write to your friends, by post, of your good success."

"And does your Honour think," said Jeanie, "that will do as weel as if I were to take my tap in my lap, and slip my ways hame again on my ain errand?"

"Much better, certainly," said the Duke. "You know the roads are not very safe for a single woman to travel."

Jeanie internally acquiesced in this observation.

"And I have a plan for you besides. One of the Duchess's attendants, and one of mine — your acquaintance Archibald — are going down to Inverary in a light calash, with four horses I have bought, and there is room enough in the carriage for you to go with them as far as Glasgow, where Archibald will find means of sending you safely to Edinburgh — And in the way, I beg you will teach the woman as much as you can of the mystery of cheese-making, for she is to have a charge in the dairy, and I dare swear you are as tidy about your milk-pail as about your dress."

"Does your honour like cheese?" said Jeanie,

with a gleam of conscious delight as she asked the question.

"Like it?" said the Duke, whose good-nature anticipated what was to follow,—"cakes and cheese are a dinner for an emperor, let alone a Highlandman."

"Because," said Jeanie, with modest confidence, and great and evident self-gratulation, "we have been thought so particular in making cheese, that some folk think it as gude as the real Dunlop; and if your Honour's Grace wad but accept a stane or twa, blithe, and fain, and proud it wad make us! But maybe ye may like the ewe-milk, that is, the Buckholmside[1] cheese better; or maybe the gait-milk, as ye come frae the Highlands—and I canna pretend just to the same skeel o' them; but my cousin Jean, that lives at Lockermachus in Lammermuir, I could speak to her, and——"

"Quite unnecessary," said the Duke; "the Dunlop is the very cheese of which I am so fond, and I will take it as the greatest favour you can do me to send one to Caroline Park. But remember, be on honour with it, Jeanie, and make it all yourself, for I am a real good judge."

"I am not feared," said Jeanie, confidently, "that I may please your Honour; for I am sure you look as if you could hardly find fault wi' ony body that did their best; and weel is it my part, I trow, to do mine."

This discourse introduced a topic upon which the two travellers, though so different in rank and education, found each a good deal to say. The Duke, besides his other patriotic qualities, was a distinguished agriculturist, and proud of his knowledge in that department. He entertained Jeanie with his observations on the different breeds of cattle in Scotland, and their capacity for the dairy, and received so much information from her practical experience in return, that he promised her a couple of Devonshire cows in reward for the lesson. In short, his mind was so transported back to his rural employments and amusements, that he sighed when his carriage stopped opposite to the old hackney-coach, which Archibald had kept in attendance at the place where they had left it. While the coachman again bridled his lean cattle, which had been indulged with a bite of musty hay, the Duke cautioned Jeanie not to be too communicative to her landlady concerning what had passed. "There is," he said, "no use of speaking of matters till they are actually settled; and you may refer the good lady to Archibald, if she presses you hard with questions. She is his old acquaintance, and he knows how to manage with her."

He then took a cordial farewell of Jeanie, and told her to be ready in the ensuing week to return to Scotland—saw her safely established in her hackney-coach, and rolled off in his own carriage, humming a stanza of the ballad which he is said to have composed:—

> "At the sight of Dumbarton once again,
> I'll cock up my bonnet and march amain,
> With my claymore hanging down to my heel,
> To whang at the bannocks of barley meal."

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[1] The hilly pastures of Buckholm, which the author now surveys,

> "Not in the frenzy of a dreamer's eye,"

are famed for producing the best ewe-milk cheese in the south of Scotland.

Perhaps one ought to be actually a Scotsman to conceive how ardently, under all distinctions of rank and situation, they feel their mutual connection with each other as natives of the same country. There are, I believe, more associations common to the inhabitants of a rude and wild, than of a well-cultivated and fertile country; their ancestors have more seldom changed their place of residence; their mutual recollection of remarkable objects is more accurate; the high and the low are more interested in each other's welfare; the feelings of kindred and relationship are more widely extended, and, in a word, the bonds of patriotic affection, always honourable even when a little too exclusively strained, have more influence on men's feelings and actions.

The rumbling hackney-coach which tumbled over the (then) execrable London pavement, at a rate very different from that which had conveyed the ducal carriage to Richmond, at length deposited Jeanie Deans and her attendant at the national sign of the Thistle. Mrs Glass, who had been in long and anxious expectation, now rushed, full of eager curiosity and open-mouthed interrogation, upon our heroine, who was positively unable to sustain the overwhelming cataract of her questions, which burst forth with the sublimity of a grand gardyloo:—"Had she seen the Duke, God bless him—the Duchess—the young ladies?—Had she seen the King, God bless him—the Queen—the Prince of Wales—the Princess—or any of the rest of the royal family?—Had she got her sister's pardon?—Was it out and out—or was it only a commutation of punishment?—How far had she gone—where had she driven to—whom had she seen—what had been said—what had kept her so long?"

Such were the various questions huddled upon each other by a curiosity so eager, that it could hardly wait for its own gratification. Jeanie would have been more than sufficiently embarrassed by this overbearing tide of interrogations, had not Archibald, who had probably received from his master a hint to that purpose, advanced to her rescue. "Mrs Glass," said Archibald, "his Grace desired me particularly to say, that he would take it as a great favour if you would ask the young woman no questions, as he wishes to explain to you more distinctly than she can do how her affairs stand, and consult you on some matters which she cannot altogether so well explain. The Duke will call at the Thistle to-morrow or next day for that purpose."

"His Grace is very condescending," said Mrs Glass, her zeal for inquiry slaked for the present by the dexterous administration of this sugar plum—"his Grace is sensible that I am in a manner accountable for the conduct of my young kinswoman, and no doubt his Grace is the best judge how far he should intrust her or me with the management of her affairs."

"His Grace is quite sensible of that," answered Archibald, with national gravity, "and will certainly trust what he has to say to the most discreet of the two; and therefore, Mrs Glass, his Grace relies you will speak nothing to Mrs Jean Deans, either of her own affairs or her sister's until he sees you himself. He desired me to assure you, in the meanwhile, that all was going on as well as your kindness could wish, Mrs Glass."

"His Grace is very kind—very considerate,

certainly, Mr Archibald—his Grace's commands shall be obeyed, and——But you have had a far drive, Mr Archibald, as I guess by the time of your absence, and I guess" (with an engaging smile) "you winna be the waur o' a glass of the right Rosa Solis."

"I thank you, Mrs Glass," said the great man's great man, "but I am under the necessity of returning to my Lord directly." And making his adieus civilly to both cousins, he left the shop of the Lady of the Thistle.

"I am glad your affairs have prospered so well, Jeanie, my love," said Mrs Glass; "though, indeed, there was little fear of them so soon as the Duke of Argyle was so condescending as to take them into hand. I will ask you no questions about them, because his Grace, who is most considerate and prudent in such matters, intends to tell me all that you ken yourself, dear, and doubtless a great deal more; so that any thing that may lie heavily on your mind may be imparted to me in the meantime, as you see it is his Grace's pleasure that I should be made acquainted with the whole matter forthwith, and whether you or he tells it, will make no difference in the world, ye ken. If I ken what he is going to say beforehand, I will be much more ready to give my advice, and whether you or he tell me about it, cannot much signify after all, my dear. So you may just say whatever you like, only mind I ask you no questions about it."

Jeanie was a little embarrassed. She thought that the communication she had to make was perhaps the only means she might have in her power to gratify her friendly and hospitable kinswoman. But her prudence instantly suggested that her secret interview with Queen Caroline, which seemed to pass under a certain sort of mystery, was not a proper subject for the gossip of a woman like Mrs Glass, of whose heart she had a much better opinion than of her prudence. She, therefore, answered in general, that the Duke had had the extraordinary kindness to make very particular inquiries into her sister's bad affair, and that he thought he had found the means of putting it a' straight again, but that he proposed to tell all that he thought about the matter to Mrs Glass herself.

This did not quite satisfy the penetrating Mistress of the Thistle. Searching as her own small rappee, she, in spite of her promise, urged Jeanie with still farther questions. "Had she been a' that time at Argyle-house? Was the Duke with her the whole time? and had she seen the Duchess? and had she seen the young ladies—and specially Lady Caroline Campbell?"—To these questions Jeanie gave the general reply, that she knew so little of the town that she could not tell exactly where she had been; that she had not seen the Duchess to her knowledge; that she had seen two ladies, one of whom, she understood, bore the name of Caroline; and more, she said, she could not tell about the matter.

"It would be the Duke's eldest daughter, Lady Caroline Campbell—there is no doubt of that," said Mrs Glass; "but, doubtless, I shall know more particularly through his Grace.—And so, as the cloth is laid in the little parlour above stairs, and it is past three o'clock, for I have been waiting this hour for you, and I have had a snack myself; and, as they used to say in Scotland in my time—I do not ken if the word be used now—there is ill talking between a full body and a fasting."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

> Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid—
> Some banish'd lover or some captive maid.
>
> POPE.

By dint of unwonted labour with the pen, Jeanie Deans contrived to indite, and give to the charge of the postman on the ensuing day, no less than three letters, an exertion altogether strange to her habits; insomuch so, that, if milk had been plenty, she would rather have made thrice as many Dunlop cheeses. The first of them was very brief. It was addressed to George Staunton, Esq. at the Rectory, Willingham, by Grantham; the address being part of the information which she had extracted from the communicative peasant who rode before her to Stamford. It was in these words:—

"SIR,

"To prevent farder mischieves, whereof there hath been enough, comes these: Sir, I have my sister's pardon from the Queen's Majesty, whereof I do not doubt you will be glad, having had to say naut of matters whereof you know the purport. So, sir, I pray for your better welfare in bodie and soul, and that it will please the fisycian to visit you in His good time. Alwaies, sir, I pray you will never come again to see my sister, whereof there has been too much. And so, wishing you no evil, but even your best good, that you may be turned from your iniquity, (for why suld ye die?) I rest your humble servant to command,

"*Ye ken wha.*"

The next letter was to her father. It is too long altogether for insertion, so we only give a few extracts. It commenced—

"*Dearest and truly honoured Father,*

"This comes with my duty to inform you, that it has pleased God to redeem that captivitie of my poor sister, in respect the Queen's blessed Majesty, for whom we are ever bound to pray, hath redeemed her soul from the slayer, granting the ransom of her, whilk is ane pardon or reprieve. And I spoke with the Queen face to face, and yet live; for she is not muckle differing from other grand leddies, saving that she has a stately presence, and een like a blue huntin' hawk's, whilk gaed throu' and throu' me like a Highland durk—And all this good was, alway under the Great Giver, to whom all are but instruments, wrought forth for us by the Duk of Argile, wha is ane native true-hearted Scotsman, and not pridefu', like other folk we ken of—and likewise skeely enow in bestial, whereof he has promised to gie me twa Devonshire kye, of which he is enamoured, although I do still haud by the real hawkit Airshire breed—and I have promised him a cheese; and I wad wuss ye, if Gowans, the brockit cow, has a quey, that she suld suck her fill of milk, as I am given to understand he has none of that breed, and is not scornfu', but will take a thing frae a puir body, that it may lighten their heart of the loading of debt that they awe him. Also his honour the Duke will accept ane of our Dunlop cheeses, and it sall be my faut if a better was ever yearned in Lowden."—[Here follow some observations respecting the breed of cattle, and the produce of the dairy, which it is our intention to forward to the

Board of Agriculture.]—"Nevertheless, these are but matters of the after-harvest, in respect of the great good which Providence hath gifted us with—and, in especial, poor Effie's life. And Oh, my dear father, since it hath pleased God to be merciful to her, let her not want your free pardon, whilk will make her meet to be ane vessel of grace, and also a comfort to your ain graie hairs. Dear Father, will ye let the Laird ken that we have had friends strangely raised up to us, and that the talent whilk he lent me will be thankfully repaid. I hae some of it to the fore; and the rest of it is not knotted up in ane purse or napkin, but in ane wee bit paper, as is the fashion heir, whilk I am assured is gude for the siller. And, dear father, through Mr Butler's means I hae gude friendship with the Duke, for their had been kindness between their forbears in the auld troublesome time bye-past. And Mrs Glass has been kind like my very mother. She has a braw house here, and lives bien and warm, wi' twa servant lasses, and a man and a callant in the shop. And she is to send you doun a pound of her hie-dried, and some other tobaka, and we maun think of some propine for her, since her kindness hath been great. And the Duk is to send the pardun doun by an express messenger, in respect tnat I canna travel sae fast; and I am to come doun wi' twa of his Honour's servants—that is, John Archibald, a decent elderly gentleman, that says he has seen you lang syne, when ye were buying beasts in the west frae the Laird of Aughtermuggitie—but maybe ye winna mind him—ony way, he 's a civil man—and Mrs Dolly Dutton, that is to be dairy-maid at Inverara; and they bring me on as far as Glasgo', whilk will make it nae pinch to win hame, whilk I desire of all things. May the Giver of all good things keep ye in your outgauns and incomings, whereof devoutly prayeth your loving dauter,

"JEAN DEANS."

The third letter was to Butler, and its tenor as follows:—

"MASTER BUTLER.

"SIR,—It will be pleasure to you to ken, that all I came for is, thanks be to God, weel dune and to the gude end, and that your forbear's letter was right welcome to the Duke of Argile, and that he wrote your name down with a kylevine pen in a leathern book, whereby it seems like he will do for you either wi' a scule or a kirk; he has enow of baith, as I am assured. And I have seen the queen, which gave me a hussy-case out of her own hand. She had not her crown and skeptre, but they are laid by for her, like the bairns' best claise, to be worn when she needs them. And they are keepit in a tour, whilk is not like the tour of Libberton, nor yet Craigmillar, but mair like to the castell of Edinburgh, if the buildings were taen and set down in the midst of the Nor'-Loch. Also the Queen was very bounteous, giving me a paper worth fiftie pounds, as I am assured, to pay my expenses here and back agen. Sae, Master Butler, as we were aye neebours' bairns, forby ony thing else that may hae been spoken between us, I trust you winna skrimp yourself for what is needfu' for your health, since it signifies not muckle whilk o' us has the siller, if the other wants it. And mind this is no meant to haud ye to ony thing whilk ye wad rather forget, if ye suld get a charge of a kirk or a scule, as above said. Only I hope it will be a scule, and not a kirk, because of these difficulties anent aiths and patronages, whilk might gang ill down wi' my honest father. Only if ye could compass a harmonious call frae the parish of Skreegh-me-dead, as ye anes had hope of, I trow it wad please him weel; since I hae heard him say, that the root of the matter was mair deeply hafted in that wild muirland parish than in the Canongate of Edinburgh. I wish I had whaten books ye wanted, Mr Butler, for they hae haill houses of them here, and they are obliged to set sum out in the street, whilk are sald cheap, doubtless, to get them out of the weather. It is a muckle place, and I hae seen sae muckle of it, that my poor head turns round. And ye ken langsyne, I am nae great pen-woman, and it is near eleven o'clock o' the night. I am cumming down in good company, and safe—and I had troubles in gaun up whilk makes me blither of travelling wi' kend folk. My cousin, Mrs Glass, has a braw house here, but a' thing is sae poisoned wi' snuff, that I am like to be scomfished whiles. But what signifies these things, in comparison of the great deliverance whilk has been vouchsafed to my father's house, in whilk you, as our auld and dear well-wisher, will, I dout not, rejoice and be exceedingly glad. And I am, dear Mr Butler, your sincere well-wisher in temporal and eternal things,

"J. D."

After these labours of an unwonted kind, Jeanie retired to her bed, yet scarce could sleep a few minutes together, so often was she awakened by the neart-stirring consciousness of her sister's safety, and so powerfully urged to deposit her burden of joy, where she had before laid her doubts and sorrows, in the warm and sincere exercises of devotion.

All the next, and all the succeeding day, Mrs Glass fidgeted about her shop in the agony of expectation, like a pea (to use a vulgar simile which her profession renders appropriate) upon one of her own tobacco-pipes. With the third morning came the expected coach, with four servants clustered behind on the foot-board, in dark brown and yellow liveries; the Duke in person, with laced coat, gold-headed cane, star and garter, all, as the story-book says, very grand.

He inquired for his little countrywoman of Mrs Glass, but without requesting to see her, probably because he was unwilling to give an appearance of personal intercourse betwixt them, which scandal might have misinterpreted. "The Queen," he said to Mrs Glass, "had taken the case of her kinswoman into her gracious consideration, and being specially moved by the affectionate and resolute character of the elder sister, had condescended to use her powerful intercession with his Majesty, in consequence of which a pardon had been despatched to Scotland to Effie Deans, on condition of her banishing herself forth of Scotland for fourteen years. The King's Advocate had insisted," he said, "upon this qualification of the pardon, having pointed out to his Majesty's ministers, that, within the course of only seven years, twenty-one instances of child-murder had occurred in Scotland."

"Weary on him!" said Mrs Glass, "what for needed he to have telled that of his ain country, and to the English folk abune a'? I used aye to think the Advocate a douce decent man, but it is an

ill bird—begging your Grace's pardon for speaking of such a coorse by-word. And then what is the poor lassie to do in a foreign land?—Why, wae 's me, it 's just sending her to play the same pranks ower again, out of sight or guidance of her friends."

"Pooh! pooh!" said the Duke, "that need not be anticipated. Why, she may come up to London, or she may go over to America, and marry well for all that is come and gone."

"In troth, and so she may, as your Grace is pleased to intimate," replied Mrs Glass; "and now I think upon it, there is my old correspondent in Virginia, Ephraim Buckskin, that has supplied the Thistle this forty years with tobacco, and it is not a little that serves our turn, and he has been writing to me this ten years to send him out a wife. The carle is not above sixty, and hale and hearty, and well to pass in the world, and a line from my hand would settle the matter, and Effie Deans's misfortune (forby that there is no special occasion to speak about it) would be thought little of there."

"Is she a pretty girl?" said the Duke; "her sister does not get beyond a good comely sonsy lass."

"Oh, far prettier is Effie than Jeanie," said Mrs Glass; "though it is long since I saw her mysell, but I hear of the Deanses by all my Lowden friends when they come—your Grace kens we Scots are clannish bodies."

"So much the better for us," said the Duke, "and the worse for those who meddle with us, as your good old-fashioned sign says, Mrs Glass. And now I hope you will approve of the measures I have taken for restoring your kinswoman to her friends." These he detailed at length, and Mrs Glass gave her unqualified approbation, with a smile and a curtsey at every sentence. "And now, Mrs Glass, you must tell Jeanie, I hope she will not forget my cheese when she gets down to Scotland. Archibald has my orders to arrange all her expenses."

"Begging your Grace's humble pardon," said Mrs Glass, "it 's a pity to trouble yourself about them; the Deanses are wealthy people in their way, and the lass has money in her pocket."

"That 's all very true," said the Duke; "but you know, where MacCallummore travels he pays all; it is our Highland privilege to take from all what *we* want, and to give to all what *they* want."

"Your Grace is better at giving than taking," said Mrs Glass.

"To shew you the contrary," said the Duke, "I will fill my box out of this canister without paying you a bawbee;" and again desiring to be remembered to Jeanie, with his good wishes for her safe journey, he departed, leaving Mrs Glass uplifted in heart and in countenance, the proudest and happiest of tobacco and snuff dealers.

Reflectively, his Grace's good humour and affability had a favourable effect upon Jeanie's situation. Her kinswoman, though civil and kind to her, had acquired too much of London breeding to be perfectly satisfied with her cousin's rustic and national dress, and was, besides, something scandalized at the cause of her journey to London. Mrs Glass might, therefore, have been less sedulous in her attentions towards Jeanie, but for the interest which the foremost of the Scottish nobles (for such, in all men's estimation, was the Duke of Argyle) seemed to take in her fate. Now, however, as a kinswoman whose virtues and domestic affections had attracted the notice and approbation of royalty itself, Jeanie stood to her relative in a light very different and much more favourable, and was not only treated with kindness, but with actual observance and respect.

It depended upon herself alone to have made as many visits, and seen as many sights, as lay within Mrs Glass's power to compass. But, excepting that she dined abroad with one or two "far away kinsfolk," and that she paid the same respect, on Mrs Glass's strong urgency, to Mrs Deputy Dabby, wife of the Worshipful Mr Deputy Dabby, of Farringdon Without, she did not avail herself of the opportunity. As Mrs Dabby was the second lady of great rank whom Jeanie had seen in London, she used sometimes afterwards to draw a parallel betwixt her and the Queen, in which she observed, "that Mrs Dabby was dressed twice as grand, and was twice as big, and spoke twice as loud, and twice as muckle, as the Queen did, but she hadna the same goss-hawk glance that makes the skin creep, and the knee bend; and though she had very kindly gifted her with a loaf of sugar and twa punds of tea, yet she hadna a'thegether the sweet look that the Queen had when she put the needle-book into her hand."

Jeanie might have enjoyed the sights and novelties of this great city more, had it not been for the qualification added to her sister's pardon, which greatly grieved her affectionate disposition. On this subject, however, her mind was somewhat relieved by a letter which she received in return of post, in answer to that which she had written to her father. With his affectionate blessing, it brought his full approbation of the step which she had taken, as one inspired by the immediate dictates of Heaven, and which she had been thrust upon in order that she might become the means of safety to a perishing household.

"If ever a deliverance was dear and precious, this," said the letter, "is a dear and precious deliverance—and if life saved can be made more sweet and savoury, it is when it cometh by the hands of those whom we hold in the ties of affection. And do not let your heart be disquieted within you, that this victim, who is rescued from the horns of the altar, whereuntil she was fast bound by the chains of human law, is now to be driven beyond the bounds of our land. Scotland is a blessed land to those who love the ordinances of Christianity, and it is a faer land to look upon, and dear to them who have dwelt in it a' their days; and weel said that judicious Christian, worthy John Livingstone, a sailor in Borrowstouness, as the famous Patrick Walker reporteth his words, that howbeit he thought Scotland was a Gehennah of wickedness when he was at home, yet when he was abroad, he accounted it ane paradise; for the evils of Scotland he found every where, and the good of Scotland he found nowhere. But we are to hold in remembrance that Scotland, though it be our native land, and the land of our fathers, is not like Goshen, in Egypt, on whilk the sun of the heavens and of the gospel shineth allenarly, and leaveth the rest of the world in utter darkness. Therefore, and also because this increase of profit at Saint Leonard's Crags may be a cauld waff of wind blawing from the frozen land of earthly self, where never plant of grace took root or grew, and because my concerns make me take something ower muckle a grip

of the gear of the warld in mine arms, I receive this dispensation anent Effie as a call to depart out of Haran, as righteous Abraham of old, and leave my father's kindred and my mother's house, and the ashes and mould of them who have gone to sleep before me, and which wait to be mingled with these auld crazed bones of mine own. And my heart is lightened to do this, when I call to mind the decay of active and earnest religion in this land, and survey the height and the depth, the length and the breadth, of national defections, and how the love of many is waxing lukewarm and cold; and I am strengthened in this resolution to change my domicile likewise, as I hear that store-farms are to be set at an easy mail in Northumberland, where there are many precious souls that are of our true, though suffering persuasion. And sic part of the kye or stock as I judge it fit to keep, may be driven thither without incommodity — say about Wooler, or that gate, keeping aye a shouther to the hills, — and the rest may be sauld to gude profit and advantage, if we had grace weel to use and guide these gifts of the warld. The Laird has been a true friend on our unhappy occasions, and I have paid him back the siller for Effie's misfortune, whereof Mr Nichil Novit returned him no balance, as the Laird and I did expect he wad hae done. But law licks up a', as the common folk say. I have had the siller to borrow out of sax purses. Mr Saddletree advised to give the Laird of Lounsbeck a charge on his band for a thousand merks. But I hae nae broo' of charges, since that awfu' morning that a tout of a horn, at the Cross of Edinburgh, blew half the faithfu' ministers of Scotland out of their pulpits. However, I sall raise an adjudication, whilk Mr Saddletree says comes instead of the auld apprisings, and will not lose weel-won gear with the like of him, if it may be helped. As for the Queen, and the credit that she hath done to a poor man's daughter, and the mercy and the grace ye found with her, I can only pray for her weel-being here and hereafter, for the establishment of her house now and for ever, upon the throne of these kingdoms. I doubt not but what you told her Majesty, that I was the same David Deans of whom there was a sport at the Revolution, when I noited thegither the heads of twa false prophets, these ungracious Graces the prelates, as they stood on the Hie Street, after being expelled from the Convention-parliament. The Duke of Argyle is a noble and true-hearted nobleman, who pleads the cause of the poor, and those who have none to help them; verily his reward shall not be lacking unto him.—I have been writing of many things, but not of that whilk lies nearest mine heart. I have seen the misguided thing; she will be at freedom the morn, on enacted caution that she shall leave Scotland in four weeks. Her mind is in an evil frame,— casting her eye backward on Egypt, I doubt, as if the bitter waters of the wilderness were harder to endure than the brick furnaces, by the side of which there were savoury flesh pots. I need not bid you make haste down, for you are, excepting always my Great Master, my only comfort in these straits. I charge you to withdraw your feet from the delusion of that Vanity-fair in whilk ye are a sojourner, and not to go to their worship, whilk is an ill-mumbled mass, as it was weel termed by James the Sext, though he afterwards, with his unhappy son, strove to bring it ower back and belly into his native kingdom, wherethrough their race have been cut off as foam upon the water, and shall be as wanderers among the nations — see the prophecies of Hosea, ninth and seventeenth, and the same, tenth and seventh. But us and our house, let us say with the same prophet, 'Let us return to the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us—He hath smitten, and he will bind us up.'"

He proceeded to say, that he approved of her proposed mode of returning by Glasgow, and entered into sundry minute particulars not necessary to be quoted. A single line in the letter, but not the least frequently read by the party to whom it was addressed, intimated, that "Reuben Butler had been as a son to him in his sorrows." As David Deans scarce ever mentioned Butler before, without some gibe, more or less direct, either at his carnal gifts and learning, or at his grandfather's heresy, Jeanie drew a good omen from no such qualifying clause being added to this sentence respecting him.

A lover's hope resembles the bean in the nursery tale,—let it once take root, and it will grow so rapidly, that in the course of a few hours the giant Imagination builds a castle on the top, and by and by comes Disappointment with the "curtal axe," and hews down both the plant and the superstructure. Jeanie's fancy, though not the most powerful of her faculties, was lively enough to transport her to a wild farm in Northumberland, well stocked with milk-cows, yeald beasts, and sheep; a meeting-house, hard by, frequented by serious presbyterians, who had united in a harmonious call to Reuben Butler to be their spiritual guide — Effie restored, not to gaiety, but to cheerfulness at least — their father, with his grey hairs smoothed down, and spectacles on his nose — herself, with the maiden snood exchanged for a matron's curch — all arranged in a pew in the said meeting-house, listening to words of devotion, rendered sweeter and more powerful by the affectionate ties which combined them with the preacher. She cherished such visions from day to day, until her residence in London began to become insupportable and tedious to her; and it was with no ordinary satisfaction that she received a summons from Argyle-house, requiring her in two days to be prepared to join their northward party.

CHAPTER XL.

> One was a female, who had grievous ill
> Wrought in revenge, and she enjoy'd it still;
> Sullen she was, and threatening; in her eye
> Glared the stern triumph that she dared to die.
>
> CRABBE.

THE summons of preparation arrived after Jeanie Deans had resided in the metropolis about three weeks.

On the morning appointed she took a grateful farewell of Mrs Glass, as that good woman's attention to her particularly required, placed herself and her moveable goods, which purchases and presents had greatly increased, in a hackney-coach, and joined her travelling companions in the housekeeper's apartment at Argyle-house. While the

carriage was getting ready, she was informed that the Duke wished to speak with her; and being ushered into a splendid saloon, she was surprised to find that he wished to present her to his lady and daughters.

"I bring you my little countrywoman, Duchess," these were the words of the introduction. "With an army of young fellows, as gallant and steady as she is, and a good cause, I would not fear two to one."

"Ah, papa!" said a lively young lady, about twelve years old, "remember you were full one to two at Sheriff-muir, and yet," (singing the well-known ballad)—

> "Some say that we wan, and some say that they wan,
> And some say that nane wan at a', man;
> But of ae thing I 'm sure, that on Sheriff-muir
> A battle there was that I saw, man.'"

"What, little Mary turned Tory on my hands? —This will be fine news for our countrywoman to carry down to Scotland!"

"We may all turn Tories for the thanks we have got for remaining Whigs," said the second young lady.

"Well, hold your peace, you discontented monkeys, and go dress your babies; and as for the Bob of Dumblane,

> "If it wasna weel bobbit, weel bobbit, weel bobbit,
> If it wasna weel bobbit, we 'll bobb it again.'"

"Papa's wit is running low," said Lady Mary: "the poor gentleman is repeating himself—he sang that on the field of battle, when he was told the Highlanders had cut his left wing to pieces with their claymores."

A pull by the hair was the repartee to this sally.

"Ah! brave Highlanders and bright claymores," said the Duke, "well do I wish them, 'for a' the ill they 've done me yet,' as the song goes.—But come, madcaps, say a civil word to your countrywoman—I wish ye had half her canny hamely sense; I think you may be as leal and true-hearted."

The Duchess advanced, and, in few words, in which there was as much kindness as civility, assured Jeanie of the respect which she had for a character so affectionate, and yet so firm, and added, "When you get home, you will perhaps hear from me."

"And from me." "And from me." "And from me, Jeanie," added the young ladies one after the other, "for you are a credit to the land we love so well."

Jeanie, overpowered with these unexpected compliments, and not aware that the Duke's investigation had made him acquainted with her behaviour on her sister's trial, could only answer by blushing, and curtseying round and round, and uttering at intervals, "Mony thanks! mony thanks!"

"Jeanie," said the Duke, "you must have *doch an' dorroch*, or you will be unable to travel."

There was a salver with cake and wine on the table. He took up a glass, drank "to all true hearts that lo'ed Scotland," and offered a glass to his guest.

Jeanie, however, declined it, saying, "that she had never tasted wine in her life."

"How comes that, Jeanie?" said the Duke,—"wine maketh glad the heart, you know."

"Ay, sir, but my father is like Jonadab the son of Rechab, who charged his children that they should drink no wine."

"I thought your father would have had more sense," said the Duke, "unless indeed he prefers brandy. But, however, Jeanie, if you will not drink, you must eat, to save the character of my house."

He thrust upon her a large piece of cake, nor would he permit her to break off a fragment, and lay the rest on the salver. "Put it in your pouch, Jeanie," said he; "you will be glad of it before you see St Giles's steeple. I wish to Heaven I were to see it as soon as you! and so my best service to all my friends at and about Auld Reekie, and a blithe journey to you."

And, mixing the frankness of a soldier with his natural affability, he shook hands with his protegée, and committed her to the charge of Archibald, satisfied that he had provided sufficiently for her being attended to by his domestics, from the unusual attention with which he had himself treated her.

Accordingly, in the course of her journey, she found both her companions disposed to pay her every possible civility, so that her return, in point of comfort and safety, formed a strong contrast to her journey to London.

Her heart also was disburdened of the weight of grief, shame, apprehension, and fear, which had loaded her before her interview with the Queen at Richmond. But the human mind is so strangely capricious, that, when freed from the pressure of real misery, it becomes open and sensitive to the apprehension of ideal calamities. She was now much disturbed in mind, that she had heard nothing from Reuben Butler, to whom the operation of writing was so much more familiar than it was to herself.

"It would have cost him sae little fash," she said to herself; "for I hae seen his pen gang as fast ower the paper, as ever it did ower the water when it was in the grey goose's wing. Wae's me! maybe he may be badly—but then my father wad likely hae said something about it—Or maybe he may hae taen the rue, and kensna how to let me wot of his change of mind. He needna be at muckle fash about it,"—she went on, drawing herself up, though the tear of honest pride and injured affection gathered in her eye, as she entertained the suspicion,—"Jeanie Deans is no the lass to pu' him by the sleeve, or put him in mind of what he wishes to forget. I shall wish him weel and happy a' the same; and if he has the luck to get a kirk in our country, I sall gang and hear him just the very same, to shew that I bear nae malice." And as she imagined the scene, the tear stole over her eye.

In these melancholy reveries, Jeanie had full time to indulge herself; for her travelling companions, servants in a distinguished and fashionable family, had, of course, many topics of conversation, in which it was absolutely impossible she could have either pleasure or portion. She had, therefore, abundant leisure for reflection, and even for self-tormenting, during the several days which, indulging the young horses the Duke was sending down to the North with sufficient ease and short stages, they occupied in reaching the neighbourhood of Carlisle.

In approaching the vicinity of that ancient city, they discerned a considerable crowd upon an emi-

nence at a little distance from the high road, and learned from some passengers who were gathering towards that busy scene from the southward, that the cause of the concourse was, the laudable public desire "to see a doomed Scotch witch and thief get half of her due upo' Haribeebroo' yonder, for she was only to be hanged; she should hae been boorned aloive, an' cheap on 't."

"Dear Mr Archibald," said the dame of the dairy elect, "I never seed a woman hanged in a' my life, and only four men, as made a goodly spectacle."

Mr Archibald, however, was a Scotchman, and promised himself no exuberant pleasure in seeing his countrywoman undergo "the terrible behests of law." Moreover, he was a man of sense and delicacy in his way, and the late circumstances of Jeanie's family, with the cause of her expedition to London, were not unknown to him; so that he answered dryly, it was impossible to stop, as he must be early at Carlisle on some business of the Duke's, and he accordingly bid the postilions get on.

The road at that time passed at about a quarter of a mile's distance from the eminence, called Haribee or Harabee-brow, which, though it is very moderate in size and height, is nevertheless seen from a great distance around, owing to the flatness of the country through which the Eden flows. Here many an outlaw, and border-rider of both kingdoms, had wavered in the wind during the wars, and scarce less hostile truces, between the two countries. Upon Harabee, in latter days, other executions had taken place with as little ceremony as compassion; for these frontier provinces remained long unsettled, and, even at the time of which we write, were ruder than those in the centre of England.

The postilions drove on, wheeling, as the Penrith road led them, round the verge of the rising ground. Yet still the eyes of Mrs Dolly Dutton, which, with the head and substantial person to which they belonged, were all turned towards the scene of action, could discern plainly the outline of the gallows-tree, relieved against the clear sky, the dark shade formed by the persons of the executioner and the criminal upon the light rounds of the tall aerial ladder, until one of the objects, lanched into the air, gave unequivocal signs of mortal agony, though appearing in the distance not larger than a spider dependent at the extremity of his invisible thread, while the remaining form descended from its elevated situation, and regained with all speed an undistinguished place among the crowd. This termination of the tragic scene drew forth of course a squall from Mrs Dutton, and Jeanie, with instinctive curiosity, turned her head in the same direction.

The sight of a female culprit in the act of undergoing the fatal punishment from which her beloved sister had been so recently rescued, was too much, not perhaps for her nerves, but for her mind and feelings. She turned her head to the other side of the carriage, with a sensation of sickness, of loathing, and of fainting. Her female companion overwhelmed her with questions, with profers of assistance, with requests that the carriage might be stopped — that a doctor might be fetched — that drops might be gotten — that burnt feathers and asafœtida, fair water, and hartshorn, might be procured, all at once, and without one instant's delay. Archibald, more calm and considerate, only desired the carriage to push forward; and it was not till they had got beyond sight of the fatal spectacle, that, seeing the deadly paleness of Jeanie's countenance, he stopped the carriage, and jumping out himself, went in search of the most obvious and most easily procured of Mrs Dutton's pharmacopœia — a draught, namely, of fair water.

While Archibald was absent on this good-natured piece of service, damning the ditches which produced nothing but mud, and thinking upon the thousand bubbling springlets of his own mountains, the attendants on the execution began to pass the stationary vehicle in their way back to Carlisle.

From their half-heard and half-understood words, Jeanie, whose attention was involuntarily riveted by them, as that of children is by ghost stories, though they know the pain with which they will afterwards remember them, Jeanie, I say, could discern that the present victim of the law had died *game*, as it is termed by those unfortunates; that is, sullen, reckless, and impenitent, neither fearing God nor regarding man.

"A sture woife, and a dour," said one Cumbrian peasant, as he clattered by in his wooden brogues, with a noise like the trampling of a dray-horse.

"She has gone to ho master, with ho's name in her mouth," said another; "Shame the country should be harried wi' Scotch witches and Scotch bitches this gate — but I say hang and drown."

"Ay, ay, Gaffer Tramp, take awa yealdon, take awa low — hang the witch, and there will be less scathe amang us; mine owsen hae been reckan this towmont."

"And mine bairns hae been crining too, mon," replied his neighbour.

"Silence wi' your fule tongues, ye churls," said an old woman, who hobbled past them, as they stood talking near the carriage; "this was nae witch, but a bluidy-fingered thief and murderess."

"Ay? was it e'en sae, Dame Hinchup?" said one in a civil tone, and stepping out of his place to let the old woman pass along the foot-path — "Nay, you know best, sure — but at ony rate, we hae but tint a Scot of her, and that 's a thing better lost than found."

The old woman passed on without making any answer.

"Ay, ay, neighbour," said Gaffer Tramp, "seest thou how one witch will speak for t 'other — Scots or English, the same to them."

His companion shook his head, and replied in the same subdued tone, "Ay, ay, when a Sark-foot wife gets on her broomstick, the dames of Allonby are ready to mount, just as sure as the by-word gangs o' the hills,

> If Skiddaw hath a cap,
> Criffel wots full weel of that."

"But," continued Gaffer Tramp, "thinkest thou the daughter o' yon hangit body isna as rank a witch as ho?"

"I kenna clearly," returned the fellow, "but the folk are speaking o' swimming her i' the Eden." And they passed on their several roads, after wishing each other good-morning.

Just as the clowns left the place, and as Mr Archibald returned with some fair water, a crowd

of boys and girls, and some of the lower rabble of more mature age, came up from the place of execution, grouping themselves with many a yell of delight around a tall female fantastically dressed, who was dancing, leaping, and bounding in the midst of them. A horrible recollection pressed on Jeanie as she looked on this unfortunate creature; and the reminiscence was mutual, for by a sudden exertion of great strength and agility, Madge Wildfire broke out of the noisy circle of tormentors who surrounded her, and clinging fast to the door of the calash, uttered, in a sound betwixt laughter and screaming, "Eh, d'ye ken, Jeanie Deans, they hae hangit our mother?" Then suddenly changing her tone to that of the most piteous entreaty, she added, "O gar them let me gang to cut her down!—let me but cut her down!—she is my mother, if she was waur than the deil, and she'll be nae mair kenspeckle than half-hangit Maggie Dickson, that cried saut mony a day after she had been hangit; her voice was roupit and hoarse, and her neck was a wee ageë, or ye wad hae kend nae odds on her frae ony other saut-wife."

Mr Archibald, embarrassed by the madwoman's clinging to the carriage, and detaining around them her noisy and mischievous attendants, was all this while looking out for a constable or beadle, to whom he might commit the unfortunate creature. But seeing no such person of authority, he endeavoured to loosen her hold from the carriage, that they might escape from her by driving on. This, however, could hardly be achieved without some degree of violence; Madge held fast, and renewed her frantic entreaties to be permitted to cut down her mother. "It was but a tenpenny tow lost," she said, "and what was that to a woman's life?" There came up, however, a parcel of savage-looking fellows, butchers and graziers chiefly, among whose cattle there had been of late a very general and fatal distemper, which their wisdom imputed to witchcraft. They laid violent hands on Madge, and tore her from the carriage, exclaiming—"What, doest stop folk o' king's highway? Hast no done mischief enow already, wi' thy murders and thy witcherings?"

"Oh Jeanie Deans—Jeanie Deans!" exclaimed the poor maniac, "save my mother, and I will take ye to the Interpreter's house again,—and I will teach ye a' my bonny sangs,—and I will tell ye what came o' the——" The rest of her entreaties were drowned in the shouts of the rabble.

"Save her, for God's sake!—save her from those people!" exclaimed Jeanie to Archibald.

"She is mad, but quite innocent; she is mad, gentlemen," said Archibald; "do not use her ill, take her before the Mayor."

"Ay, ay, we'se hae care enow on her," answered one of the fellows; "gang thou thy gate, man, and mind thine own matters."

"He's a Scot by his tongue," said another; "and an he will come out o' his whirligig there, I'se gie him his tartan plaid fu' o' broken banes."

It was clear nothing could be done to rescue Madge; and Archibald, who was a man of humanity, could only bid the postilions hurry on to Carlisle, that he might obtain some assistance to the unfortunate woman. As they drove off, they heard the hoarse roar with which the mob preface acts of riot or cruelty, yet even above that deep and dire note, they could discern the screams of the unfortunate victim. They were soon out of hearing of the cries, but had no sooner entered the streets of Carlisle, than Archibald, at Jeanie's earnest and urgent entreaty, went to a magistrate, to state the cruelty which was likely to be exercised on this unhappy creature.

In about an hour and a half he returned, and reported to Jeanie, that the magistrate had very readily gone in person, with some assistants, to the rescue of the unfortunate woman, and that he had himself accompanied him; that when they came to the muddy pool, in which the mob were ducking her, according to their favourite mode of punishment, the magistrate succeeded in rescuing her from their hands, but in a state of insensibility owing to the cruel treatment which she had received. He added, that he had seen her carried to the workhouse, and understood that she had been brought to herself, and was expected to do well.

This last averment was a slight alteration in point of fact, for Madge Wildfire was not expected to survive the treatment she had received; but Jeanie seemed so much agitated, that Mr Archibald did not think it prudent to tell her the worst at once. Indeed, she appeared so fluttered and disordered by this alarming accident, that, although it had been their intention to proceed to Longtown that evening, her companions judged it most advisable to pass the night at Carlisle.

This was particularly agreeable to Jeanie, who resolved, if possible, to procure an interview with Madge Wildfire. Connecting some of her wild flights with the narrative of George Staunton, she was unwilling to omit the opportunity of extracting from her, if possible, some information concerning the fate of that unfortunate infant which had cost her sister so dear. Her acquaintance with the disordered state of poor Madge's mind did not permit her to cherish much hope that she could acquire from her any useful intelligence; but then, since Madge's mother had suffered her deserts, and was silent for ever, it was her only chance of obtaining any kind of information, and she was loath to lose the opportunity.

She coloured her wish to Mr Archibald by saying, that she had seen Madge formerly, and wished to know, as a matter of humanity, how she was attended to under her present misfortunes. That complaisant person immediately went to the workhouse, or hospital, in which he had seen the sufferer lodged, and brought back for reply, that the medical attendants positively forbade her seeing any one. When the application for admittance was repeated next day, Mr Archibald was informed that she had been very quiet and composed, insomuch that the clergyman, who acted as chaplain to the establishment, thought it expedient to read prayers beside her bed, but that her wandering fit of mind had returned soon after his departure; however, her countrywoman might see her if she chose it. She was not expected to live above an hour or two.

Jeanie had no sooner received this information, than she hastened to the hospital, her companions attending her. They found the dying person in a large ward, where there were ten beds, of which the patient's was the only one occupied.

Madge was singing when they entered—singing her own wild snatches of songs and obsolete airs, with a voice no longer overstrained by false spirits, but softened, saddened, and subdued by bodily ex-

haustion. She was still insane, but was no longer able to express her wandering ideas in the wild notes of her former state of exalted imagination. There was death in the plaintive tones of her voice, which yet, in this moderated and melancholy mood, had something of the lulling sound with which a mother sings her infant asleep. As Jeanie entered, she heard first the air, and then a part of the chorus and words, of what had been, perhaps, the song of a jolly harvest-home :

"Our work is over — over now,
The goodman wipes his weary brow,
The last long wain wends slow away,
And we are free to sport and play.

"The night comes on when sets the sun,
And labour ends when day is done.
When Autumn's gone and Winter's come,
We hold our jovial harvest-home."

Jeanie advanced to the bed-side when the strain was finished, and addressed Madge by her name. But it produced no symptoms of recollection. On the contrary, the patient, like one provoked by interruption, changed her posture, and called out, with an impatient tone, "Nurse — nurse, turn my face to the wa', that I may never answer to that name ony mair, and never see mair of a wicked world."

The attendant on the hospital arranged her in her bed as she desired, with her face to the wall and her back to the light. So soon as she was quiet in this new position, she began again to sing in the same low and modulated strains, as if she was recovering the state of abstraction which the interruption of her visitants had disturbed. The strain, however, was different, and rather resembled the music of the Methodist hymns, though the measure of the song was similar to that of the former :

"When the fight of grace is fought, —
When the marriage vest is wrought, —
When Faith hath chased cold Doubt away,
And Hope but sickens at delay, —

When Charity, imprison'd here,
Longs for a more expanded sphere,
Doff thy robes of sin and clay ;
Christian, rise, and come away."

The strain was solemn and affecting, sustained as it was by the pathetic warble of a voice which had naturally been a fine one, and which weakness, if it diminished its power, had improved in softness. Archibald, though a follower of the court, and a pococurante by profession, was confused, if not affected ; the dairy-maid blubbered ; and Jeanie felt the tears rise spontaneously to her eyes. Even the nurse, accustomed to all modes in which the spirit can pass, seemed considerably moved.

The patient was evidently growing weaker, as was intimated by an apparent difficulty of breathing, which seized her from time to time, and by the utterance of low listless moans, intimating that nature was succumbing in the last conflict. But the spirit of melody, which must originally have so strongly possessed this unfortunate young woman, seemed, at every interval of ease, to triumph over her pain and weakness. And it was remarkable, that there could always be traced in her songs something appropriate, though perhaps only obliquely or collaterally so, to her present situation. Her next seemed the fragment of some old ballad :

"Cauld is my bed, Lord Archibald,
And sad my sleep of sorrow ;
But thine sall be as sad and cauld,
My fause true-love ! to-morrow.

"And weep ye not, my maidens free,
Though death your mistress borrow ;
For he for whom I die to-day,
Shall die for me to-morrow."

Again she changed the tune to one wilder, less monotonous, and less regular. But of the words, only a fragment or two could be collected by those who listened to this singular scene :

"Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early ;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me ?'
'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

* * *

"'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly ?'—
'The grey-headed sexton,
That delves the grave duly."

* * *

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady ;
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"

Her voice died away with the last notes, and she fell into a slumber, from which the experienced attendant assured them, that she never would awake at all, or only in the death agony.

The nurse's prophecy proved true. The poor maniac parted with existence, without again uttering a sound of any kind. But our travellers did not witness this catastrophe. They left the hospital as soon as Jeanie had satisfied herself that no elucidation of her sister's misfortunes was to be hoped from the dying person.[1]

CHAPTER XLI.

Wilt thou go on with me ?
The moon is bright, the sea is calm,
And I know well the ocean paths . . . .
Thou wilt go on with me !
Thalaba.

The fatigue and agitation of these various scenes had agitated Jeanie so much, notwithstanding her robust strength of constitution, that Archibald judged it necessary that she should have a day's repose at the village of Longtown. It was in vain that Jeanie herself protested against any delay. The Duke of Argyle's man of confidence was of course consequential ; and as he had been bred to the medical profession in his youth, (at least he used this expression to describe his having, thirty years before, pounded for six months in the mortar of old Mungo Mangleman, the surgeon at Greenock,) he was obstinate whenever a matter of health was in question.

In this case he discovered febrile symptoms, and having once made a happy application of that learned phrase to Jeanie's case, all farther resistance became in vain ; and she was glad to acquiesce, and even to go to bed, and drink water-gruel, in

[1] See Note X. *Madge Wildfire.*

order that she might possess her soul in quiet and without interruption.

Mr Archibald was equally attentive in another particular. He observed that the execution of the old woman, and the miserable fate of her daughter, seemed to have had a more powerful effect upon Jeanie's mind, than the usual feelings of humanity might naturally have been expected to occasion. Yet she was obviously a strong-minded, sensible young woman, and in no respect subject to nervous affections; and therefore Archibald, being ignorant of any special connection between his master's protegée and these unfortunate persons, excepting that she had seen Madge formerly in Scotland, naturally imputed the strong impression these events had made upon her, to her associating them with the unhappy circumstances in which her sister had so lately stood. He became anxious, therefore, to prevent any thing occurring which might recall these associations to Jeanie's mind.

Archibald had speedily an opportunity of exercising this precaution. A pedlar brought to Longtown that evening, amongst other wares, a large broad-side sheet, giving an account of the "Last Speech and Execution of Margaret Murdockson, and of the barbarous Murder of her Daughter, Magdalene or Madge Murdockson, called Madge Wildfire; and of her pious conversation with his Reverence Archdeacon Fleming;" which authentic publication had apparently taken place on the day they left Carlisle, and being an article of a nature peculiarly acceptable to such country-folk as were within hearing of the transaction, the itinerant bibliopolist had forthwith added them to his stock in trade. He found a merchant sooner than he expected; for Archibald, much applauding his own prudence, purchased the whole lot for two shillings and ninepence; and the pedlar, delighted with the profit of such a wholesale transaction, instantly returned to Carlisle to supply himself with more.

The considerate Mr Archibald was about to commit his whole purchase to the flames, but it was rescued by the yet more considerate dairy-damsel, who said, very prudently, it was a pity to waste so much paper, which might crepe hair, pin up bonnets, and serve many other useful purposes; and who promised to put the parcel into her own trunk, and keep it carefully out of the sight of Mrs Jeanie Deans: "Though, by the by, she had no great notion of folk being so very nice. Mrs Deans might have had enough to think about the gallows all this time to endure a sight of it, without all this to do about it."

Archibald reminded the dame of the dairy of the Duke's very particular charge, that they should be attentive and civil to Jeanie; as also that they were to part company soon, and consequently would not be doomed to observing any one's health or temper during the rest of the journey. With which answer Mrs Dolly Dutton was obliged to hold herself satisfied.

On the morning they resumed their journey, and prosecuted it successfully, travelling through Dumfries-shire and part of Lanarkshire, until they arrived at the small town of Rutherglen, within about four miles of Glasgow. Here an express brought letters to Archibald from the principal agent of the Duke of Argyle in Edinburgh.

He said nothing of their contents that evening; but when they were seated in the carriage the next day, the faithful squire informed Jeanie, that he had received directions from the Duke's factor, to whom his Grace had recommended him to carry her, if the had no objection, for a stage or two beyond Glasgow. Some temporary causes of discontent had occasioned tumults in that city and the neighbourhood, which would render it unadvisable for Mrs Jeanie Deans to travel alone and unprotected betwixt that city and Edinburgh; whereas, by going forward a little farther, they would meet one of his Grace's subfactors, who was coming down from the Highlands to Edinburgh with his wife, and under whose charge she might journey with comfort and in safety.

Jeanie remonstrated against this arrangement. "She had been lang," she said, "frae hame — her father and her sister behoved to be very anxious to see her — there were other friends she had that werena weel in health. She was willing to pay for man and horse at Glasgow, and surely naebody wad meddle wi' sae harmless and feckless a creature as she was. — She was muckle obliged by the offer; but never hunted deer langed for its resting-place as I do to find myself at Saint Leonard's."

The groom of the chambers exchanged a look with his female companion, which seemed so full of meaning, that Jeanie screamed aloud — "O Mr Archibald — Mrs Dutton, if ye ken of ony thing that has happened at Saint Leonard's, for God's sake — for pity's sake, tell me, and dinna keep me in suspense!"

"I really know nothing, Mrs Deans," said the groom of the chambers.

"And I—I—I am sure, I knows as little," said the dame of the dairy, while some communication seemed to tremble on her lips, which, at a glance of Archibald's eye, she appeared to swallow down, and compressed her lips thereafter into a state of extreme and vigilant firmness, as if she had been afraid of its bolting out before she was aware.

Jeanie saw there was to be something concealed from her, and it was only the repeated assurances of Archibald that her father — her sister — all her friends were, as far as he knew, well and happy, that at all pacified her alarm. From such respectable people as those with whom she travelled she could apprehend no harm, and yet her distress was so obvious, that Archibald, as a last resource, pulled out, and put into her hand, a slip of paper, on which these words were written: —

"Jeanie Deans — You will do me a favour by going with Archibald and my female domestic a day's journey beyond Glasgow, and asking them no questions, which will greatly oblige your friend,

"Argyle & Greenwich."

Although this laconic epistle, from a nobleman to whom she was bound by such inestimable obligations, silenced all Jeanie's objections to the proposed route, it rather added to than diminished the eagerness of her curiosity. The proceeding to Glasgow seemed now no longer to be an object with her fellow-travellers. On the contrary, they kept the left-hand side of the river Clyde, and travelled through a thousand beautiful and changing views down the side of that noble stream, till, ceasing to hold its inland character, it began to assume that of a navigable river.

"You are not for gaun intill Glasgow then?" said

Jeanie, as she observed that the drivers made no motion for inclining their horses' heads towards the ancient bridge, which was then the only mode of access to St Mungo's capital.

"No," replied Archibald; "there is some popular commotion, and as our Duke is in opposition to the court, perhaps we might be too well received; or they might take it in their heads to remember that the Captain of Carrick came down upon them with his Highlandmen in the time of Shawfield's mob in 1725, and then we would be too ill received.[1] And, at any rate, it is best for us, and for me in particular, who may be supposed to possess his Grace's mind upon many particulars, to leave the good people of the Gorbals to act according to their own imaginations, without either provoking or encouraging them by my presence."

To reasoning of such tone and consequence Jeanie had nothing to reply, although it seemed to her to contain fully as much self-importance as truth.

The carriage meantime rolled on; the river expanded itself, and gradually assumed the dignity of an estuary or arm of the sea. The influence of the advancing and retiring tides became more and more evident, and in the beautiful words of him of the laurel wreath, the river waxed

> "A broader and a broader stream.
> * * * *
> The cormorant stands upon its shoals,
> His black and dripping wings
> Half open'd to the wind."

"Which way lies Inverary?" said Jeanie, gazing on the dusky ocean of Highland hills, which now, piled above each other, and intersected by many a lake, stretched away on the opposite side of the river to the northward. "Is yon high castle the Duke's hoose?"

"That, Mrs Deans?—Lud help thee," replied Archibald, "that 's the old castle of Dumbarton, the strongest place in Europe, be the other what it may. Sir William Wallace was governor of it in the old wars with the English, and his Grace is governor just now. It is always intrusted to the best man in Scotland."

"And does the Duke live on that high rock, then?" demanded Jeanie.

"No, no, he has his deputy-governor, who commands in his absence; he lives in the white house you see at the bottom of the rock—His Grace does not reside there himself."

"I think not, indeed," said the dairy-woman, upon whose mind the road, since they had left Dumfries, had made no very favourable impression, "for if he did, he might go whistle for a dairy-woman, an he were the only duke in England. I did not leave my place and my friends to come down to see cows starve to death upon hills as they be at that pig-stye of Elfinfoot, as you call it, Mr Archibald, or to be perched upon the top of a rock, like a squirrel in his cage, hung out of a three pair of stairs window."

Inwardly chuckling that these symptoms of recalcitration had not taken place until the fair malecontent was, as he mentally termed it, under his thumb, Archibald coolly replied, "that the hills were none of his making, nor did he know how to mend them; but as to lodging, they would soon be in a house of the Duke's in a very pleasant island called Roseneath, where they went to wait for shipping to take them to Inverary, and would meet the company with whom Jeanie was to return to Edinburgh."

"An island?" said Jeanie, who, in the course of her various and adventurous travels, had never quitted terra firma, "then I am doubting we maun gang in ane of these boats; they look unco sma', and the waves are something rough, and——"

"Mr Archibald," said Mrs Dutton, "I will not consent to it; I was never engaged to leave the country, and I desire you will bid the boys drive round the other way to the Duke's house."

"There is a safe pinnace belonging to his Grace, ma'am, close by," replied Archibald, "and you need be under no apprehensions whatsoever."

"But I *am* under apprehensions," said the damsel; "and I insist upon going round by land, Mr Archibald, were it ten miles about."

"I am sorry I cannot oblige you, madam, as Roseneath happens to be an island."

"If it were ten islands," said the incensed dame, "that 's no reason why I should be drowned in going over the seas to it."

"No reason why you should be drowned, certainly, ma'am," answered the unmoved groom of the chambers, "but an admirable good one why you cannot proceed to it by land." And, fixed his master's mandates to perform, he pointed with his hand, and the drivers, turning off the high-road, proceeded towards a small hamlet of fishing huts, where a shallop, somewhat more gaily decorated than any which they had yet seen, having a flag which displayed a boar's head, crested with a ducal coronet, waited with two or three seamen, and as many Highlanders.

The carriage stopped, and the men began to unyoke their horses, while Mr Archibald gravely superintended the removal of the baggage from the carriage to the little vessel. "Has the Caroline been long arrived?" said Archibald to one of the seamen.

"She has been here in five days from Liverpool, and she's lying down at Greenock," answered the fellow.

"Let the horses and carriage go down to Greenock then," said Archibald, "and be embarked there for Inverary when I send notice—they may stand in my cousin's, Duncan Archibald the stabler's.—Ladies," he added, "I hope you will get yourselves ready, we must not loss the tide."

"Mrs Deans," said the Cowslip of Inverary, "you may do as you please—but I will sit here all night, rather than go into that there painted eggshell.—Fellow—fellow!" (this was addressed to a Highlander who was lifting a travelling trunk) "that trunk is *mine*, and that there band-box, and that pillion mail, and those seven bundles, and the paper-bag; and if you venture to touch one of them, it shall be at your peril."

The Celt kept his eye fixed on the speaker, then turned his head towards Archibald, and receiving no countervailing signal, he shouldered the portmanteau, and without farther notice of the distressed damsel, or paying any attention to remonstrances, which probably he did not understand, and would certainly have equally disregarded whether he understood them or not, moved off with Mrs Dutton's wearables and deposited the trunk containing them safely in the boat.

The baggage being stowed in safety, Mr Archi-

[1] See Note Y. *Shawfield's Mob.*

bald handed Jeanie out of the carriage, and, not without some tremor on her part, she was transported through the surf and placed in the boat. He then offered the same civility to his fellow-servant, but she was resolute in her refusal to quit the carriage, in which she now remained in solitary state, threatening all concerned or unconcerned with actions for wages and board-wages, damages and expenses, and numbering on her fingers the gowns and other habiliments, from which she seemed in the act of being separated for ever. Mr Archibald did not give himself the trouble of making many remonstrances, which, indeed, seemed only to aggravate the damsel's indignation, but spoke two or three words to the Highlanders in Gaelic; and the wily mountaineers, approaching the carriage cautiously, and without giving the slightest intimation of their intention, at once seized the recusant so effectually fast that she could neither resist nor struggle, and hoisting her on their shoulders in nearly a horizontal posture, rushed down with her to the beach, and through the surf, and with no other inconvenience than ruffling her garments a little, deposited her in the boat; but in a state of surprise, mortification, and terror, at her sudden transportation, which rendered her absolutely mute for two or three minutes. The men jumped in themselves; one tall fellow remained till he had pushed off the boat, and then tumbled in upon his companions. They took their oars and began to pull from the shore, then spread their sail, and drove merrily across the firth.

"You Scotch villain!" said the infuriated damsel to Archibald, "how dare you use a person like me in this way?"

"Madam," said Archibald, with infinite composure, "it's high time you should know you are in the Duke's country, and that there is not one of these fellows but would throw you out of the boat as readily as into it, if such were his Grace's pleasure."

"Then the Lord have mercy on me!" said Mrs Dutton. "If I had had any on myself, I would never have engaged with you."

"It's something of the latest to think of that now, Mrs Dutton," said Archibald; "but I assure you, you will find the Highlands have their pleasures. You will have a dozen of cow-milkers under your own authority at Inverary, and you may throw any of them into the lake, if you have a mind, for the Duke's head people are almost as great as himself."

"This is a strange business, to be sure, Mr. Archibald," said the lady; "but I suppose I must make the best on't.—Are you sure the boat will not sink? it leans terribly to one side, in my poor mind"

"Fear nothing," said Mr Archibald, taking a most important pinch of snuff; "this same ferry on Clyde knows us very well, or we know it, which is all the same; no fear of any of our people meeting with any accident. We should have crossed from the opposite shore, but for the disturbances at Glasgow, which made it improper for his Grace's people to pass through the city."

"Are you not afeard, Mrs Deans," said the dairy-vestal, addressing Jeanie, who sat, not in the most comfortable state of mind, by the side of Archibald, who himself managed the helm;—"Are you not afeard of these wild men with their naked knees, and of this nut-shell of a thing, that seems bobbing up and down like a skimming-dish in a milk-pail?"

"No—no—madam," answered Jeanie, with some hesitation, "I am not feared; for I hae seen Hielandmen before, though I never was sae near them; and for the danger of the deep waters, I trust there is a Providence by sea as well as by land."

"Well," said Mrs Dutton, "it is a beautiful thing to have learned to write and read, for one can always say such fine words whatever should befall them."

Archibald, rejoicing in the impression which his vigorous measures had made upon the intractable dairymaid, now applied himself, as a sensible and good-natured man, to secure by fair means the ascendency which he had obtained by some wholesome violence; and he succeeded so well in representing to her the idle nature of her fears, and the impossibility of leaving her upon the beach, enthroned in an empty carriage, that the good understanding of the party was completely revived ere they landed at Roseneath.

CHAPTER XLII.

Did Fortune guide,
Or rather Destiny, our bark, to which
We could appoint no port, to this best place?
FLETCHER.

THE islands in the Firth of Clyde, which the daily passage of so many smoke-pennoned steam-boats now renders so easily accessible, were, in our fathers' times, secluded spots, frequented by no travellers, and few visitants of any kind. They are of exquisite, yet varied beauty. Arran, a mountainous region, or Alpine island, abounds with the grandest and most romantic scenery. Bute is of a softer and more woodland character. The Cumrays, as if to exhibit a contrast to both, are green, level, and bare, forming the links of a sort of natural bar, which is drawn along the mouth of the firth, leaving large intervals, however, of ocean. Roseneath, a smaller isle, lies much higher up the firth, and toward its western shore, near the opening of the lake called the Gare-Loch, and not far from Loch Long and Loch Seant, or the Holy-Loch, which wind from the mountains of the western Highlands to join the estuary of the Clyde.

In these isles the severe frost winds, which tyrannize over the vegetable creation during a Scottish spring, are comparatively little felt; nor, excepting the gigantic strength of Arran, are they much exposed to the Atlantic storms, lying landlocked and protected to the westward by the shores of Ayrshire. Accordingly, the weeping-willow, the weeping birch, and other trees of early and pendulous shoots, flourish in these favoured recesses in a degree unknown in our eastern districts; and the air is also said to possess that mildness which is favourable to consumptive cases.

The picturesque beauty of the island of Roseneath, in particular, had such recommendations, that the Earls and Dukes of Argyle, from an early period, made it their occasional residence, and had their temporary accommodation in a fishing or hunting-lodge, which succeeding improvements have since transformed into a palace. It was in its original simplicity, when the little bark, which we left

traversing the firth at the end of last chapter, approached the shores of the isle.

When they touched the landing-place, which was partly shrouded by some old low but wide-spreading oak-trees, intermixed with hazel-bushes, two or three figures were seen as if awaiting their arrival. To these Jeanie paid little attention, so that it was with a shock of surprise almost electrical, that, upon being carried by the rowers out of the boat to the shore, she was received in the arms of her father!

It was too wonderful to be believed — too much like a happy dream to have the stable feeling of reality — She extricated herself from his close and affectionate embrace, and held him at arm's length, to satisfy her mind that it was no illusion. But the form was indisputable — Douce David Deans himself, in his best light-blue Sunday's coat, with broad metal-buttons, and waistcoat and breeches of the same, his strong gramashes or leggins of thick grey cloth — the very copper buckles — the broad Lowland blue bonnet, thrown back as he lifted his eyes to Heaven in speechless gratitude — the grey locks that straggled from beneath it down his weather-beaten "haffets" — the bald and furrowed forehead — the clear blue eye, that, undimmed by years, gleamed bright and pale from under its shaggy grey pent-house — the features, usually so stern and stoical, now melted into the unwonted expression of rapturous joy, affection, and gratitude — were all those of David Deans; and so happily did they assort together, that, should I ever again see my friends Wilkie or Allan, I will try to borrow or steal from them a sketch of this very scene.

"Jeanie — my ain Jeanie — my best — my maist dutiful bairn — the Lord of Israel be thy father, for I am hardly worthy of thee! Thou hast redeemed our captivity — brought back the honour of our house — Bless thee, my bairn, with mercies promised and purchased! — But He *has* blessed thee, in the good of which He has made thee the instrument."

These words broke from him not without tears, though David was of no melting mood. Archibald had, with delicate attention, withdrawn the spectators from the interview, so that the wood and setting sun alone were witnesses of the expansion of their feelings.

"And Effie? — and Effie, dear father!" was an eager interjectional question which Jeanie repeatedly threw in among her expressions of joyful thankfulness.

"Ye will hear — ye will hear," said David hastily, and ever and anon renewed his grateful acknowledgments to Heaven for sending Jeanie safe down from the land of prelatic deadness and schismatic heresy; and had delivered her from the dangers of the way, and the lions that were in the path.

"And Effie?" repeated her affectionate sister again and again. "And — and" — (fain would she have said Butler, but she modified the direct inquiry) — "and Mr and Mrs Saddletree — and Dumbiedikes — and a' friends?"

"A' weel — a' weel, praise to His name!"

"And — Mr Butler — he wasna weel when I gaed awa?"

"He is quite mended — quite weel," replied her father.

"Thank God — but O, dear father, Effie? — Effie?"

"You will never see her mair, my bairn," answered Deans in a solemn tone — "You are the ae and only leaf left now on the auld tree — heal be your portion!"

"She is dead! — She is slain! — It has come ower late!" exclaimed Jeanie, wringing her hands.

"No, Jeanie," returned Deans, in the same grave melancholy tone. "She lives in the flesh, and is at freedom from earthly restraint if she were as much alive in faith, and as free from the bonds of Satan."

"The Lord protect us!" said Jeanie.—"Can the unhappy bairn hae left you for that villain?"

"It is ower truly spoken," said Deans — "She has left her auld father, that has wept and prayed for her — She has left her sister, that travailed and toiled for her like a mother — She has left the bones of her mother, and the land of her people, and she is ower the march wi' that son of Belial — She has made a moonlight flitting of it." He paused, for a feeling betwixt sorrow and strong resentment choked his utterance.

"And wi' that man? — that fearfu' man?" said Jeanie. "And she has left us to gang aff wi' him? — O Effie, Effie, wha could hae thought it, after sic a deliverance as you had been gifted wi'!"

"She went out from us, my bairn, because she was not of us," replied David. "She is a withered branch will never bear fruit of grace — a scapegoat gone forth into the wilderness of the world, to carry wi' her, as I trust, the sins of our little congregation. The peace of the warld gang wi' her, and a better peace when she has the grace to turn to it! If she is of His elected, His ain hour will come. What would her mother have said, that famous and memorable matron, Rebecca MacNaught, whose memory is like a flower of sweet savour in Newbattle, and a pot of frankincense in Lugton? But be it sae — let her part — let her gang her gate — let her bite on her ain bridle — The Lord kens his time — She was the bairn of prayers, and may not prove an utter castaway. But never, Jeanie — never more let her name be spoken between you and me — She hath passed from us like the brook which vanisheth when the summer waxeth warm, as patient Job saith — let her pass, and be forgotten."

There was a melancholy pause which followed these expressions. Jeanie would fain have asked more circumstances relating to her sister's departure, but the tone of her father's prohibition was positive. She was about to mention her interview with Staunton at his father's rectory; but, on hastily running over the particulars in her memory, she thought that, on the whole, they were more likely to aggravate than diminish his distress of mind. She turned, therefore, the discourse from this painful subject, resolving to suspend farther inquiry until she should see Butler, from whom she expected to learn the particulars of her sister's elopement.

But when was she to see Butler? was a question she could not forbear asking herself, especially while her father, as if eager to escape from the subject of his youngest daughter, pointed to the opposite shore of Dunbartonshire, and asking Jeanie "if it werena a pleasant abode?" declared to her his intention of removing his earthly tabernacle to that country, "in respect he was solicited by his Grace the Duke of Argyle, as one well skilled in country labour, and a' that appertained to flocks and herds, to superintend a store-farm, whilk his Grace had taen into his ain hand for the improvement of stock."

Jeanie's heart sunk within her at this declaration. "She allowed it was a goodly and pleasant land, and sloped bonnily to the western sun; and she doubtedna that the pasture might be very gude, for the grass looked green, for as drouthy as the weather had been. But it was far frae hame, and she thought she wad be often thinking on the bonny spots of turf, sae fu' of gowans and yellow kingcups, amang the Crags at St Leonard's."

"Dinna speak on 't, Jeanie," said her father; "I wish never to hear it named mair — that is, after the rouping is ower, and the bills paid. But I brought a' the beasts ower-by that I thought ye wad like best. There is Gowans, and there 's your ain brockit cow, and the wee hawkit ane, that ye ca'd — I needna tell ye how ye ca'd it — but I couldna bid them sell the petted creature, though the sight o't may sometimes gie us a sair heart — it 's no the poor dumb creature's fault — And ane or twa beasts mair I hae reserved, and I caused them to be driven before the other beasts, that men might say, as when the son of Jesse returned from battle, 'This is David's spoil.'"

Upon more particular inquiry, Jeanie found new occasion to admire the active beneficence of her friend the Duke of Argyle. While establishing a sort of experimental farm on the skirts of his immense Highland estates, he had been somewhat at a loss to find a proper person in whom to vest the charge of it. The conversation his Grace had upon country matters with Jeanie Deans during their return from Richmond, had impressed him with a belief that the father, whose experience and success she so frequently quoted, must be exactly the sort of person whom he wanted. When the condition annexed to Effie's pardon rendered it highly probable that David Deans would choose to change his place of residence, this idea again occurred to the Duke more strongly, and as he was an enthusiast equally in agriculture and in benevolence, he imagined he was serving the purposes of both, when he wrote to the gentleman in Edinburgh intrusted with his affairs, to inquire into the character of David Deans, cowfeeder, and so forth, at St Leonard's Crags; and if he found him such as he had been represented, to engage him without delay, and on the most liberal terms, to superintend his fancy-farm in Dunbartonshire.

The proposal was made to old David by the gentleman so commissioned, on the second day after his daughter's pardon had reached Edinburgh. His resolution to leave St Leonard's had been already formed; the honour of an express invitation from the Duke of Argyle to superintend a department where so much skill and diligence was required, was in itself extremely flattering; and the more so, because honest David, who was not without an excellent opinion of his own talents, persuaded himself that, by accepting this charge, he would in some sort repay the great favour he had received at the hands of the Argyle family. The appointments, including the right of sufficient grazing for a small stock of his own, were amply liberal; and David's keen eye saw that the situation was convenient for trafficking to advantage in Highland cattle. There was risk of "her'ship"[1] from the neighbouring mountains, indeed, but the awful name of the Duke of Argyle would be a great security, and a trifle of *black-mail* would, David was aware, assure his safety.

Still, however, there were two points on which he haggled. The first was the character of the clergyman with whose worship he was to join; and on this delicate point he received, as we will presently shew the reader, perfect satisfaction. The next obstacle was the condition of his youngest daughter, obliged as she was to leave Scotland for so many years.

The gentleman of the law smiled, and said, "There was no occasion to interpret that clause very strictly — that if the young woman left Scotland for a few months, or even weeks, and came to her father's new residence by sea from the western side of England, nobody would know of her arrival, or at least nobody who had either the right or inclination to give her disturbance. The extensive heritable jurisdictions of his Grace excluded the interference of other magistrates with those living on his estates, and they who were in immediate dependence on him would receive orders to give the young woman no disturbance. Living on the verge of the Highlands, she might, indeed, be said to be out of Scotland, that is, beyond the bounds of ordinary law and civilisation."

Old Deans was not quite satisfied with this reasoning; but the elopement of Effie, which took place on the third night after her liberation, rendered his residence at St Leonard's so detestable to him, that he closed at once with the proposal which had been made him, and entered with pleasure into the idea of surprising Jeanie, as had been proposed by the Duke, to render the change of residence more striking to her. The Duke had apprised Archibald of these circumstances, with orders to act according to the instructions he should receive from Edinburgh, and by which accordingly he was directed to bring Jeanie to Roseneath.

The father and daughter communicated these matters to each other, now stopping, now walking slowly towards the Lodge, which shewed itself among the trees, at about half a mile's distance from the little bay in which they had landed.

As they approached the house, David Deans informed his daughter, with somewhat like a grim smile, which was the utmost advance he ever made towards a mirthful expression of visage, that "there was baith a worshipful gentleman, and ane reverend gentleman, residing therein. The worshipful gentleman was his honour the Laird of Knocktarlitie, who was bailie of the Lordship under the Duke of Argyle, ane Hieland gentleman, tarr'd wi' the same stick," David doubted, "as mony of them, namely, a hasty and choleric temper, and a neglect of the higher things that belong to salvation, and also a gripping unto the things of this world, without muckle distinction of property; but, however, ane gude hospitable gentleman, with whom it would be a part of wisdom to live on a gude understanding, (for Hielandmen were hasty, ower hasty.) As for the reverend person of whom he had spoken, he was candidate by favour of the Duke of Argyle (for David would not for the universe have called him presentee) for the kirk of the parish in which their farm was situated, and he was likely to be highly acceptable unto the Christian souls of the parish, who were hungering for spiritual manna, having

[1] Her'ship, a Scottish word which may be said to be now obsolete; because, fortunately, the practice of "plundering by armed force," which is its meaning, does not require to be commonly spoken of.

been fed but upon sour Hieland sowens by Mr Duncan MacDonought, the last minister, who began the morning duly, Sunday and Saturday, with a mutchkin of usquebaugh. But I need say the less about the present lad," said David, again grimly grimacing, "as I think ye may hae seen him afore; and here he is come to meet us."

She had indeed seen him before, for it was no other than Reuben Butler himself.

CHAPTER XLIII.

> No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face;
> Thou hast already had her last embrace.
> *Elegy on Mrs Anne Killigrew.*

This second surprise had been accomplished for Jeanie Deans by the rod of the same benevolent enchanter, whose power had transplanted her father from the Crags of St Leonard's to the banks of the Gare-Loch. The Duke of Argyle was not a person to forget the hereditary debt of gratitude, which had been bequeathed to him by his grandfather, in favour of the grandson of old Bible Butler. He had internally resolved to provide for Reuben Butler in this kirk of Knocktarlitie, of which the incumbent had just departed this life. Accordingly, his agent received the necessary instructions for that purpose, under the qualifying condition always, that the learning and character of Mr Butler should be found proper for the charge. Upon inquiry, these were found as highly satisfactory as had been reported in the case of David Deans himself.

By this preferment, the Duke of Argyle more essentially benefited his friend and protegée, Jeanie, than he himself was aware of, since he contributed to remove objections in her father's mind to the match, which he had no idea had been in existence.

We have already noticed that Deans had something of a prejudice against Butler, which was, perhaps, in some degree owing to his possessing a sort of consciousness, that the poor usher looked with eyes of affection upon his eldest daughter. This, in David's eyes, was a sin of presumption, even although it should not be followed by any overt act, or actual proposal. But the lively interest which Butler had displayed in his distresses, since Jeanie set forth on her London expedition, and which, therefore, he ascribed to personal respect for himself individually, had greatly softened the feelings of irritability with which David had sometimes regarded him. And, while he was in this good disposition towards Butler, another incident took place which had great influence on the old man's mind.

So soon as the shock of Effie's second elopement was over, it was Deans's early care to collect and refund to the Laird of Dumbiedikes the money which he had lent for Effie's trial, and for Jeanie's travelling expenses. The Laird, the pony, the cocked hat, and the tobacco-pipe, had not been seen at St Leonard's Crags for many a day; so that, in order to pay this debt, David was under the necessity of repairing in person to the mansion of Dumbiedikes.

He found it in a state of unexpected bustle. There were workmen pulling down some of the old hangings, and replacing them with others, altering, repairing, scrubbing, painting, and white-washing. There was no knowing the old house, which had been so long the mansion of sloth and silence. The Laird himself seemed in some confusion, and his reception, though kind, lacked something of the reverential cordiality with which he used to greet David Deans. There was a change also, David did not very well know of what nature, about the exterior of this landed proprietor — an improvement in the shape of his garments, a spruceness in the air with which they were put on, that were both novelties. Even the old hat looked smarter; the cock had been newly pointed, the lace had been refreshed, and instead of slouching backward or forward on the Laird's head, as it happened to be thrown on, it was adjusted with a knowing inclination over one eye.

David Deans opened his business, and told down the cash. Dumbiedikes steadily inclined his ear to the one, and counted the other with great accuracy, interrupting David, while he was talking of the redemption of the captivity of Judah, to ask him whether he did not think one or two of the guineas looked rather light. When he was satisfied on this point, had pocketed his money, and had signed a receipt, he addressed David with some little hesitation, — "Jeanie wad be writing ye something, gudeman?"

"About the siller?" replied David — "Nae doubt, she did."

"And did she say nae mair about me?" asked the Laird.

"Nae mair but kind and Christian wishes — what suld she hae said?" replied David, fully expecting that the Laird's long courtship (if his dangling after Jeanie deserves so active a name) was now coming to a point. And so indeed it was, but not to that point which he wished or expected.

"Aweel, she kens her ain mind best, gudeman. I hae made a clean house o' Jenny Balchristie, and her niece. They were a bad pack — steal'd meat and mault, and loot the carters magg the coals — I 'm to be married the morn, and kirkit on Sunday."

Whatever David felt, he was too proud and too steady-minded to shew any unpleasant surprise in his countenance and manner.

"I wuss ye happy, sir, through Him that gies happiness — marriage is an honourable state."

"And I am wedding into an honourable house, David — the Laird of Lickpelf's youngest daughter — she sits next us in the kirk, and that 's the way I came to think on 't."

There was no more to be said, but again to wish the Laird joy, to taste a cup of his liquor, and to walk back again to St Leonard's, musing on the mutability of human affairs and human resolutions. The expectation that one day or other Jeanie would be Lady Dumbiedikes, had, in spite of himself, kept a more absolute possession of David's mind than he himself was aware of. At least, it had hitherto seemed a union at all times within his daughter's reach, whenever she might choose to give her silent lover any degree of encouragement, and now it was vanished for ever. David returned, therefore, in no very gracious humour for so good a man. He was angry with Jeanie for not having encouraged the Laird — he was angry

with the Laird for requiring encouragement—and he was angry with himself for being angry at all on the occasion.

On his return he found the gentleman who managed the Duke of Argyle's affairs was desirous of seeing him, with a view to completing the arrangement between them. Thus, after a brief repose, he was obliged to set off anew for Edinburgh, so that old May Hettly declared, "That a' this was to end with the master just walking himself aff his feet."

When the business respecting the farm had been talked over and arranged, the professional gentleman acquainted David Deans, in answer to his inquiries concerning the state of public worship, that it was the pleasure of the Duke to put an excellent young clergyman, called Reuben Butler, into the parish, which was to be his future residence.

"Reuben Butler!" exclaimed David—"Reuben Butler, the usher at Libberton?"

"The very same," said the Duke's commissioner; "his Grace has heard an excellent character of him, and has some hereditary obligations to him besides—few ministers will be so comfortable as I am directed to make Mr Butler."

"Obligations?—The Duke?—Obligations to Reuben Butler—Reuben Butler a placed minister of the Kirk of Scotland!" exclaimed David, in interminable astonishment, for somehow he had been led by the bad success which Butler had hitherto met with in all his undertakings, to consider him as one of those step-sons of Fortune, whom she treats with unceasing rigour, and ends with disinheriting altogether.

There is, perhaps, no time at which we are disposed to think so highly of a friend, as when we find him standing higher than we expected in the esteem of others. When assured of the reality of Butler's change of prospects, David expressed his great satisfaction at his success in life, which, he observed, was entirely owing to himself (David.) "I advised his puir grandmother, who was but a silly woman, to breed him up to the ministry; and I prophesied that, with a blessing on his endeavours, he would become a polished shaft in the temple. He may be something ower proud o' his carnal learning, but a gude lad, and has the root of the matter—as ministers gang now, where ye 'll find ane better, ye 'll find ten waur, than Reuben Butler."

He took leave of the man of business, and walked homeward, forgetting his weariness in the various speculations to which this wonderful piece of intelligence gave rise. Honest David had now, like other great men, to go to work to reconcile his speculative principles with existing circumstances; and, like other great men, when they set seriously about that task, he was tolerably successful.

Ought Reuben Butler in conscience to accept of this preferment in the Kirk of Scotland, subject as David at present thought that establishment was to the Erastian encroachments of the civil power? This was the leading question, and he considered it carefully. "The Kirk of Scotland was shorn of its beams, and deprived of its full artillery and banners of authority; but still it contained zealous and fructifying pastors, attentive congregations, and, with all her spots and blemishes, the like of this Kirk was nowhere else to be seen upon earth."

David's doubts had been too many and too critical to permit him ever unequivocally to unite himself with any of the dissenters, who, upon various accounts, absolutely seceded from the national church. He had often joined in communion with such of the established clergy as approached nearest to the old Presbyterian model and principles of 1640. And although there were many things to be amended in that system, yet he remembered that he, David Deans, had himself ever been a humble pleader for the good old cause in a legal way, but without rushing into right-hand excesses, divisions, and separations. But, as an enemy to separation, he might join the right-hand of fellowship with a minister of the Kirk of Scotland in its present model. *Ergo*, Reuben Butler might take possession of the parish of Knocktarlitie, without forfeiting his friendship or favour—Q. E. D. But, secondly, came the trying point of lay-patronage, which David Deans had ever maintained to be a coming in by the window, and over the wall, a cheating and starving the souls of a whole parish, for the purpose of clothing the back and filling the belly of the incumbent.

This presentation, therefore, from the Duke of Argyle, whatever was the worth and high character of that nobleman, was a limb of the brazen image, a portion of the evil thing, and with no kind of consistency could David bend his mind to favour such a transaction. But if the parishioners themselves joined in a general call to Reuben Butler to be their pastor, it did not seem quite so evident that the existence of this unhappy presentation was a reason for his refusing them the comforts of his doctrine. If the presbytery admitted him to the kirk, in virtue rather of that act of patronage than of the general call of the congregation, that might be their error, and David allowed it was a heavy one. But if Reuben Butler accepted of the cure as tendered to him by those whom he was called to teach, and who had expressed themselves desirous to learn, David, after considering and reconsidering the matter, came, through the great virtue of IF, to be of opinion that he might safely so act in that matter.

There remained a third stumbling-block—the oaths to government exacted from the established clergymen, in which they acknowledge an Erastian king and parliament, and homologate the incorporating Union between England and Scotland, through which the latter kingdom had become part and portion of the former, wherein Prelacy, the sister of Popery, had made fast her throne, and elevated the horns of her mitre. These were symptoms of defection which had often made David cry out, "My bowels—my bowels!—I am pained at the very heart!" And he remembered that a godly Bow-head matron had been carried out of the Tolbooth Church in a swoon, beyond the reach of brandy and burnt feathers, merely on hearing these fearful words, "It is enacted by the Lords *spiritual* and temporal," pronounced from a Scottish pulpit, in the proem to the Porteous Proclamation. These oaths were, therefore, a deep compliance and dire abomination—a sin and a snare, and a danger and a defection. But this shibboleth was not always exacted. Ministers had respect to their own tender consciences, and those of their brethren; and it was not till a later period that the reins of discipline were taken up

tight by the General Assemblies and Presbyteries. The peace-making particle came again to David's assistance. *If* an incumbent was not called upon to make such compliances, and *if* he got a right entry into the church without intrusion, and by orderly appointment, why, upon the whole, David Deans came to be of opinion, that the said incumbent might lawfully enjoy the spirituality and temporality of the cure of souls at Knocktarlitie, with stipend, manse, glebe, and all thereunto appertaining.

The best and most upright-minded men are so strongly influenced by existing circumstances, that it would be somewhat cruel to inquire too nearly what weight paternal affection gave to these ingenious trains of reasoning. Let David Deans's situation be considered. He was just deprived of one daughter, and his eldest, to whom he owed so much, was cut off, by the sudden resolution of Dumbiedikes, from the high hope which David had entertained, that she might one day be mistress of that fair lordship. Just while this disappointment was bearing heavy on his spirits, Butler comes before his imagination — no longer the half-starved threadbare usher, but fat and sleek and fair, the beneficed minister of Knocktarlitie, beloved by his congregation — exemplary in his life — powerful in his doctrine — doing the duty of the kirk as never Highland minister did before — turning sinners as a colley dog turns sheep — a favourite of the Duke of Argyle, and drawing a stipend of eight hundred punds Scots, and four chalders of victual. Here was a match, making up, in David's mind, in a tenfold degree, the disappointment in the case of Dumbiedikes, in so far as the Goodman of St Leonard's held a powerful minister in much greater admiration than a mere landed proprietor. It did not occur to him, as an additional reason in favour of the match, that Jeanie might herself have some choice in the matter; for the idea of consulting her feelings never once entered into the honest man's head, any more than the possibility that her inclination might perhaps differ from his own.

The result of his meditations was, that he was called upon to take the management of the whole affair into his own hand, and give, if it should be found possible without sinful compliance, or backsliding, or defection of any kind, a worthy pastor to the kirk of Knocktarlitie. Accordingly, by the intervention of the honest dealer in butter-milk who dwelt in Libberton, David summoned to his presence Reuben Butler. Even from this worthy messenger he was unable to conceal certain swelling emotions of dignity, insomuch, that, when the carter had communicated his message to the usher, he added, that "Certainly the Gudeman of St Leonard's had some grand news to tell him, for he was as uplifted as a midden-cock upon pattens."

Butler, it may readily be conceived, immediately obeyed the summons. He was a plain character, in which worth and good sense and simplicity were the principal ingredients; but love, on this occasion, gave him a certain degree of address. He had received an intimation of the favour designed him by the Duke of Argyle, with what feelings those only can conceive, who have experienced a sudden prospect of being raised to independence and respect, from penury and toil. He resolved, however, that the old man should retain all the consequence of being, in his own opinion, the first to communicate the important intelligence. At the same time, he also determined that in the expected conference he would permit David Deans to expatiate at length upon the proposal, in all its bearings, without irritating him either by interruption or contradiction. This last was the most prudent plan he could have adopted; because, although there were many doubts which David Deans could himself clear up to his own satisfaction, yet he might have been by no means disposed to accept the solution of any other person; and to engage him in an argument would have been certain to confirm him at once and for ever in the opinion which Butler chanced to impugn.

He received his friend with an appearance of important gravity, which real misfortune had long compelled him to lay aside, and which belonged to those days of awful authority in which he predominated over Widow Butler, and dictated the mode of cultivating the crofts of Beersheba. He made known to Reuben, with great prolixity, the prospect of his changing his present residence for the charge of the Duke of Argyle's stock-farm in Dunbartonshire, and enumerated the various advantages of the situation with obvious self-congratulation; but assured the patient hearer, that nothing had so much moved him to acceptance, as the sense that, by his skill in bestial, he could render the most important services to his Grace the Duke of Argyle, to whom, "in the late unhappy circumstance," (here a tear dimmed the sparkle of pride in the old man's eye,) "he had been sae muckle obliged."

"To put a rude Hielandman into sic a charge," he continued, "what could be expected but that he suld be sic a chiefest herdsman, as wicked Doeg the Edomite? whereas, while this grey head is to the fore, not a clute o' them but sall be as weel cared for as if they were the fatted kine of Pharaoh. — And now, Reuben, lad, seeing we maun remove our tent to a strange country, ye will be casting a dolefu' look after us, and thinking with whom ye are to hold counsel anent your government in thae slippery and backsliding times; and nae doubt remembering, that the auld man, David Deans, was made the instrument to bring you out of the mire of schism and heresy, wherein your father's house delighted to wallow; aften also, nae doubt, when ye are pressed wi' ensnaring trials and tentations and heart-plagues, you, that are like a recruit that is marching for the first time to the took of drum, will miss the auld, bauld, and experienced veteran soldier that has felt the brunt of mony a foul day, and heard the bullets whistle as aften as he has hairs left on his auld pow."

It is very possible that Butler might internally be of opinion, that the reflection on his ancestor's peculiar tenets might have been spared, or that he might be presumptuous enough even to think, that, at his years and with his own lights, he might be able to hold his course without the pilotage of honest David. But he only replied, by expressing his regret, that any thing should separate him from an ancient, tried, and affectionate friend.

"But how can it be helped, man?" said David, twisting his features into a sort of smile — "How can we help it? — I trow ye canna tell me that — Ye maun leave that to ither folk — to the Duke of Argyle and me, Reuben. It's a gude thing to

hae friends in this warld — how muckle better to hae an interest beyond it!"

And David, whose piety, though not always quite rational, was as sincere as it was habitual and fervent, looked reverentially upward and paused. Mr Butler intimated the pleasure with which he would receive his friend's advice on a subject so important, and David resumed.

"What think ye now, Reuben, of a kirk — a regular kirk under the present establishment? — Were sic offered to ye, wad ye be free to accept it, and under whilk provisions? — I am speaking but by way of query."

Butler replied, "That if such a prospect were held out to him, he would probably first consult whether he was likely to be useful to the parish he should be called to; and if there appeared a fair prospect of his proving so, his friend must be aware, that, in every other point of view, it would be highly advantageous for him."

"Right, Reuben, very right, lad," answered the monitor, "your ain conscience is the first thing to be satisfied — for how sall he teach others that has himsell sae ill learned the Scriptures, as to grip for the lucre of foul earthly preferment, sic as gear and manse, money and victual, that which is not his in a spiritual sense — or wha makes his kirk a stalking-horse, from behind which he may tak aim at his stipend? But I look for better things of you — and specially ye maun be minded not to act altogether on your ain judgment, for therethrough comes sair mistakes, backslidings, and defections, on the left and on the right. If there were sic a day of trial put to you, Reuben, you, who are a young lad, although it may be ye are gifted wi' the carnal tongues, and those whilk are spoken at Rome, whilk is now the seat of the scarlet abomination, and by the Greeks, to whom the Gospel was as foolishness, yet nae-the-less ye may be entreated by your weelwisher to take the counsel of those prudent and resolved and weather-withstanding professors, wha hae kend what it was to lurk on banks and in mosses, in bogs and in caverns, and to risk the peril of the head rather than renunce the honesty of the heart."

Butler replied, "That certainly, possessing such a friend as he hoped and trusted he had in the goodman himself, who had seen so many changes in the preceding century, he should be much to blame if he did not avail himsell of his experience and friendly counsel."

"Eneugh said — eneugh said, Reuben," said David Deans, with internal exultation; "and say that ye were in the predicament whereof I hae spoken, of a surety I would deem it my duty to gang to the root o' the matter, and lay bare to you the ulcers and imposthumes, and the sores and the leprosies, of this our time, crying aloud and sparing not."

David Deans was now in his element. He commenced his examination of the doctrines and belief of the Christian Church with the very Culdees, from whom he passed to John Knox, — from John Knox to the recusants in James the Sixth's time, — Bruce, Black, Blair, Livingstone, — from them to the brief, and at length triumphant period of the presbyterian church's splendour, until it was overrun by the English Independents. Then followed the dismal times of prelacy, the indulgences, seven in number, with all their shades and bearings, until he arrived at the reign of King James the Second, in which he himself had been, in his own mind, neither an obscure actor nor an obscure sufferer. Then was Butler doomed to hear the most detailed and annotated edition of what he had so often heard before, — David Deans's confinement, namely, in the iron cage in the Canongate Tolbooth, and the cause thereof.

We should be very unjust to our friend David Deans, if we should "pretermit" — to use his own expression — a narrative which he held essential to his fame. A drunken trooper of the Royal Guards, Francis Gordon by name, had chased five or six of the skulking Whigs, among whom was our friend David; and after he had compelled them to stand, and was in the act of brawling with them, one of their number fired a pocket-pistol, and shot him dead. David used to sneer and shake his head when any one asked him whether *he* had been the instrument of removing this wicked persecutor from the face of the earth. In fact, the merit of the deed lay between him and his friend, Patrick Walker, the pedlar, whose works he was so fond of quoting. Neither of them cared directly to claim the merit of silencing Mr Francis Gordon of the Life-Guards, there being some wild cousins of his about Edinburgh, who might have been even yet addicted to revenge, but yet neither of them chose to disown or yield to the other the merit of this active defence of their religious rites. David said, that if he had fired a pistol then, it was what he never did after or before. And as for Mr Patrick Walker, he has left it upon record, that his great surprise was, that so small a pistol could kill so big a man. These are the words of that venerable biographer, whose trade had not taught him by experience, that an inch was as good as an ell. "He" (Francis Gordon) "got a shot in his head out of a pocket-pistol, rather fit for diverting a boy than killing such a furious, mad, brisk man, which notwithstanding killed him dead!"[1]

Upon the extensive foundation which the history of the kirk afforded, during its short-lived triumph and long tribulation, David, with length of breath and of narrative, which would have astounded any one but a lover of his daughter, proceeded to lay down his own rules for guiding the conscience of his friend, as an aspirant to serve in the ministry. Upon this subject, the good man went through such a variety of nice and casuistical problems, supposed so many extreme cases, made the distinctions so critical and nice betwixt the right-hand and the left-hand — betwixt compliance and defection — holding back and stepping aside — slipping and stumbling — snares and errors — that at length, after having limited the path of truth to a mathematical line, he was brought to the broad admission, that each man's conscience, after he had gained a certain view of the difficult navigation which he was to encounter, would be the best guide for his pilotage. He stated the examples and arguments for and against the acceptance of a kirk on the present revolution model, with much more impartiality to Butler than he had been able to place them before his own view. And he concluded, that his young friend ought to think upon these things, and be guided by the voice of his own conscience, whether he could

[1] See Note Z. *Death of Francis Gordon.*

take such an awful trust as the charge of souls, without doing injury to his own internal conviction of what is right or wrong.

When David had finished his very long harangue, which was only interrupted by monosyllables, or little more, on the part of Butler, the orator himself was greatly astonished to find that the conclusion, at which he very naturally wished to arrive, seemed much less decisively attained than when he had argued the case in his own mind.

In this particular, David's current of thinking and speaking only illustrated the very important and general proposition, concerning the excellence of the publicity of debate. For, under the influence of any partial feeling, it is certain, that most men can more easily reconcile themselves to any favourite measure, when agitating it in their own mind, than when obliged to expose its merits to a third party, when the necessity of seeming impartial procures for the opposite arguments a much more fair statement than that which he affords it in tacit meditation. Having finished what he had to say, David thought himself obliged to be more explicit in point of fact, and to explain that this was no hypothetical case, but one on which (by his own influence and that of the Duke of Argyle) Reuben Butler would soon be called to decide.

It was even with something like apprehension that David Deans heard Butler announce, in return to this communication, that he would take that night to consider on what he had said with such kind intentions, and return him an answer the next morning. The feelings of the father mastered David on this occasion. He pressed Butler to spend the evening with him—He produced, most unusual at his meals, one, nay, two bottles of aged strong ale. —He spoke of his daughter—of her merits—her housewifery—her thrift—her affection. He led Butler so decidedly up to a declaration of his feelings towards Jeanie, that, before nightfall, it was distinctly understood she was to be the bride of Reuben Butler; and if they thought it indelicate to abridge the period of deliberation which Reuben had stipulated, it seemed to be sufficiently understood betwixt them, that there was a strong probability of his becoming minister of Knocktarlitie, providing the congregation were as willing to accept of him, as the Duke to grant him the presentation. The matter of the oaths, they agreed, it was time enough to dispute about, whenever the shibboleth should be tendered.

Many arrangements were adopted that evening, which were afterwards ripened by correspondence with the Duke of Argyle's man of business, who intrusted Deans and Butler with the benevolent wish of his principal, that they should all meet with Jeanie, on her return from England, at the Duke's hunting-lodge in Roseneath.

This retrospect, so far as the placid loves of Jeanie Deans and Reuben Butler are concerned, forms a full explanation of the preceding narrative up to their meeting on the island as already mentioned.

CHAPTER XLIV.

> "I come," he said "my love, my life,
> And — nature's dearest name — my wife:
> Thy father's house and friends resign,
> My home, my friends, my sire, are thine."
> LOGAN.

THE meeting of Jeanie and Butler, under circumstances promising to crown an affection so long delayed, was rather affecting from its simple sincerity than from its uncommon vehemence of feeling. David Deans, whose practice was sometimes a little different from his theory, appalled them at first, by giving them the opinion of sundry of the suffering preachers and champions of his younger days, that marriage, though honourable by the laws of Scripture, was yet a state over-rashly coveted by professors, and specially by young ministers, whose desire, he said, was at whiles too inordinate for kirks, stipends, and wives, which had frequently occasioned over-ready compliance with the general defections of the times. He endeavoured to make them aware also, that hasty wedlock had been the bane of many a savoury professor—that the unbelieving wife had too often reversed the text, and perverted the believing husband—that when the famous Donald Cargill, being then hiding in Lee-Wood, in Lanarkshire, it being killing-time, did, upon importunity, marry Robert Marshal of Starry Shaw, he had thus expressed himself: "What hath induced Robert to marry this woman? her ill will overcome his good—he will not keep the way long—his thriving days are done." To the sad accomplishment of which prophecy David said he was himself a living witness, for Robert Marshal, having fallen into foul compliances with the enemy, went home, and heard the curates, declined into other steps of defection, and became lightly esteemed. Indeed, he observed, that the great upholders of the standard, Cargill, Peden, Cameron, and Renwick, had less delight in tying the bonds of matrimony than in any other piece of their ministerial work; and although they would neither dissuade the parties, nor refuse their office, they considered the being called to it as an evidence of indifference, on the part of those between whom it was solemnized, to the many grievous things of the day. Notwithstanding, however, that marriage was a snare unto many, David was of opinion (as, indeed, he had shewed in his practice) that it was in itself honourable, especially if times were such that honest men could be secure against being shot, hanged, or banished, and had ane competent livelihood to maintain themselves, and those that might come after them. "And, therefore," as he concluded something abruptly, addressing Jeanie and Butler, who, with faces as high-coloured as crimson, had been listening to his lengthened argument for and against the holy state of matrimony, "I will leave you to your ain cracks."

As their private conversation, however interesting to themselves, might probably be very little so to the reader, so far as it respected their present feelings and future prospects, we shall pass it over, and only mention the information which Jeanie received from Butler concerning her sister's elopement, which contained many particulars that she had been unable to extract from her father.

Jeanie learned, therefore, that, for three days

after her pardon had arrived, Effie had been the inmate of her father's house at St Leonard's — that the interviews betwixt David and his erring child, which had taken place before she was liberated from prison, had been touching in the extreme; but Butler could not suppress his opinion, that, when he was freed from the apprehension of losing her in a manner so horrible, her father had tightened the bands of discipline, so as, in some degree, to gall the feelings and aggravate the irritability of a spirit naturally impatient and petulant, and now doubly so from the sense of merited disgrace.

On the third night, Effie disappeared from St Leonard's, leaving no intimation whatever of the route she had taken. Butler, however, set out in pursuit of her, and with much trouble traced her towards a little landing-place, formed by a small brook which enters the sea betwixt Musselburgh and Edinburgh. This place, which has been since made into a small harbour, surrounded by many villas and lodging-houses, is now termed Portobello. At this time it was surrounded by a waste common, covered with furze, and unfrequented, save by fishing-boats, and now and then a smuggling lugger. A vessel of this description had been hovering in the firth at the time of Effie's elopement, and, as Butler ascertained, a boat had come ashore in the evening on which the fugitive had disappeared, and had carried on board a female. As the vessel made sail immediately, and landed no part of their cargo, there seemed little doubt that they were accomplices of the notorious Robertson, and that the vessel had only come into the firth to carry off his paramour.

This was made clear by a letter which Butler himself soon afterwards received by post, signed E. D., but without bearing any date of place or time. It was miserably ill written and spelt; sea-sickness having apparently aided the derangement of Effie's very irregular orthography and mode of expression. In this epistle, however, as in all that that unfortunate girl said or did, there was something to praise as well as to blame. She said in her letter, "That she could not endure that her father and her sister should go into banishment, or be partakers of her shame — that if her burden was a heavy one, it was of her own binding, and she had the more right to bear it alone, — that in future they could not be a comfort to her, or she to them, since every look and word of her father put her in mind of her transgression, and was like to drive her mad, — that she had nearly lost her judgment during the three days she was at St Leonard's — her father meant weel by her, and all men, but he did not know the dreadful pain he gave her in casting up her sins. If Jeanie had been at hame, it might hae dune better — Jeanie was ane, like the angels in heaven, that rather weep for sinners, than reckon their transgressions. But she should never see Jeanie ony mair, and that was the thought that gave her the sairest heart of a' that had come and gane yet. On her bended knees would she pray for Jeanie, night and day, baith for what she had done, and what she had scorned to do, in her behalf; for what a thought would it have been to her at that moment o' time, if that upright creature had made a fault to save her! She desired her father would give Jeanie a' the gear — her ain (*i. e.* Effie's) mother's and a' — She had made a deed, giving up her right, and it was in Mr Novit's hand — Warld's gear was henceforward the least of her care, nor was it likely to be muckle her mister — She hoped this would make it easy for her sister to settle;" and immediately after this expression, she wished Butler himself all good things, in return for his kindness to her. "For herself," she said, "she kend her lot would be a waesome ane, but it was of her own framing, sae she desired the less pity. But, for her friends' satisfaction, she wished them to know that she was gaun nae ill gate — that they who had done her maist wrong were now willing to do her what justice was in their power; and she would, in some warldly respects, be far better off than she deserved. But she desired her family to remain satisfied with this assurance, and give themselves no trouble in making farther inquiries after her."

To David Deans and to Butler this letter gave very little comfort; for what was to be expected from this unfortunate girl's uniting her fate to that of a character so notorious as Robertson, who they readily guessed was alluded to in the last sentence, excepting that she should become the partner and victim of his future crimes. Jeanie, who knew George Staunton's character and real rank, saw her sister's situation under a ray of better hope. She augured well of the haste he had shewn to reclaim his interest in Effie, and she trusted he had made her his wife. If so, it seemed improbable that, with his expected fortune, and high connections, he should again resume the life of criminal adventure which he had led, especially since, as matters stood, his life depended upon his keeping his own secret, which could only be done by an entire change of his habits, and particularly by avoiding all those who had known the heir of Willingham under the character of the audacious, criminal, and condemned Robertson.

She thought it most likely that the couple would go abroad for a few years, and not return to England until the affair of Porteous was totally forgotten. Jeanie, therefore, saw more hopes for her sister than Butler or her father had been able to perceive; but she was not at liberty to impart the comfort which she felt in believing that she would be secure from the pressure of poverty, and in little risk of being seduced into the paths of guilt. She could not have explained this without making public what it was essentially necessary for Effie's chance of comfort to conceal, the identity, namely, of George Staunton and George Robertson. After all, it was dreadful to think that Effie had united herself to a man condemned for felony, and liable to trial for murder, whatever might be his rank in life, and the degree of his repentance. Besides, it was melancholy to reflect, that, she herself being in possession of the whole dreadful secret, it was most probable he would, out of regard to his own feelings, and fear for his safety, never again permit her to see poor Effie. After perusing and re-perusing her sister's valedictory letter, she gave ease to her feelings in a flood of tears, which Butler in vain endeavoured to check by every soothing attention in his power. She was obliged, however, at length to look up and wipe her eyes, for her father, thinking he had allowed the lovers time enough for conference, was now advancing towards them from the Lodge, accompanied by the Captain of Knockdunder, or, as his friends called him for brevity's sake, Duncan Knock, a title which some youthful exploits had rendered peculiarly appropriate.

This Duncan of Knockdunder was a person of first-rate importance in the island of Roseneath, and

the continental parishes of Knocktarlitie, Kilmun, and so forth; nay, his influence extended as far as Cowal, where, however, it was obscured by that of another factor. The Tower of Knockdunder still occupies, with its remains, a cliff overhanging the Holy Loch. Duncan swore it had been a royal castle; if so, it was one of the smallest, the space within only forming a square of sixteen feet, and bearing therefore a ridiculous proportion to the thickness of the walls, which was ten feet at least. Such as it was, however, it had long given the title of Captain, equivalent to that of Chatellain, to the ancestors of Duncan, who were retainers of the house of Argyle, and held a hereditary jurisdiction under them, of little extent indeed, but which had great consequence in their own eyes, and was usually administered with a vigour somewhat beyond the law.

The present representative of that ancient family was a stout short man about fifty, whose pleasure it was to unite in his own person the dress of the Highlands and Lowlands, wearing on his head a black tie-wig, surmounted by a fierce cocked-hat, deeply guarded with gold lace, while the rest of his dress consisted of the plaid and philabeg. Duncan superintended a district which was partly Highland, partly Lowland, and therefore might be supposed to combine their national habits, in order to shew his impartiality to Trojan or Tyrian. The incongruity, however, had a whimsical and ludicrous effect, as it made his head and body look as if belonging to different individuals; or, as some one said who had seen the executions of the insurgent prisoners in 1715, it seemed as if some Jacobite enchanter, having recalled the sufferers to life, had clapped, in his haste, an Englishman's head on a Highlander's body. To finish the portrait, the bearing of the gracious Duncan was brief, bluff, and consequential, and the upward turn of his short copper-coloured nose indicated that he was somewhat addicted to wrath and usquebaugh.

When this dignitary had advanced up to Butler and to Jeanie, "I take the freedom, Mr Deans," he said, in a very consequential manner, "to salute your daughter, whilk I presume this young lass to be—I kiss every pretty girl that comes to Roseneath, in virtue of my office." Having made this gallant speech, he took out his quid, saluted Jeanie with a hearty smack, and bade her welcome to Argyle's country. Then addressing Butler, he said, "Ye maun gang ower and meet the carle ministers yonder the morn, for they will want to do your job, and synd it down with usquebaugh doubtless—they seldom make dry wark in this kintra."

"And the Laird"—said David Deans, addressing Butler in farther explanation,——

"The Captain, man," interrupted Duncan; "folk winna ken wha ye are speaking aboot, unless ye gie shentlemens their proper title."

"The Captain, then," said David, "assures me that the call is unanimous on the part of the parishioners—a real harmonious call, Reuben."

"I pelieve," said Duncan, "it was as harmonious as could pe expected, when the tae half o' the bodies were clavering Sassenach, and the t'other skirling Gaelic, like sea-maws and clackgeese before a storm. Ane wad hae needed the gift of tongues to ken preceesly what they said—but I pelieve the best end of it was, 'Long Live MacCallummore and Knockdunder!'—And as to its being an unanimous call, I wad be glad to ken fat business the carles have to call ony thing or ony body but what the Duke and mysell likes?"

"Nevertheless," said Mr Butler, "if any of the parishioners have any scruples, which sometimes happen in the mind of sincere professors, I should be happy of an opportunity of trying to remove——"

"Never fash your peard about it, man," interrupted Duncan Knock—"Leave it a' to me.—Scruple! deil ane o' them has been bred up to scruple ony thing that they 're bidden to do. And if sic a thing suld happen as ye speak o' ye sall see the sincere professor, as ye ca' him, towed at the stern of my boat for a few furlongs. I 'll try if the water of the Haly Loch winna wash off scruples as weel as fleas—Cot tam!——"

The rest of Duncan's threat was lost in a growling gurgling sort of sound, which he made in his throat, and which menaced recusants with no gentle means of conversion. David Deans would certainly have given battle in defence of the right of the Christian congregation to be consulted in the choice of their own pastor, which, in his estimation, was one of the choicest and most inalienable of their privileges; but he had again engaged in close conversation with Jeanie, and, with more interest than he was in use to take in affairs foreign alike to his occupation and to his religious tenets, was inquiring into the particulars of her London journey. This was, perhaps, fortunate for the new-formed friendship betwixt him and the Captain of Knockdunder, which rested, in David's estimation, upon the proofs he had given of his skill in managing stock; but, in reality, upon the special charge transmitted to Duncan from the Duke and his agent, to behave with the utmost attention to Deans and his family.

"And now, sirs," said Duncan, in a commanding tone, "I am to pray ye a' to come in to your supper, for yonder is Mr Archibald half famished, and a Saxon woman, that looks as if her een were fleeing out o' her head wi' fear and wonder, as if she had never seen a shentleman in a philabeg pefore."

"And Reuben Butler," said David, "will doubtless desire instantly to retire, that he may prepare his mind for the exercise of to-morrow, that his work may suit the day, and be an offering of a sweet savour in the nostrils of the reverend presbytery."

"Hout tout, man, it 's but little ye ken about them," interrupted the Captain. "Teil a ane o' them wad gie the savour of the hot venison pasty which I smell" (turning his squab nose up in the air) "a' the way frae the Lodge, for a' that Mr Putler, or you either, can say to them."

David groaned; but judging he had to do with a Gallio, as he said, did not think it worth his while to give battle. They followed the Captain to the house, and arranged themselves with great ceremony round a well-loaded supper-table. The only other circumstance of the evening worthy to be recorded is, that Butler pronounced the blessing; that Knockdunder found it too long, and David Deans censured it as too short, from which the charitable reader may conclude it was exactly the proper length.

CHAPTER XLV.

Now turn the Psalms of David ower,
And lilt wi' holy clangor;
Of double verse come gie us four,
And skirl up the Bangor.

BURNS.

THE next was the important day, when, according to the forms and ritual of the Scottish Kirk, Reuben Butler was to be ordained minister of Knocktarlitie by the Presbytery of ——. And so eager were the whole party, that all, excepting Mrs Dutton, the destined Cowslip of Inverary, were stirring at an early hour.

Their host, whose appetite was as quick and keen as his temper, was not long in summoning them to a substantial breakfast, where there were at least a dozen of different preparations of milk, plenty of cold meat, scores boiled and roasted eggs, a huge cag of butter, half a firkin herrings boiled and broiled, fresh and salt, and tea and coffee for them that liked it, which, as their landlord assured them, with a nod and a wink, pointing, at the same time, to a little cutter which seemed dodging under the lee of the island, cost them little beside the fetching ashore.

"Is the contraband trade permitted here so openly?" said Butler. "I should think it very unfavourable to the people's morals."

"The Duke, Mr Putler, has gien nae orders concerning the putting of it down," said the magistrate, and seemed to think that he had said all that was necessary to justify his connivance.

Butler was a man of prudence, and aware that real good can only be obtained by remonstrance when remonstrance is well-timed; so for the present he said nothing more on the subject.

When breakfast was half over, in flounced Mrs Dolly, as fine as a blue sacque and cherry-coloured ribands could make her.

"Good-morrow to you, madam," said the master of ceremonies; "I trust your early rising will not skaith ye."

The dame apologized to Captain Knockunder, as she was pleased to term their entertainer; "but, as we say in Cheshire," she added, "I was like the Mayor of Altringham, who lies in bed while his breeches are mending, for the girl did not bring up the right bundle to my room, till she had brought up all the others by mistake one after t'other.—Well, I suppose we are all for church to-day, as I understand—Pray may I be so bold as to ask, if it is the fashion for you North-country gentlemen to go to church in your petticoats, Captain Knockunder?"

"Captain of Knockdunder, madam, if you please, for I knock under to no man; and in respect of my garb, I shall go to church as I am, at your service, madam; for if I were to lie in bed like your Major What-d'ye-callum, till my preeches were mended, I might be there all my life, seeing I never had a pair of them on my person but twice in my life, which I am pound to remember, it peing when the Duke brought his Duchess here, when her grace pehoved to be pleasured; so I e'en porrowed the minister's trews for the twa days his Grace was pleased to stay—but I will put myself under sic confinement again for no man on earth, or woman either, but her Grace being always excepted, as in duty pound."

The mistress of the milking-pail stared, but, making no answer to this round declaration, immediately proceeded to shew, that the alarm of the preceding evening had in no degree injured her appetite.

When the meal was finished, the Captain proposed to them to take boat, in order that Mistress Jeanie might see her new place of residence, and that he himself might inquire whether the necessary preparations had been made there, and at the Manse, for receiving the future inmates of these mansions.

The morning was delightful, and the huge mountain-shadows slept upon the mirror'd wave of the Firth, almost as little disturbed as if it had been an inland lake. Even Mrs Dutton's fears no longer annoyed her. She had been informed by Archibald, that there was to be some sort of junketting after the sermon, and that was what she loved dearly; and as for the water, it was so still that it would look quite like a pleasuring on the Thames.

The whole party being embarked, therefore, in a large boat, which the captain called his coach and six, and attended by a smaller one termed his gig, the gallant Duncan steered straight upon the little tower of the old-fashioned church of Knocktarlitie, and the exertions of six stout rowers sped them rapidly on their voyage. As they neared the land, the hills appeared to recede from them, and a little valley, formed by the descent of a small river from the mountains, evolved itself as it were upon their approach. The style of the country on each side was simply pastoral, and resembled, in appearance and character, the description of a forgotten Scottish poet, which runs nearly thus:—

"The water gently down a level slid,
With little din, but couthy what it made;
On ilka side the trees grew thick and lang,
And wi' the wild birds' notes were a' in sang;
On either side, a full bow-shot and mair,
The green was even, gowany, and fair;
With easy slope on every hand the braes
To the hills' feet with scatter'd bushes raise;
With goats and sheep aboon, and kye below,
The bonny banks all in a swarm did go."[1]

They landed in this Highland Arcadia, at the mouth of the small stream which watered the delightful and peaceable valley. Inhabitants of several descriptions came to pay their respects to the Captain of Knockdunder, a homage which he was very peremptory in exacting, and to see the new settlers. Some of these were men after David Deans's own heart, elders of the kirk-session, zealous professors, from the Lennox, Lanarkshire, and Ayrshire, to whom the preceding Duke of Argyle had given *rooms* in this corner of his estate, because they had suffered for joining his father, the unfortunate Earl, during his ill-fated attempt in 1686. These were cakes of the right leaven for David regaling himself with; and, had it not been for this circumstance, he has been heard to say, "that the Captain of Knockdunder would have swore him out of the country in twenty-four hours, sae awsome it was to ony thinking soul to hear his imprecations, upon the slightest temptation that crossed his humour."

Besides these, there were a wilder set of parishioners, mountaineers from the upper glen and

[1] Ross's Fortunate Shepherdess. Edit. 1778, p. 23.

adjacent hill, who spoke Gaelic, went about armed, and wore the Highland dress. But the strict commands of the Duke had established such good order in this part of his territories, that the Gael and Saxons lived upon the best possible terms of good neighbourhood.

They first visited the Manse, as the parsonage is termed in Scotland. It was old, but in good repair, and stood snugly embosomed in a grove of sycamore, with a well-stocked garden in front, bounded by the small river, which was partly visible from the windows, partly concealed by the bushes, trees, and bounding hedge. Within, the house looked less comfortable than it might have been, for it had been neglected by the late incumbent; but workmen had been labouring under the directions of the Captain of Knockdunder, and at the expense of the Duke of Argyle, to put it into some order. The old "plenishing" had been removed, and neat, but plain household furniture had been sent down by the Duke in a brig of his own, called the Caroline, and was now ready to be placed in order in the apartments.

The gracious Duncan, finding matters were at a stand among the workmen, summoned before him the delinquents, and impressed all who heard him with a sense of his authority, by the penalties with which he threatened them for their delay. Mulcting them in half their charge, he assured them, would be the least of it; for, if they were to neglect his pleasure and the Duke's, "he would be tamn'd if he paid them the t' other half either, and they might seek law for it where they could get it." The work-people humbled themselves before the offended dignitary, and spake him soft and fair; and at length, upon Mr Butler recalling to his mind that it was the ordination-day, and that the workmen were probably thinking of going to church, Knockdunder agreed to forgive them, out of respect to their new minister.

"But an I catch them neglecking my duty again, Mr Putler, the teil pe in me if the kirk shall be an excuse; for what has the like o' them rapparees to do at the kirk ony day put Sundays, or then either, if the Duke and I has the necessitous uses for them?"

It may be guessed with what feelings of quiet satisfaction and delight Butler looked forward to spending his days, honoured and useful as he trusted to be, in this sequestered valley, and how often an intelligent glance was exchanged betwixt him and Jeanie, whose good-humoured face looked positively handsome, from the expression of modesty, and, at the same time, of satisfaction, which she wore when visiting the apartments of which she was soon to call herself mistress. She was left at liberty to give more open indulgence to her feelings of delight and admiration, when, leaving the Manse, the company proceeded to examine the destined habitation of David Deans.

Jeanie found with pleasure that it was not above a musket-shot from the Manse: for it had been a bar to her happiness to think she might be obliged to reside at a distance from her father, and she was aware that there were strong objections to his actually living in the same house with Butler. But this brief distance was the very thing which she could have wished.

The farm-house was on the plan of an improved cottage, and contrived with great regard to convenience; an excellent little garden, an orchard, and a set of offices complete, according to the best ideas of the time, combined to render it a most desirable habitation for the practical farmer, and far superior to the hovel at Woodend, and the small house at Saint Leonard's Crags. The situation was considerably higher than that of the Manse, and fronted to the west. The windows commanded an enchanting view of the little vale over which the mansion seemed to preside, the windings of the stream, and the firth, with its associated lakes and romantic islands. The hills of Dunbartonshire, once possessed by the fierce clan of MacFarlanes, formed a crescent behind the valley, and far to the right were seen the dusky and more gigantic mountains of Argyleshire, with a seaward view of the shattered and thunder-splitten peaks of Arran.

But to Jeanie, whose taste for the picturesque, if she had any by nature, had never been awakened or cultivated, the sight of the faithful old May Hettly, as she opened the door to receive them in her clean toy, Sunday's russet-gown, and blue apron, nicely smoothed down before her, was worth the whole varied landscape. The raptures of the faithful old creature at seeing Jeanie were equal to her own, as she hastened to assure her, "that baith the gudeman and the beasts had been as weel seen after as she possibly could contrive." Separating her from the rest of the company, May then hurried her young mistress to the offices, that she might receive the compliments she expected for her care of the cows. Jeanie rejoiced, in the simplicity of her heart, to see her charge once more; and the mute favourites of our heroine, Gowans, and the others, acknowledged her presence by lowing, turning round their broad and decent brows when they heard her well-known "Pruh, my leddy — pruh, my woman," and, by various indications, known only to those who have studied the habits of the milky mothers, shewing sensible pleasure as she approached to caress them in their turn.

"The very brute beasts are glad to see ye again," said May; "but nae wonder, Jeanie, for ye were aye kind to beast and body. And I maun learn to ca' ye *mistress* now, Jeanie, since ye hae been up to Lunnon, and seen the Duke, and the King, and a' the braw folk. But wha kens," added the old dame slyly, "what I 'll hae to ca' ye forby mistress, for I am thinking it wunna lang be Deans."

"Ca' me your ain Jeanie, May, and then ye can never gang wrang."

In the cow-house which they examined, there was one animal which Jeanie looked at till the tears gushed from her eyes. May, who had watched her with a sympathizing expression, immediately observed, in an under tone, "The gudeman aye sorts that beast himsell, and is kinder to it than ony beast in the byre; and I noticed he was that way e'en when he was angriest, and had maist cause to be angry. — Eh, sirs! a parent's heart 's a queer thing! — Mony a warsle he has had for that puir lassie — I am thinking he petitions mair for her than for yoursell, hinny; for what can he plead for you but just to wish you the blessing ye deserve? And when I sleepit ayont the hallan, when we came first here, he was often earnest a' night, and I could hear him come ower and ower again wi', 'Effie — puir blinded misguided thing!' it was aye 'Effie! Effie!' — If that puir wandering lamb comena into the sheepfauld in the Shepherd's ain time, it will

be an unco wonder, for I wot she has been a child of prayers. O, if the puir prodigal wad return, sae blithely as the goodman wad kill the fatted calf!—though Brockie's calf will no be fit for killing this three weeks yet."

And then, with the discursive talent of persons of her description, she got once more afloat in her account of domestic affairs, and left this delicate and affecting topic.

Having looked at every thing in the offices and the dairy, and expressed her satisfaction with the manner in which matters had been managed in her absence, Jeanie rejoined the rest of the party, who were surveying the interior of the house, all excepting David Deans and Butler, who had gone down to the church to meet the kirk-session and the clergymen of the presbytery, and arrange matters for the duty of the day.

In the interior of the cottage all was clean, neat, and suitable to the exterior. It had been originally built and furnished by the Duke, as a retreat for a favourite domestic of the higher class, who did not long enjoy it, and had been dead only a few months, so that every thing was in excellent taste and good order. But in Jeanie's bedroom was a neat trunk, which had greatly excited Mrs Dutton's curiosity, for she was sure that the direction, "For Mrs Jean Deans, at Auchingower, parish of Knocktarlitie," was the writing of Mrs Semple, the Duchess's own woman. May Hettly produced the key in a sealed parcel, which bore the same address, and attached to the key was a label, intimating that the trunk and its contents were "a token of remembrance to Jeanie Deans, from her friends the Duchess of Argyle and the young ladies." The trunk, hastily opened, as the reader will not doubt, was found to be full of wearing apparel of the best quality, suited to Jeanie's rank in life; and to most of the articles the names of the particular donors were attached, as if to make Jeanie sensible not only of the general, but of the individual interest she had excited in the noble family. To name the various articles by their appropriate names, would be to attempt things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme; besides, that the old-fashioned terms of manteaus, sacques, kissing-strings, and so forth, would convey but little information even to the milliners of the present day. I shall deposit, however, an accurate inventory of the contents of the trunk with my kind friend, Miss Martha Buskbody, who has promised, should the public curiosity seem interested in the subject, to supply me with a professional glossary and commentary. Suffice it to say, that the gift was such as became the donors, and was suited to the situation of the receiver; that every thing was handsome and appropriate, and nothing forgotten which belonged to the wardrobe of a young person in Jeanie's situation in life, the destined bride of a respectable clergyman.

Article after article was displayed, commented upon, and admired, to the wonder of May, who declared, "she didna think the Queen had mair or better claise," and somewhat to the envy of the northern Cowslip. This unamiable, but not very unnatural, disposition of mind, broke forth in sundry unfounded criticisms to the disparagement of the articles, as they were severally exhibited. But it assumed a more direct character, when, at the bottom of all, was found a dress of white silk, very plainly made, but still of white silk, and French silk to boot, with a paper pinned to it, bearing that it was a present from the Duke of Argyle to his travelling companion, to be worn on the day when she should change her name.

Mrs Dutton could forbear no longer, but whispered into Mr Archibald's ear, that it was a clever thing to be a Scotchwoman: "She supposed all *her* sisters, and she had half a dozen, might have been hanged, without any one sending her a present of a pocket handkerchief."

"Or without your making any exertion to save them, Mrs Dolly," answered Archibald drily.—"But I am surprised we do not hear the bell yet," said he, looking at his watch.

"Fat ta deil, Mr Archibald," answered the Captain of Knockdunder, "wad ye hae them ring the bell before I am ready to gang to kirk?—I wad gar the bedral eat the bell-rope, if he took ony sic freedom. But if ye want to hear the bell, I will just shew mysell on the knowe-head, and it will begin jowing forthwith."

Accordingly, so soon as they sallied out, and that the gold-laced hat of the Captain was seen rising like Hesper above the dewy verge of the rising ground, the clash (for it was rather a clash than a clang) of the bell was heard from the old moss-grown tower, and the clapper continued to thump its cracked sides all the while they advanced towards the kirk, Duncan exhorting them to take their own time, "for teil ony sport wad be till he came."[1]

Accordingly, the bell only changed to the final and impatient chime when they crossed the stile; and "rang in," that is, concluded its mistuned summons, when they had entered the Duke's seat, in the little kirk, where the whole party arranged themselves, with Duncan at their head, excepting David Deans, who already occupied a seat among the elders.

The business of the day, with a particular detail of which it is unnecessary to trouble the reader, was gone through according to the established form, and the sermon pronounced upon the occasion had the good fortune to please even the critical David Deans, though it was only an hour and a quarter long, which David termed a short allowance of spiritual provender.

The preacher, who was a divine that held many of David's opinions, privately apologized for his brevity by saying, "That he observed the Captain was gaunting grievously, and that if he had detained him longer, there was no knowing how long he might be in paying the next term's victual stipend."

David groaned to find that such carnal motives could have influence upon the mind of a powerful preacher. He had, indeed, been scandalized by another circumstance during the service.

So soon as the congregation were seated after prayers, and the clergyman had read his text, the gracious Duncan, after rummaging the leathern purse which hung in front of his petticoat, produced a short tobacco-pipe made of iron, and observed, almost aloud, "I hae forgotten my spleuchan—Lachlan, gang down to the clachan, and bring me up a pennyworth of twist." Six arms, the nearest within reach, presented, with an obedient start, as many tobacco-pouches to the man of office. He made choice of one with a nod of acknowledgment, filled his pipe, lighted it with the assistance of his

[1] See Note, AA. *Tolling to Service in Scotland.*

pistol-flint, and smoked with infinite composure during the whole time of the sermon. When the discourse was finished, he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, replaced it in his sporran, returned the tobacco pouch or spleuchan to its owner, and joined in the prayer with decency and attention.

At the end of the service, when Butler had been admitted minister of the kirk of Knocktarlitie, with all its spiritual immunities and privileges, David, who had frowned, groaned, and murmured at Knockdunder's irreverent demeanour, communicated his plain thoughts of the matter to Isaac Meiklehose, one of the elders, with whom a reverential aspect and huge grizzle wig had especially disposed him to seek fraternization. "It didna become a wild Indian," David said, "much less a Christian, and a gentleman, to sit in the kirk puffing tobacco-reek, as if he were in a change-house."

Meiklehose shook his head, and allowed it was "far frae beseeming—But what will ye say? The Captain 's a queer hand, and to speak to him about that or ony thing else that crosses the maggot, wad be to set the kiln a-low. He keeps a high hand ower the country, and we couldna deal wi' the Hielandmen without his protection, sin' a' the keys o' the kintray hings at his belt; and he 's no an ill body in the main, and maistry, ye ken, maws the meadows doun."

"That may be very true, neighbour," said David; "but Reuben Butler isna the man I take him to be, if he disna learn the Captain to fuff his pipe some other gate than in God's house, or the quarter be ower."

"Fair and softly gangs far," said Meiklehose; "and if a fule may gie a wise man a counsel, I wad hae him think twice or he mells with Knockdunder—He suld hae a lang-shankit spune that wad sup kail wi' the deil. But they are a' away to their dinner to the change-house, and if we dinna mend our pace, we 'll come short at meal-time."

David accompanied his friend without answer; but began to feel from experience, that the glen of Knocktarlitie, like the rest of the world, was haunted by its own special subjects of regret and discontent. His mind was so much occupied by considering the best means of converting Duncan of Knock to a sense of reverent decency during public worship, that he altogether forgot to inquire, whether Butler was called upon to subscribe the oaths to government.

Some have insinuated, that his neglect on this head was, in some degree, intentional; but I think this explanation inconsistent with the simplicity of my friend David's character. Neither have I ever been able, by the most minute inquiries, to know whether the *formula*, at which he so much scrupled, had been exacted from Butler, aye or no. The books of the kirk-session might have thrown some light on this matter; but unfortunately they were destroyed in the year 1746, by one Donacha Dhu na Dunaigh, at the instance, it was said, or at least by the connivance, of the gracious Duncan of Knock, who had a desire to obliterate the recorded foibles of a certain Kate Finlayson.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Now butt and ben the change-house fills
Wi' yill-caup commentators.—
Here's crying out for bakes and gills,
And there the pint-stoup clatters.
Wi' thick and thrang, and loud and lang,—
Wi' logic and wi' scripture,
They raise a din that in the end
Is like to breed a rupture,
O' wrath that day.

BURNS.

A PLENTIFUL entertainment, at the Duke of Argyle's cost, regaled the reverend gentlemen who had assisted at the ordination of Reuben Butler, and almost all the respectable part of the parish. The feast was, indeed, such as the country itself furnished; for plenty of all the requisites for "a rough and round dinner" were always at Duncan of Knock's command. There was the beef and mutton on the braes, the fresh and salt-water fish in the lochs, the brooks, and firth; game of every kind, from the deer to the leveret, were to be had for the killing, in the Duke's forests, moors, heaths, and mosses; and for liquor, home-brewed ale flowed as freely as water; brandy and usquebaugh both were had in those happy times without duty; even white wine and claret were got for nothing, since the Duke's extensive rights of admiralty gave him a title to all the wine in cask which is drifted ashore on the western coast and isles of Scotland, when shipping have suffered by severe weather. In short, as Duncan boasted, the entertainment did not cost MacCallummore a plack out of his sporran, and was nevertheless not only liberal, but overflowing.

The Duke's health was solemnized in a *bona fide* bumper, and David Deans himself added perhaps the first huzza that his lungs had ever uttered, to swell the shout with which the pledge was received. Nay, so exalted in heart was he upon this memorable occasion, and so much disposed to be indulgent, that he expressed no dissatisfaction when three bagpipers struck up, "The Campbells are coming." The health of the reverend minister of Knocktarlitie was received with similar honours; and there was a roar of laughter, when one of his brethren slyly subjoined the addition of, "A good wife to our brother, to keep the Manse in order." On this occasion David Deans was delivered of his first-born joke; and apparently the parturition was accompanied with many throes, for sorely did he twist about his physiognomy, and much did he stumble in his speech, before he could express his idea, "That the lad being now wedded to his spiritual bride, it was hard to threaten him with ane temporal spouse in the same day." He then laughed a hoarse and brief laugh, and was suddenly grave and silent, as if abashed at his own vivacious effort.

After another toast or two, Jeanie, Mrs Dolly, and such of the female natives as had honoured the feast with their presence, retired to David's new dwelling at Auchingower, and left the gentlemen to their potations.

The feast proceeded with great glee. The conversation, where Duncan had it under his direction, was not indeed always strictly canonical, but David Deans escaped any risk of being scandalized, by engaging with one of his neighbours in a recapitu-

lation of the sufferings of Ayrshire and Lanarkshire, during what was called the invasion of the Highland Host; the prudent Mr Meiklehose cautioning them from time to time to lower their voices, for "that Duncan Knock's father had been at that onslaught, and brought back muckle gude plenishing, and that Duncan was no unlikely to hae been there himself, for what he kend."

Meanwhile, as the mirth grew fast and furious, the graver members of the party began to escape as well as they could. David Deans accomplished his retreat, and Butler anxiously watched an opportunity to follow him. Knockdunder, however, desirous, he said, of knowing what stuff was in the new minister, had no intention to part with him so easily, but kept him pinned to his side, watching him sedulously, and with obliging violence filling his glass to the brim, as often as he could seize an opportunity of doing so. At length as the evening was wearing late, a venerable brother chanced to ask Mr Archibald when they might hope to see the Duke, *tam carum caput*, as he would venture to term him, at the Lodge of Roseneath. Duncan of Knock, whose ideas were somewhat conglomerated, and who, it may be believed, was no great scholar, catching up some imperfect sound of the words, conceived the speaker was drawing a parallel between the Duke and Sir Donald Gorme of Sleat; and being of opinion that such comparison was odious, snorted thrice, and prepared himself to be in a passion.

To the explanation of the venerable divine the Captain answered, "I heard the word Gorme myself, sir, with my ain ears. D'ye think I do not know Gaelic from Latin?"

"Apparently not, sir;"—so the clergyman, offended in his turn, and taking a pinch of snuff, answered with great coolness.

The copper nose of the gracious Duncan now became heated like the bull of Phalaris, and while Mr Archibald mediated betwixt the offended parties, and the attention of the company was engaged by their dispute, Butler took an opportunity to effect his retreat.

He found the females at Auchingower, very anxious for the breaking up of the convivial party; for it was a part of the arrangement, that although David Deans was to remain at Auchingower, and Butler was that night to take possession of the Manse, yet Jeanie, for whom complete accommodations were not yet provided in her father's house, was to return for a day or two to the Lodge at Roseneath, and the boats had been held in readiness accordingly. They waited, therefore, for Knockdunder's return, but twilight came, and they still waited in vain. At length Mr Archibald, who, as a man of decorum, had taken care not to exceed in his conviviality, made his appearance, and advised the females strongly to return to the island under his escort; observing, that, from the humour in which he had left the Captain, it was a great chance whether he budged out of the public-house that night, and it was absolutely certain that he would not be very fit company for ladies. The gig was at their disposal, he said, and there was still pleasant twilight for a party on the water.

Jeanie, who had considerable confidence in Archibald's prudence, immediately acquiesced in this proposal; but Mrs Dolly positively objected to the small boat. If the big boat could be gotten, she agreed to set out, otherwise she would sleep on the floor, rather than stir a step. Reasoning with Dolly was out of the question, and Archibald did not think the difficulty so pressing as to require compulsion. He observed, it was not using the Captain very politely to deprive him of his coach and six; "but as it was in the ladies' service," he gallantly said, "he would use so much freedom — besides the gig would serve the Captain's purpose better, as it could come off at any hour of the tide; the large boat should, therefore, be at Mrs Dolly's service."

They walked to the beach accordingly, accompanied by Butler. It was some time before the boatmen could be assembled, and ere they were well embarked, and ready to depart, the pale moon was come over the hill, and flinging a trembling reflection on the broad and glittering waves. But so soft and pleasant was the night, that Butler, in bidding farewell to Jeanie, had no apprehension for her safety; and, what is yet more extraordinary, Mrs Dolly felt no alarm for her own. The air was soft, and came over the cooling wave with something of summer fragrance. The beautiful scene of headlands, and capes, and bays, around them, with the broad blue chain of mountains, were dimly visible in the moonlight; while every dash of the oars made the waters glance and sparkle with the brilliant phenomenon called the sea fire.

This last circumstance filled Jeanie with wonder, and served to amuse the mind of her companion, until they approached the little bay, which seemed to stretch its dark and wooded arms into the sea as if to welcome them.

The usual landing-place was at a quarter of a mile's distance from the Lodge, and although the tide did not admit of the large boat coming quite close to the jetty of loose stones which served as a pier, Jeanie, who was both bold and active, easily sprung ashore; but Mrs Dolly positively refusing to commit herself to the same risk, the complaisant Mr Archibald ordered the boat round to a more regular landing-place, at a considerable distance along the shore. He then prepared to land himself, that he might, in the meanwhile, accompany Jeanie to the Lodge. But as there was no mistaking the woodland lane, which led from thence to the shore, and as the moonlight shewed her one of the white chimneys rising out of the wood which embosomed the building, Jeanie declined this favour with thanks, and requested him to proceed with Mrs Dolly, who, being "in a country where the ways were so strange to her, had mare need of countenance."

This, indeed, was a fortunate circumstance, and might even be said to save poor Cowslip's life, if it was true, as she herself used solemnly to aver, that she must positively have expired for fear, if she had been left alone in the boat with six wild Highlanders in kilts.

The night was so exquisitely beautiful, that Jeanie, instead of immediately directing her course towards the Lodge, stood looking after the boat as it again put off from the side, and rowed into the little bay, the dark figures of her companions growing less and less distinct as they diminished in the distance, and the jorram, or melancholy boat-song of the rowers, coming on the ear with soft-

ened and sweeter sound, until the boat rounded the headland, and was lost to her observation.

Still Jeanie remained in the same posture, looking out upon the sea. It would, she was aware, be some time ere her companions could reach the Lodge, as the distance by the more convenient landing-place was considerably greater than from the point where she stood, and she was not sorry to have an opportunity to spend the interval by herself.

The wonderful change which a few weeks had wrought in her situation, from shame and grief, and almost despair, to honour, joy, and a fair prospect of future happiness, passed before her eyes with a sensation which brought the tears into them. Yet they flowed at the same time from another source. As human happiness is never perfect, and as well-constructed minds are never more sensible of the distresses of those whom they love, than when their own situation forms a contrast with them, Jeanie's affectionate regrets turned to the fate of her poor sister — the child of so many hopes — the fondled nursling of so many years — now an exile, and, what was worse, dependent on the will of a man, of whose habits she had every reason to entertain the worst opinion, and who, even in his strongest paroxysms of remorse, had appeared too much a stranger to the feelings of real penitence.

While her thoughts were occupied with these melancholy reflections, a shadowy figure seemed to detach itself from the copsewood on her right-hand. Jeanie started, and the stories of apparitions and wraiths, seen by solitary travellers in wild situations, at such times, and in such an hour, suddenly came full upon her imagination. The figure glided on, and as it came betwixt her and the moon, she was aware that it had the appearance of a woman. A soft voice twice repeated, "Jeanie — Jeanie!"—Was it indeed — could it be the voice of her sister? — Was she still among the living, or had the grave given up its tenant? — Ere she could state these questions to her own mind, Effie, alive, and in the body, had clasped her in her arms, and, was straining her to her bosom, and devouring her with kisses. "I have wandered here," she said, "like a ghaist, to see you, and nae wonder you take me for ane — I thought but to see you gang by, or to hear the sound of your voice; but to speak to yoursell again, Jeanie, was mair than I deserved, and mair than I durst pray for."

"O, Effie! how came ye here alone, and at this hour, and on the wild sea-beach? — Are you sure it 's your ain living sell?"

There was something of Effie's former humour in her practically answering the question by a gentle pinch, more beseeming the fingers of a fairy than of a ghost. And again the sisters embraced, and laughed, and wept by turns.

"But ye maun gang up wi' me to the Lodge, Effie," said Jeanie, "and tell me a' your story — I hae gude folk there that will make ye welcome for my sake."

"Na, na, Jeanie," replied her sister sorrowfully, — "ye hae forgotten what I am — a banished outlawed creature, scarce escaped the gallows by your being the bauldest and the best sister that ever lived — I 'll gae near nane o' your grand friends, even if there was nae danger to me."

"There is nae danger — there shall be nae danger," said Jeanie eagerly. "O, Effie, dinna be wilfu' — be guided for ance — we will be sae happy a' thegither!"

"I have a' the happiness I deserve on this side of the grave, now that I hae seen you," answered Effie; "and whether there were danger to mysell or no, naebody shall ever say that I come with my cheat-the-gallows face to shame my sister amang her grand friends."

"I hae nae grand friends," said Jeanie; "nae friends but what are friends of yours — Reuben Butler and my father. — O, unhappy lassie, dinna be dour, and turn your back on your happiness again! We wunna see another acquaintance — Come hame to us, your ain dearest friends — it's better sheltering under an auld hedge than under a new-planted wood."

"It's in vain speaking, Jeanie — I maun drink as I hae brewed — I am married, and I maun follow my husband for better for worse."

"Married, Effie!" exclaimed Jeanie — "Misfortunate creature! and to that awfu' ——"

"Hush, hush," said Effie, clapping one hand on her mouth, and pointing to the thicket with the other, "he is yonder."

She said this in a tone which shewed that her husband had found means to inspire her with awe, as well as affection. At this moment a man issued from the wood.

It was young Staunton. Even by the imperfect light of the moon, Jeanie could observe that he was handsomely dressed, and had the air of a person of rank.

"Effie," he said, "our time is well-nigh spent — the skiff will be aground in the creek, and I dare not stay longer. — I hope your sister will allow me to salute her?" But Jeanie shrunk back from him with a feeling of internal abhorrence. "Well," he said, "it does not much signify; if you keep up the feeling of ill-will, at least you do not act upon it, and I thank you for your respect to my secret, when a word (which in your place I would have spoken at once) would have cost me my life. People say, you should keep from the wife of your bosom the secret that concerns your neck — my wife and her sister both know mine, and I shall not sleep a wink the less sound."

"But are you really married to my sister, sir?" asked Jeanie, in great doubt and anxiety; for the haughty, careless tone in which he spoke seemed to justify her worst apprehensions.

"I really am legally married, and by my own name," replied Staunton, more gravely.

"And your father — and your friends?" —

"And my father and my friends must just reconcile themselves to that which is done and cannot be undone," replied Staunton. "However, it is my intention, in order to break off dangerous connections, and to let my friends come to their temper, to conceal my marriage for the present, and stay abroad for some years. So that you will not hear of us for some time, if ever you hear of us again at all. It would be dangerous, you must be aware, to keep up the correspondence; for all would guess that the husband of Effie was the — what shall I call myself? — the slayer of Porteous."

Hard-hearted light man! thought Jeanie — to

what a character she has intrusted her happiness! — She has sown the wind, and maun reap the whirlwind.

"Dinna think ill o' him," said Effie, breaking away from her husband, and leading Jeanie a step or two out of hearing, — "dinna think *very* ill o' him — he's gude to me, Jeanie — as gude as I deserve — And he is determined to gie up his bad courses — Sae, after a', dinna greet for Effie; she is better off than she has wrought for. — But you — oh, you! — how can you be happy eneugh! — never till ye get to Heaven, where a'body is as gude as yoursell. — Jeanie, if I live and thrive, ye shall hear of me — if not, just forget that sic a creature ever lived to vex ye — fare ye weel — fare — fare ye weel!"

She tore herself from her sister's arms—rejoined her husband — they plunged into the copsewood, and she saw them no more. The whole scene had the effect of a vision, and she could almost have believed it such, but that very soon after they quitted her, she heard the sound of oars, and a skiff was seen on the Firth, pulling swiftly towards the small smuggling sloop which lay in the offing. It was on board of such a vessel that Effie had embarked at Portobello, and Jeanie had no doubt that the same conveyance was destined, as Staunton had hinted, to transport them to a foreign country.

Although it was impossible to determine whether this interview, while it was passing, gave more pain or pleasure to Jeanie Deans, yet the ultimate impression which remained on her mind was decidedly favourable. Effie was married — made, according to the common phrase, an honest woman — that was one main point; it seemed also as if her husband were about to abandon the path of gross vice, in which he had run so long and so desperately — that was another. For his final and effectual conversion, he did not want understanding, and God knew his own hour.

Such were the thoughts with which Jeanie endeavoured to console her anxiety respecting her sister's future fortune. On her arrival at the Lodge, she found Archibald in some anxiety at her stay, and about to walk out in quest of her. A headach served as an apology for retiring to rest, in order to conceal her visible agitation of mind from her companions.

By this secession also she escaped a scene of a different sort. For, as if there were danger in all gigs, whether by sea or land, that of Knockdunder had been run down by another boat, an accident owing chiefly to the drunkenness of the captain, his crew, and passengers. Knockdunder, and two or three guests, whom he was bringing along with him to finish the conviviality of the evening at the Lodge, got a sound ducking; but, being rescued by the crew of the boat which endangered them, there was no ultimate loss, excepting that of the Captain's laced hat, which, greatly to the satisfaction of the Highland part of the district, as well as to the improvement of the conformity of his own personal appearance, he replaced by a smart Highland bonnet next day. Many were the vehement threats of vengeance which, on the succeeding morning, the gracious Duncan threw out against the boat which had upset him; but as neither she, nor the small smuggling vessel to which she belonged, was any longer to be seen in the firth, he was compelled to sit down with the affront. This was the more hard, he said, as he was assured the mischief was done on purpose, these scoundrels having lurked about after they had landed every drop of brandy, and every bag of tea they had on board; and he understood the coxswain had been on shore, making particular inquiries concerning the time when his boat was to cross over, and to return, and so forth.

"Put the neist time they meet me on the firth," said Duncan, with great majesty, "I will teach the moonlight rapscallions and vagabonds to keep their ain side of the road, and pe tamn'd to them!"

CHAPTER XLVII.

> Lord! who would live turmoiled in a court,
> And may enjoy such quiet walks as these?
> SHAKESPEARE.

WITHIN a reasonable time after Butler was safely and comfortably settled in his living, and Jeanie had taken up her abode at Auchingower with her father, — the precise extent of which interval we request each reader to settle according to his own sense of what is decent and proper upon the occasion,—and after due proclamation of banns, and all other formalities, the long wooing of this worthy pair was ended by their union in the holy bands of matrimony. On this occasion, David Deans stoutly withstood the iniquities of pipes, fiddles, and promiscuous dancing, to the great wrath of the Captain of Knockdunder, who said, if he "had guessed it was to be sic a tamn'd Quakers' meeting, he wad hae seen them peyont the cairn before he wad hae darkened their doors."

And so much rancour remained on the spirits of the gracious Duncan upon this occasion, that various "picqueerings," as David called them, took place upon the same and similar topics; and it was only in consequence of an accidental visit of the Duke to his Lodge at Roseneath, that they were put a stop to. But upon that occasion his Grace shewed such particular respect to Mr and Mrs Butler, and such favour even to old David, that Knockdunder held it prudent to change his course towards the latter. He, in future, used to express himself among friends, concerning the minister and his wife, as "very worthy decent folk, just a little over strict in their notions; put it was pest for thae plack cattle to err on the safe side." And respecting David, he allowed that "he was an excellent judge of nowte and sheep, and a sensible eneugh carle, an it werena for his tamn'd Cameronian nonsense, whilk it is not worth while of a shentleman to knock out of an auld silly head, either by force of reason, or otherwise." So that, by avoiding topics of dispute, the personages of our tale lived in great good habits with the gracious Duncan, only that he still grieved David's soul, and set a perilous example to the congregation, by sometimes bringing his pipe to the church during a cold winter-day, and almost always sleeping during sermon in the summer-time.

Mrs Butler, whom we must no longer, if we can help it, term by the familiar name of Jeanie, brought into the married state the same firm mind and affectionate disposition — the same natural and

homely good sense, and spirit of useful exertion — in a word, all the domestic good qualities, of which she had given proof during her maiden life. She did not indeed rival Butler in learning; but then no woman more devoutly venerated the extent of her husband's erudition. She did not pretend to understand his expositions of divinity; but no minister of the presbytery had his humble dinner so well arranged, his clothes and linen in equal good order, his fireside so neatly swept, his parlour so clean, and his books so well dusted.

If he talked to Jeanie of what she did not understand, — and (for the man was mortal, and had been a schoolmaster) he sometimes did harangue more scholarly and wisely than was necessary, — she listened in placid silence; and whenever the point referred to common life, and was such as came under the grasp of a strong natural understanding, her views were more forcible, and her observations more acute, than his own. In acquired politeness of manners, when it happened that she mingled a little in society, Mrs Butler was, of course, judged deficient. But then she had that obvious wish to oblige, and that real and natural good-breeding depending on good sense and good-humour, which, joined to a considerable degree of archness and liveliness of manner, rendered her behaviour acceptable to all with whom she was called upon to associate. Notwithstanding her strict attention to all domestic affairs, she always appeared the clean well-dressed mistress of the house, never the sordid household drudge. When complimented on this occasion by Duncan Knock, who swore, "that he thought the fairies must help her, since her house was always clean, and nobody ever saw any body sweeping it," she modestly replied, "That much might be dune by timing ane's turns."

Duncan replied, "He heartily wished she could teach that art to the huzzies at the Lodge, for he could never discover that the house was washed at a', except now and then by breaking his shins over the pail — Cot tamn the jauds!"

Of lesser matters there is not occasion to speak much. It may easily be believed that the Duke's cheese was carefully made, and so graciously accepted, that the offering became annual. Remembrances and acknowledgments of past favours were sent to Mrs Bickerton and Mrs Glass, and an amicable intercourse maintained from time to time with these two respectable and benevolent persons.

It is especially necessary to mention, that, in the course of five years, Mrs Butler had three children, two boys and a girl, all stout healthy babes of grace, fair-haired, blue-eyed, and strong-limbed. The boys were named David and Reuben, an order of nomenclature which was much to the satisfaction of the old hero of the Covenant, and the girl, by her mother's special desire, was christened Euphemia, rather contrary to the wish both of her father and husband, who nevertheless loved Mrs Butler too well, and were too much indebted to her for their hours of happiness, to withstand any request which she made with earnestness, and as a gratification to herself. But from some feeling, I know not of what kind, the child was never distinguished by the name of Effie, but by the abbreviation of Femie, which in Scotland is equally commonly applied to persons called Euphemia.

In this state of quiet and unostentatious enjoyment, there were, besides the ordinary rubs and ruffles which disturb even the most uniform life, two things which particularly chequered Mrs Butler's happiness. "Without these," she said to our informer, "her life would have been but too happy; and perhaps," she added, "she had need of some crosses in this world to remind her that there was a better to come behind it."

The first of these related to certain polemical skirmishes betwixt her father and her husband, which, notwithstanding the mutual respect and affection they entertained for each other, and their great love for her, — notwithstanding also their general agreement in strictness, and even severity, of presbyterian principle, — often threatened unpleasant weather between them. David Deans, as our readers must be aware, was sufficiently opinionative and intractable, and having prevailed on himself to become a member of a kirk-session under the established church, he felt doubly obliged to evince, that, in so doing, he had not compromised any whit of his former professions, either in practice or principle. Now Mr Butler, doing all credit to his father-in-law's motives, was frequently of opinion that it were better to drop out of memory points of division and separation, and to act in the manner most likely to attract and unite all parties who were serious in religion. Moreover, he was not pleased, as a man and a scholar, to be always dictated to by his unlettered father-in-law; and as a clergyman, he did not think it fit to seem for ever under the thumb of an elder of his own kirk-session. A proud but honest thought carried his opposition now and then a little farther than it would otherwise have gone. "My brethren," he said, "will suppose I am flattering and conciliating the old man for the sake of his succession, if I defer and give way to him on every occasion; and, besides, there are many on which I neither can nor will conscientiously yield to his notions. I cannot be persecuting old women for witches, or ferreting out matter of scandal among the young ones, which might otherwise have remained concealed."

From this difference of opinion it happened, that, in many cases of nicety, such as in owning certain defections, and failing to testify against certain backslidings of the time, in not always severely tracing forth little matters of scandal and *fama clamosa*, which David called a loosening of the reins of discipline, and in failing to demand clear testimonies in other points of controversy which had, as it were, drifted to leeward with the change of times, Butler incurred the censure of his father-in-law; and sometimes the disputes betwixt them became eager and almost unfriendly. In all such cases Mrs Butler was a mediating spirit, who endeavoured, by the alkaline smoothness of her own disposition, to neutralize the acidity of theological controversy. To the complaints of both she lent an unprejudiced and attentive ear, and sought always rather to excuse than absolutely to defend the other party.

She reminded her father that Butler had not "his experience of the auld and wrastling times, when folk were gifted wi' a far look into eternity, to make up for the oppressions whilk they suffered here below in time. She freely allowed that many devout ministers and professors in times past had enjoyed downright revelation, like the blessed Peden, and Lundie, and Cameron, and Renwick, and John Caird the tinkler, wha entered into the secrets, and Elizabeth Melvil, Lady Culross, wha prayed in her bed,

surrounded by a great many Christians in a large room, in whilk it was placed on purpose, and that for three hours' time, with wonderful assistance; and Lady Robertland, whilk got six sure outgates of grace, and mony other in times past; and of a specialty, Mr John Scrimgeour, minister of Kinghorn, who, having a beloved child sick to death of the crewels, was free to expostulate with his Maker with such impatience of displeasure, and complaining so bitterly, that at length it was said unto him, that he was heard for this time, but that he was requested to use no such boldness in time coming; so that, when he returned, he found the child sitting up in the bed hale and fair, with all its wounds closed, and supping its parritch, whilk babe he had left at the time of death. But though these things might be true in these needful times, she contended that those ministers who had not seen such vouchsafed and especial mercies, were to seek their rule in the records of ancient times; and therefore Reuben was carefu' both to search the Scriptures and the books written by wise and good men of old; and sometimes in this way it wad happen that twa precious saints might pu' sundry wise, like twa cows riving at the same hay-band."

To this David used to reply, with a sigh, "Ah, hinny, thou kenn'st little o't; but that saam John Scrimgeour, that blew open the gates of heaven as an it had been wi' a sax-pund cannon-ball, used devoutly to wish that most part of books were burnt, except the Bible. Reuben 's a gude lad and a kind —I have aye allowed that; but as to his not allowing inquiry anent the scandal of Margery Kittlesides and Rory MacRand, under pretence that they have southered sin wi' marriage, it 's clear agane the Christian discipline o' the kirk. And then there 's Aily MacClure of Deepheugh, that practises her abominations, spaeing folks' fortunes wi' eggshells, and mutton-banes, and dreams and divinations, whilk is a scandal to ony Christian land to suffer sic a wretch to live; and I 'll uphaud that, in a' judicatures, civil or ecclesiastical."

"I daresay ye are very right, father," was the general style of Jeanie's answer; "but ye maun come down to the Manse to your dinner the day. The bits o' bairns, puir things, are wearying to see their luckie-dad; and Reuben never sleeps weel, nor I neither, when you and he hae had ony bit outcast."

"Nae outcast, Jeanie; God forbid I suld cast out wi' thee, or aught that is dear to thee!" And he put on his Sunday's coat, and came to the Manse accordingly.

With her husband, Mrs Butler had a more direct conciliatory process. Reuben had the utmost respect for the old man's motives, and affection for his person, as well as gratitude for his early friendship. So that, upon any such occasion of accidental irritation, it was only necessary to remind him with delicacy of his father-in-law's age, of his scanty education, strong prejudices, and family distresses. The least of these considerations always inclined Butler to measures of conciliation, in so far as he could accede to them without compromising principle; and thus our simple and unpretending heroine had the merit of those peacemakers, to whom it is pronounced as a benediction, that they shall inherit the earth.

The second crook in Mrs Butler's lot, to use the language of her father, was the distressing circumstance, that she had never heard of her sister's safety, or of the circumstances in which she found herself, though betwixt four and five years had elapsed since they had parted on the beach of the island of Roseneath. Frequent intercourse was not to be expected—not to be desired, perhaps, in their relative situations; but Effie had promised, that, if she lived and prospered, her sister should hear from her. She must then be no more, or sunk into some abyss of misery, since she had never redeemed her pledge. Her silence seemed strange and portentous, and wrung from Jeanie, who could never forget the early years of their intimacy, the most painful anticipation concerning her fate. At length, however, the veil was drawn aside.

One day, as the Captain of Knockdunder had called in at the Manse, on his return from some business in the Highland part of the parish, and had been accommodated, according to his special request, with a mixture of milk, brandy, honey, and water, which he said Mrs Butler compounded "better than ever a woman in Scotland,"—for, in all innocent matters, she studied the taste of every one around her,—he said to Butler, "Py the py, minister, I have a letter here either for your canny pody of a wife or you, which I got when I was last at Glasco; the postage comes to fourpence, which you may either pay me forthwith, or give me tooble or quits in a hit at packcammon."

The playing at backgammon and draughts had been a frequent amusement of Mr Whackbairn, Butler's principal, when at Libberton school. The minister, therefore, still piqued himself on his skill at both games, and occasionally practised them, as strictly canonical, although David Deans, whose notions of every kind were more rigorous, used to shake his head, and groan grievously, when he espied the tables lying in the parlour, or the children playing with the dice-boxes or backgammon men. Indeed, Mrs Butler was sometimes chidden for removing these implements of pastime into some closet or corner out of sight. "Let them be where they are, Jeanie," would Butler say upon such occasions; "I am not conscious of following this, or any other trifling relaxation, to the interruption of my more serious studies, and still more serious duties. I will not, therefore, have it supposed that I am indulging by stealth, and against my conscience, in an amusement which, using it so little as I do, I may well practise openly, and without any check of mind—*Nil conscire sibi*, Jeanie, that is my motto; which signifies, my love, the honest and open confidence which a man ought to entertain when he is acting openly, and without any sense of doing wrong."

Such being Butler's humour, he accepted the Captain's defiance to a two-penny hit at backgammon, and handed the letter to his wife, observing the post-mark was York, but, if it came from her friend Mrs Bickerton, she had considerably improved her hand-writing, which was uncommon at her years.

Leaving the gentlemen to their game, Mrs Butler went to order something for supper, for Captain Duncan had proposed kindly to stay the night with them, and then carelessly broke open her letter. It was not from Mrs Bickerton, and, after glancing over the first few lines, she soon found it necessary to retire to her own bedroom, to read the document at leisure.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Happy thou art! then happy be,
Nor envy me my lot;
Thy happy state I envy thee,
And peaceful cot.
LADY C— C—L.

THE letter, which Mrs Butler, when retired into her own apartment, perused with anxious wonder, was certainly from Effie, although it had no other signature than the letter E.; and although the orthography, style, and penmanship, were very far superior not only to any thing which Effie could produce, who, though a lively girl, had been a remarkably careless scholar, but even to her more considerate sister's own powers of composition and expression. The manuscript was a fair Italian hand, though something stiff and constrained — the spelling and the diction that of a person who had been accustomed to read good composition, and mix in good society.

The tenor of the letter was as follows:

"MY DEAREST SISTER,

"At many risks I venture to write to you, to inform you that I am still alive, and, as to worldly situation, that I rank higher than I could expect or merit. If wealth, and distinction, and an honourable rank, could make a woman happy, I have them all; but you, Jeanie, whom the world might think placed far beneath me in all these respects, are far happier than I am. I have had means of hearing of your welfare, my dearest Jeanie, from time to time — I think I should have broken my heart otherwise. I have learned with great pleasure of your increasing family. We have not been worthy of such a blessing; two infants have been successively removed, and we are now childless — God's will be done! But, if we had a child, it would perhaps divert him from the gloomy thoughts which make him terrible to himself and others. Yet do not let me frighten you, Jeanie; he continues to be kind, and I am far better off than I deserve. You will wonder at my better scholarship; but when I was abroad, I had the best teachers, and I worked hard, because my progress pleased him. He is kind, Jeanie, only he has much to distress him, especially when he looks backward. When I look backward myself, I have always a ray of comfort; it is in the generous conduct of a sister, who forsook me not when I was forsaken by every one. You have had your reward. You live happy in the esteem and love of all who know you, and I drag on the life of a miserable impostor, indebted for the marks of regard I receive to a tissue of deceit and lies, which the slightest accident may unravel. He has produced me to his friends, since the estate opened to him, as the daughter of a Scotchman of rank, banished on account of the Viscount of Dundee's wars — that is, our Fr's old friend Clavers, you know — and he says I was educated in a Scotch convent; indeed, I lived in such a place long enough to enable me to support the character. But when a countryman approaches me, and begins to talk, as they all do, of the various families engaged in Dundee's affair, and to make inquiries into my connections, and when I see *his* eye bent on mine with such an expression of agony, my terror brings me to the very risk of detection. Good-nature and politeness have hitherto saved me, as they prevented people from pressing on me with distressing questions. But how long — O how long, will this be the case! — And if I bring this disgrace on him, he will hate me — he will kill me, for as much as he loves me; he is as jealous of his family honour now, as ever he was careless about it. I have been in England four months, and have often thought of writing to you; and yet, such are the dangers that might arise from an intercepted letter, that I have hitherto forborne. But now I am obliged to run the risk. Last week I saw your great friend, the D. of A. He came to my box, and sate by me; and something in the play put him in mind of you — Gracious Heaven! he told over your whole London journey to all who were in the box, but particularly to the wretched creature who was the occasion of it all. If he had known — if he could have conceived, beside whom he was sitting, and to whom the story was told! — I suffered with courage, like an Indian at the stake, while they are rending his fibres and boring his eyes, and while he smiles applause at each well-imagined contrivance of his torturers. It was too much for me at last, Jeanie — I fainted; and my agony was imputed partly to the heat of the place, and partly to my extreme sensibility; and, hypocrite all over, I encouraged both opinions — any thing but discovery! Luckily *he* was not there. But the incident has more alarms. I am obliged to meet your great man often; and he seldom sees me without talking of E. D. and J. D., and R. B. and D. D., as persons in whom my amiable sensibility is interested. My amiable sensibility!!! — And then the cruel tone of light indifference with which persons in the fashionable world speak together on the most affecting subjects! To hear my guilt, my folly, my agony, the foibles and weaknesses of my friends — even your heroic exertions, Jeanie, spoken of in the drolling style which is the present tone in fashionable life — Scarce all that I formerly endured is equal to this state of irritation — then it was blows and stabs — now it is pricking to death with needles and pins. — He — I mean the D. — goes down next month to spend the shooting-season in Scotland — he says, he makes a point of always dining one day at the Manse — be on your guard, and do not betray yourself, should he mention me — Yourself, alas! *you* have nothing to betray — nothing to fear; you, the pure, the virtuous, the heroine of unstained faith, unblemished purity, what can you have to fear from the world or its proudest minions? It is E. whose life is once more in your hands — it is E. whom you are to save from being plucked of her borrowed plumes, discovered, branded, and trodden down, first by him, perhaps, who has raised her to this dizzy pinnacle! — The enclosure will reach you twice a-year — do not refuse it — it is out of my own allowance, and may be twice as much when you want it. With you it may do good — with me it never can.

"Write to me soon, Jeanie, or I shall remain in the agonizing apprehension that this has fallen into wrong hands — Address simply to L. S., under cover, to the Reverend George Whiterose, in the Minster-Close, York. He thinks I correspond with some of my noble Jacobite relations who are in Scotland. How high-church and jacobitical zeal would burn in his cheeks, if he knew he was the agent, not of Euphemia Setoun, of the honourable

house of Winton, but of E. D., daughter of a Cameronian cowfeeder!—Jeanie, I can laugh yet sometimes—but God protect you from such mirth.—My father—I mean your father, would say it was like the idle crackling of thorns; but the thorns keep their poignancy, they remain unconsumed.—Farewell, my dearest Jeanie—Do not shew this even to Mr Butler, much less to any one else—I have every respect for him, but his principles are over strict, and my case will not endure severe handling.—I rest your affectionate sister, E."

In this long letter there was much to surprise as well as to distress Mrs Butler. That Effie—her sister Effie, should be mingling freely in society, and apparently on not unequal terms, with the Duke of Argyle, sounded like something so extraordinary, that she even doubted if she read truly. Nor was it less marvellous, that, in the space of four years, her education should have made such progress. Jeanie's humility readily allowed that Effie had always, when she chose it, been smarter at her book than she herself was, but then she was very idle, and, upon the whole, had made much less proficiency. Love, or fear, or necessity, however, had proved an able school-mistress, and completely supplied all her deficiencies.

What Jeanie least liked in the tone of the letter, was a smothered degree of egotism. "We should have heard little about her," said Jeanie to herself, "but that she was feared the Duke might come to learn wha she was, and a' about her puir friends here; but Effie, puir thing, aye looks her ain way, and folk that do that think mair o' themselves than of their neighbours.—I am no clear about keeping her siller," she added, taking up a £50 note which had fallen out of the paper to the floor. "We hae eneugh, and it looks unco like theftboot, or hush-money, as they ca' it; she might hae been sure that I wad say naething wad harm her, for a' the gowd in Lunnon. And I maun tell the minister about it. I dinna see that she suld be sae feared for her ain bonny bargain o' a gudeman, and that I shouldna reverence Mr Butler just as much; and sae I 'll e'en tell him, when that tippling body the Captain has ta'en boat in the morning.——But I wonder at my ain state of mind," she added, turning back, after she had made a step or two to the door to join the gentlemen; "surely I am no sic a fule as to be angry that Effie 's a braw lady, while I am only a minister's wife?—and yet I am as petted as a bairn, when I should bless God, that has redeemed her from shame, and poverty, and guilt, as ower likely she might hae been plunged into."

Sitting down upon a stool at the foot of the bed, she folded her arms upon her bosom, saying within herself, "From this place will I not rise till I am in a better frame of mind;" and so placed, by dint of tearing the veil from the motives of her little temporary spleen against her sister, she compelled herself to be ashamed of them, and to view as blessings the advantages of her sister's lot, while its embarrassments were the necessary consequences of errors long since committed. And thus she fairly vanquished the feeling of pique which she naturally enough entertained, at seeing Effie, so long the object of her care and her pity, soar suddenly so high above her in life, as to reckon amongst the chief objects of her apprehension the risk of their relationship being discovered.

When this unwonted burst of *amour propre* was thoroughly subdued, she walked down to the little parlour where the gentlemen were finishing their game, and heard from the Captain a confirmation of the news intimated in her letter, that the Duke of Argyle was shortly expected at Roseneath.

"He 'll find plenty of moor-fowls and plack-cock on the moors of Auchingower, and he 'll pe nae doubt for taking a late dinner, and a ped at the Manse, as he has done pefore now."

"He has a gude right, Captain," said Jeanie.

"Teil ane petter to ony ped in the kintra," answered the Captain. "And ye had petter tell your father, puir body, to get his beasts a' in order, and put his tamn'd Cameronian nonsense out o' his head for twa or three days, if he can pe so opliging; for fan I speak to him apout prute pestial, he answers me out o' the Pible, whilk is not using a shentleman weel, unless it be a person of your cloth, Mr Putler."

No one understood better than Jeanie the merit of the soft answer, which turneth away wrath; and she only smiled, and hoped that his Grace would find every thing that was under her father's care to his entire satisfaction.

But the Captain, who had lost the whole postage of the letter at backgammon, was in the pouting mood not unusual to losers, and which, says the proverb, must be allowed to them.

"And, Master Putler, though you know I never meddle with the things of your kirk-sessions, yet I must pe allowed to say that I will not be pleased to allow Ailie MacClure of Deepheugh to be poonished as a witch, in respect she only spaes fortunes, and does not lame, or plind, or pedevil any persons, or coup cadgers' carts, or ony sort of mischief; put only tells people good fortunes, as anent our poats killing so many seals and doug-fishes, whilk is very pleasant to hear."

"The woman," said Butler, "is, I believe, no witch but a cheat; and it is only on that head that she is summoned to the kirk-session, to cause her to desist in future from practising her impostures upon ignorant persons."

"I do not know," replied the gracious Duncan, "what her practices or postures are, but I pelieve that if the poys take hould on her to duck her in the Clachan purn, it will be a very sorry practice—and I pelieve, moreover, that if I come in thirdsman among you at the kirk-sessions, you will be all in a tamn'd pad posture indeed."

Without noticing this threat, Mr Butler replied, "That he had not attended to the risk of ill usage which the poor woman might undergo at the hands of the rabble, and that he would give her the necessary admonition in private, instead of bringing her before the assembled session."

"This," Duncan said, "was speaking like a reasonable shentleman;" and so the evening passed peaceably off.

Next morning, after the Captain had swallowed his morning draught of Athole brose, and departed in his coach and six, Mrs Butler anew deliberated upon communicating to her husband her sister's letter. But she was deterred by the recollection, that, in doing so, she would unveil to him the whole of a dreadful secret, of which, perhaps, his public character might render him an unfit depositary. Butler already had reason to believe that Effie had eloped with that same Robertson who had been a

leader in the Porteous mob, and who lay under sentence of death for the robbery at Kirkaldy. But he did not know his identity with George Staunton, a man of birth and fortune, who had now apparently reassumed his natural rank in society. Jeanie had respected Staunton's own confession as sacred, and upon reflection she considered the letter of her sister as equally so, and resolved to mention the contents to no one.

On reperusing the letter, she could not help observing the staggering and unsatisfactory condition of those who have risen to distinction by undue paths, and the outworks and bulwarks of fiction and falsehood, by which they are under the necessity of surrounding and defending their precarious advantages. But she was not called upon, she thought, to unveil her sister's original history —it would restore no right to any one, for she was usurping none—it would only destroy her happiness, and degrade her in the public estimation. Had she been wise, Jeanie thought she would have chosen seclusion and privacy, in place of public life and gaiety; but the power of choice might not be hers. The money, she thought, could not be returned without her seeming haughty and unkind. She resolved, therefore, upon reconsidering this point, to employ it as occasion should serve, either in educating her children better than her own means could compass, or for their future portion. Her sister had enough, was strongly bound to assist Jeanie by any means in her power, and the arrangement was so natural and proper, that it ought not to be declined out of fastidious or romantic delicacy. Jeanie accordingly wrote to her sister, acknowledging her letter, and requesting to hear from her as often as she could. In entering into her own little details of news, chiefly respecting domestic affairs, she experienced a singular vacillation of ideas; for sometimes she apologized for mentioning things unworthy the notice of a lady of rank, and then recollected that every thing which concerned her should be interesting to Effie. Her letter, under the cover of Mr Whiterose, she committed to the post-office at Glasgow, by the intervention of a parishioner who had business at that city.

The next week brought the Duke to Roseneath, and shortly afterwards he intimated his intention of sporting in their neighbourhood, and taking his bed at the Manse; an honour which he had once or twice done to its inmates on former occasions.

Effie proved to be perfectly right in her anticipations. The Duke had hardly set himself down at Mrs Butler's right hand, and taken upon himself the task of carving the excellent "barn-door chucky," which had been selected as the high dish upon this honourable occasion, before he began to speak of Lady Staunton of Willingham, in Lincolnshire, and the great noise which her wit and beauty made in London. For much of this Jeanie was, in some measure, prepared — but Effie's wit! that would never have entered into her imagination, being ignorant how exactly raillery in the higher rank resembles flippancy among their inferiors.

"She has been the ruling belle—the blazing star—the universal toast of the winter," said the Duke; "and is really the most beautiful creature that was seen at court upon the birth-day."

The birth-day! and at court!—Jeanie was annihilated, remembering well her own presentation, all its extraordinary circumstances, and particularly the cause of it.

"I mention this lady particularly to you, Mrs Butler," said the Duke, "because she has something in the sound of her voice, and cast of her countenance, that reminded me of you — not when you look so pale though — you have over-fatigued yourself — you must pledge me in a glass of wine."

She did so, and Butler observed, "It was dangerous flattery in his Grace to tell a poor minister's wife that she was like a court-beauty."

"Oho! Mr Butler," said the Duke, "I find you are growing jealous; but it's rather too late in the day, for you know how long I have admired your wife. But seriously, there is betwixt them one of those inexplicable likenesses which we see in countenances, that do not otherwise resemble each other."

"The perilous part of the compliment has flown off," thought Mr Butler.

His wife, feeling the awkwardness of silence, forced herself to say, "That, perhaps, the lady might be her countrywoman, and the language might have made some resemblance."

"You are quite right," replied the Duke. "She is a Scotchwoman, and speaks with a Scotch accent, and now and then a provincial word drops out so prettily, that it is quite Doric, Mr Butler."

"I should have thought," said the clergyman, "that would have sounded vulgar in the great city."

"Not at all," replied the Duke; "you must suppose it is not the broad coarse Scotch that is spoken in the Cowgate of Edinburgh, or in the Gorbals. This lady has been very little in Scotland, in fact — She was educated in a convent abroad, and speaks that pure court-Scotch, which was common in my younger days; but it is so generally disused now, that it sounds like a different dialect, entirely distinct from our modern *patois*."

Notwithstanding her anxiety, Jeanie could not help admiring within herself, how the most correct judges of life and manners can be imposed on by their own preconceptions, while the Duke proceeded thus: "She is of the unfortunate house of Winton, I believe; but, being bred abroad, she had missed the opportunity of learning her own pedigree, and was obliged to me for informing her, that she must certainly come of the Setons of Windygoul. I wish you could have seen how prettily she blushed at her own ignorance. Amidst her noble and elegant manners, there is now and then a little touch of bashfulness and conventual rusticity, if I may call it so, that makes her quite enchanting. You see at once the rose that had bloomed untouched amid the chaste precincts of the cloister, Mr Butler."

True to the hint, Mr Butler failed not to start with his

"Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis," &c.

while his wife could hardly persuade herself that all this was spoken of Effie Deans, and by so competent a judge as the Duke of Argyle; and had she been acquainted with Catullus, would have thought the fortunes of her sister had reversed the whole passage.

She was, however, determined to obtain some

indemnification for the anxious feelings of the moment, by gaining all the intelligence she could; and therefore ventured to make some inquiry about the husband of the lady his Grace admired so much.

"He is very rich," replied the Duke; "of an ancient family, and has good manners; but he is far from being such a general favourite as his wife. Some people say he can be very pleasant — I never saw him so; but should rather judge him reserved, and gloomy, and capricious. He was very wild in his youth, they say, and has bad health; yet he is a good-looking man enough — a great friend of your Lord High Commissioner of the Kirk, Mr Butler."

"Then he is the friend of a very worthy and honourable nobleman," said Butler.

"Does he admire his lady as much as other people do?" said Jeanie, in a low voice.

"Who — Sir George? They say he is very fond of her," said the Duke; "but I observe she trembles a little when he fixes his eye on her, and that is no good sign — But it is strange how I am haunted by this resemblance of yours to Lady Staunton, in look and tone of voice. One would almost swear you were sisters."

Jeanie's distress became uncontrollable, and beyond concealment. The Duke of Argyle was much disturbed, good-naturedly ascribing it to his having unwittingly recalled to her remembrance her family misfortunes. He was too well-bred to attempt to apologize; but hastened to change the subject, and arrange certain points of dispute which had occurred betwixt Duncan of Knock and the minister, acknowledging that his worthy substitute was sometimes a little too obstinate, as well as too energetic, in his executive measures.

Mr Butler admitted his general merits; but said, "He would presume to apply to the worthy gentleman the words of the poet to Marrucinus Asinius,

'Manu ——
Non belle uteris in joco atque vino.'"

The discourse being thus turned on parish-business, nothing farther occurred that can interest the reader.

CHAPTER XLIX.

> Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
> And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
> Thence to be wrench'd by an unlineal hand,
> No son of mine succeeding.
>
> *Macbeth.*

After this period, but under the most strict precautions against discovery, the sisters corresponded occasionally, exchanging letters about twice every year. Those of Lady Staunton spoke of her husband's health and spirits as being deplorably uncertain; her own seemed also to be sinking, and one of the topics on which she most frequently dwelt was their want of family. Sir George Staunton, always violent, had taken some aversion at the next heir, whom he suspected of having irritated his friends against him during his absence; and he declared, he would bequeath Willingham and all its lands to an hospital, ere that fetch-and-carry tell-tale should inherit an acre of it.

"Had he but a child," said the unfortunate wife, "or had that luckless infant survived, it would be some motive for living and for exertion. But Heaven has denied us a blessing which we have not deserved."

Such complaints, in varied form, but turning frequently on the same topic, filled the letters which passed from the spacious but melancholy halls of Willingham, to the quiet and happy parsonage at Knocktarlitie. Years meanwhile rolled on amid these fruitless repinings. John, Duke of Argyle and Greenwich, died in the year 1743, universally lamented, but by none more than by the Butlers, to whom his benevolence had been so distinguished. He was succeeded by his brother Duke Archibald, with whom they had not the same intimacy; but who continued the protection which his brother had extended towards them. This, indeed, became more necessary than ever; for, after the breaking out and suppression of the rebellion in 1745, the peace of the country, adjacent to the Highlands, was considerably disturbed. Marauders, or men that had been driven to that desperate mode of life, quartered themselves in the fastnesses nearest to the Lowlands, which were their scene of plunder; and there is scarce a glen in the romantic and now peaceable Highlands of Perth, Stirling, and Dunbartonshire, where one or more did not take up their residence.

The prime pest of the parish of Knocktarlitie was a certain Donacha dhu na Dunaigh, or Black Duncan the Mischievous, whom we have already casually mentioned. This fellow had been originally a tinkler, or *caird*, many of whom stroll about these districts; but when all police was disorganized by the civil war, he threw up his profession, and from half thief became whole robber; and being generally at the head of three or four active young fellows, and he himself artful, bold, and well acquainted with the passes, he plied his new profession with emolument to himself, and infinite plague to the country.

All were convinced that Duncan of Knock could have put down his namesake Donacha any morning he had a mind; for there were in the parish a set of stout young men, who had joined Argyle's banner in the war under his old friend, and behaved very well upon several occasions. And as for their leader, as no one doubted his courage, it was generally supposed that Donacha had found out the mode of conciliating his favour, a thing not very uncommon in that age and country. This was the more readily believed, as David Deans's cattle (being the property of the Duke) were left untouched, when the minister's cows were carried off by the thieves. Another attempt was made to renew the same act of rapine, and the cattle were in the act of being driven off, when Butler, laying his profession aside in a case of such necessity, put himself at the head of some of his neighbours, and rescued the creagh, an exploit at which Deans attended in person, notwithstanding his extreme old age, mounted on a Highland pony, and girded with an old broadsword, likening himself (for he failed not to arrogate the whole merit of the expedition) to David, the son of Jesse, when he recovered the spoil of Ziklag from the Amalekites. This spirited behaviour had so far a good effect, that Donacha dhu na Dunaigh kept his distance for some time to come; and, though his distant exploits were frequently spoken of, he

did not exercise any depredations in that part of the country. He continued to flourish, and to be heard of occasionally, until the year 1751, when, if the fear of the second David had kept him in check, fate released him from that restraint, for the venerable patriarch of St Leonard's was that year gathered to his fathers.

David Deans died full of years and of honour. He is believed, for the exact time of his birth is not known, to have lived upwards of ninety years; for he used to speak of events as falling under his own knowledge, which happened about the time of the battle of Bothwell-Bridge. It was said that he even bore arms there; for once, when a drunken Jacobite laird wished for a Bothwell-Brigg whig, that "he might stow the lugs out of his head," David informed him with a peculiar austerity of countenance, that, if he liked to try such a prank, there was one at his elbow; and it required the interference of Butler to preserve the peace.

He expired in the arms of his beloved daughter, thankful for all the blessings which Providence had vouchsafed to him while in this valley of strife and toil—and thankful also for the trials he had been visited with; having found them, he said, needful to mortify that spiritual pride and confidence in his own gifts, which was the side on which the wily Enemy did most sorely beset him. He prayed in the most affecting manner for Jeanie, her husband, and her family, and that her affectionate duty to the puir auld man might purchase her length of days here, and happiness hereafter; then, in a pathetic petition, too well understood by those who knew his family circumstances, he besought the Shepherd of souls, while gathering his flock, not to forget the little one that had strayed from the fold, and even then might be in the hands of the ravening wolf.—He prayed for the national Jerusalem, that peace might be in her land, and prosperity in her palaces—for the welfare of the honourable House of Argyle, and for the conversion of Duncan of Knockdunder. After this he was silent, being exhausted, nor did he again utter any thing distinctly. He was heard, indeed, to mutter something about national defections, right-hand extremes, and left-hand fallings off; but, as May Hettly observed, his head was carried at the time; and it is probable that these expressions occurred to him merely out of general habit, and that he died in the full spirit of charity with all men. About an hour afterwards he slept in the Lord.

Notwithstanding her father's advanced age, his death was a severe shock to Mrs Butler. Much of her time had been dedicated to attending to his health and his wishes, and she felt as if part of her business in the world was ended, when the good old man was no more. His wealth, which came nearly to fifteen hundred pounds, in disposable capital, served to raise the fortunes of the family at the Manse. How to dispose of this sum for the best advantage of his family, was matter of anxious consideration to Butler. "If we put it on heritable bond, we shall maybe lose the interest; for there 's that bond over Lounsbeck's land, your father could neither get principal nor interest for it—If we bring it into the funds, we shall maybe lose the principal and all, as many did in the South Sea scheme. The little estate of Craigsture is in the market—it lies within two miles of the Manse, and Knock says his Grace has no thought to buy it. But they ask L.2500, and they may, for it is worth the money; and were I to borrow the balance, the creditor might call it up suddenly, or in case of my death my family might be distressed."

"And so, if we had mair siller, we might buy that bonny pasture-ground, where the grass comes so early?" asked Jeanie.

"Certainly, my dear; and Knockdunder, who is a good judge, is strongly advising me to it.—To be sure it is his nephew that is selling it."

"Aweel, Reuben," said Jeanie, "ye maun just look up a text in Scripture, as ye did when ye wanted siller before—just look up a text in the Bible."

"Ah, Jeanie," said Butler, laughing and pressing her hand at the same time, "the best people in these times can only work miracles once."

"We will see," said Jeanie composedly; and going to the closet in which she kept her honey, her sugar, her pots of jelly, her vials of the more ordinary medicines, and which served her, in short, as a sort of store-room, she jangled vials and gallipots, till, from out the darkest nook, well flanked by a triple row of bottles and jars, which she was under the necessity of displacing, she brought a cracked brown cann, with a piece of leather tied over the top. Its contents seemed to be written papers, thrust in disorder into this uncommon *secrétaire*. But from among these Jeanie brought an old clasped Bible, which had been David Deans's companion in his earlier wanderings, and which he had given to his daughter when the failure of his eyes had compelled him to use one of a larger print. This she gave to Butler, who had been looking at her motions with some surprise, and desired him to see what that book could do for him. He opened the clasps, and to his astonishment a parcel of L.50 bank-notes dropped out from betwixt the leaves, where they had been separately lodged, and fluttered upon the floor. "I didna think to hae tauld you o' my wealth, Reuben," said his wife, smiling at his surprise, "till on my deathbed, or maybe on some family pinch; but it wad be better laid out on yon bonny grass-holms, than lying useless here in this auld pigg."

"How on earth came ye by that siller, Jeanie?—Why, here is more than a thousand pounds," said Butler, lifting up and counting the notes.

"If it were ten thousand, it 's a' honestly come by," said Jeanie; "and troth I kenna how muckle there is o 't, but it 's a' there that ever I got.—And as for how I came by it, Reuben—it 's weel come by, and honestly, as I said before—And it 's mair folk's secret than mine, or ye wad hae kend about it lang syne; and as for ony thing else, I am not free to answer mair questions about it, and ye maun just ask me nane."

"Answer me but one," said Butler. "Is it all freely and indisputably your own property, to dispose of it as you think fit?—Is it possible no one has a claim in so large a sum except you?"

"It *was* mine, free to dispose of it as I like," answered Jeanie; "and I have disposed of it already, for now it is yours, Reuben—You are Bible Butler now, as weel as your forbear, that my puir father had sic an ill will at. Only, if ye like, I wad wish Femie to get a gude share o 't when we are gane."

"Certainly, it shall be as you choose—But who

on earth ever pitched on such a hiding-place for temporal treasures?"

"That is just ane o' my auld-fashioned gates, as you ca' them, Reuben. I thought if Donacha Dhu was to make an outbreak upon us, the Bible was the last thing in the house he wad meddle wi'—but an ony mair siller should drap in, as it is not unlikely, I shall e'en pay it ower to you, and ye may lay it out your ain way."

"And I positively must not ask you how you have come by all this money?" said the clergyman.

"Indeed, Reuben, you must not; for if you were asking me very sair I wad maybe tell you, and then I am sure I would do wrong."

"But tell me," said Butler, "is it any thing that distresses your own mind?"

"There is baith weal and woe come aye wi' warld's gear, Reuben; but ye maun ask me naething mair—This siller binds me to naething, and can never be speered back again."

"Surely," said Mr Butler, when he had again counted over the money, as if to assure himself that the notes were real, "there was never man in the world had a wife like mine—a blessing seems to follow her."

"Never," said Jeanie, "since the enchanted princess in the bairns' fairy tale, that kamed gold nobles out o' the tae side of her haffit locks, and Dutch dollars out o' the tother. But gang away now, minister, and put by the siller, and dinna keep the notes wampishing in your hand that gate, or I shall wish them in the brown pigg again, for fear we get a black cast about them—we 're ower near the hills in these times to be thought to hae siller in the house. And, besides, ye maun gree wi' Knockdunder, that has the selling o' the lands; and dinna you be simple and let him ken o' this windfa', but keep him to the very lowest penny, as if ye had to borrow siller to make the price up."

In the last admonition Jeanie shewed distinctly, that, although she did not understand how to secure the money which came into her hands otherwise than by saving and hoarding it, yet she had some part of her father David's shrewdness, even upon worldly subjects. And Reuben Butler was a prudent man, and went and did even as his wife had advised him.

The news quickly went abroad into the parish that the minister had bought Craigsture; and some wished him joy, and some "were sorry it had gane out of the auld name." However, his clerical brethren, understanding that he was under the necessity of going to Edinburgh about the ensuing Whitsunday, to get together David Deans's cash to make up the purchase-money of his new acquisition, took the opportunity to name him their delegate to the General Assembly, or Convocation of the Scottish Church, which takes place usually in the latter end of the month of May.

CHAPTER L.

> But who is this? what thing of sea or land—
> Female of sex it seems—
> That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
> Comes this way sailing?
>
> MILTON.

Not long after the incident of the Bible and the bank notes, Fortune shewed that she could surprise Mrs Butler as well as her husband. The minister, in order to accomplish the various pieces of business, which his unwonted visit to Edinburgh rendered necessary, had been under the necessity of setting out from home in the latter end of the month of February, concluding justly, that he would find the space betwixt his departure and the term of Whitsunday (24th May) short enough for the purpose of bringing forward those various debtors of old David Deans, out of whose purses a considerable part of the price of his new purchase was to be made good.

Jeanie was thus in the unwonted situation of inhabiting a lonely house, and she felt yet more solitary from the death of the good old man, who used to divide her cares with her husband. Her children were her principal resource, and to them she paid constant attention.

It happened, a day or two after Butler's departure, that, while she was engaged in some domestic duties, she heard a dispute among the young folk, which, being maintained with obstinacy, appeared to call for her interference. All came to their natural umpire with their complaints. Femie, not yet ten years old, charged Davie and Reubie with an attempt to take away her book by force; and David and Reuben replied, the elder, "That it was not a book for Femie to read," and Reuben, "That it was about a bad woman."

"Where did you get the book, ye little hempie?" said Mrs Butler. "How dare ye touch papa's books when he is away?"

But the little lady, holding fast a sheet of crumpled paper, declared, "It was nane o' papa's books, and May Hettly had taken it off the muckle cheese which came from Inverara;" for, as was very natural to suppose, a friendly intercourse, with interchange of mutual civilities, was kept up from time to time between Mrs Dolly Dutton, now Mrs MacCorkindale, and her former friends.

Jeanie took the subject of contention out of the child's hand, to satisfy herself of the propriety of her studies; but how much was she struck when she read upon the title of the broadside-sheet, "The Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words of Margaret MacCraw, or Murdockson, executed on Harabee-hill, near Carlisle, the — day of —— 1737." It was, indeed, one of those papers which Archibald had bought at Longtown, when he monopolized the pedlar's stock, which Dolly had thrust into her trunk out of sheer economy. One or two copies, it seems, had remained in her repositories at Inverary, till she chanced to need them in packing a cheese, which, as a very superior production, was sent, in the way of civil challenge, to the dairy at Knocktarlitie.

The title of this paper, so strangely fallen into the very hands from which, in well-meant respect to her feelings, it had been so long detained, was of itself sufficiently startling; but the narrative itself

was so interesting, that Jeanie, shaking herself loose from the children, ran up stairs to her own apartment, and bolted the door, to peruse it without interruption.

The narrative, which appeared to have been drawn up, or at least corrected, by the clergyman who attended this unhappy woman, stated the crime for which she suffered to have been "her active part in that atrocious robbery and murder, committed near two years since near Haltwhistle, for which the notorious Frank Levitt was committed for trial at Lancaster assizes. It was supposed the evidence of the accomplice Thomas Tuck, commonly called Tyburn Tom, upon which the woman had been convicted, would weigh equally heavy against him; although many were inclined to think it was Tuck himself who had struck the fatal blow, according to the dying statement of Meg Murdockson."

After a circumstantial account of the crime for which she suffered, there was a brief sketch of Margaret's life. It was stated, that she was a Scotchwoman by birth, and married a soldier in the Cameronian regiment—that she long followed the camp, and had doubtless acquired in fields of battle, and similar scenes, that ferocity and love of plunder for which she had been afterwards distinguished—that her husband, having obtained his discharge, became servant to a beneficed clergyman of high situation and character in Lincolnshire, and that she acquired the confidence and esteem of that honourable family. She had lost this many years after her husband's death, it was stated, in consequence of conniving at the irregularities of her daughter with the heir of the family, added to the suspicious circumstances attending the birth of a child, which was strongly suspected to have met with foul play, in order to preserve, if possible, the girl's reputation. After this, she had led a wandering life both in England and Scotland, under colour sometimes of telling fortunes, sometimes of driving a trade in smuggled wares, but, in fact, receiving stolen goods, and occasionally actively joining in the exploits by which they were obtained. Many of her crimes she had boasted of after conviction, and there was one circumstance for which she seemed to feel a mixture of joy and occasional compunction. When she was residing in the suburbs of Edinburgh during the preceding summer, a girl, who had been seduced by one of her confederates, was intrusted to her charge, and in her house delivered of a male infant. Her daughter, whose mind was in a state of derangement ever since she had lost her own child, according to the criminal's account, carried off the poor girl's infant, taking it for her own, of the reality of whose death she at times could not be persuaded.

Margaret Murdockson stated, that she, for some time, believed her daughter had actually destroyed the infant in her mad fits, and that she gave the father to understand so, but afterwards learned that a female stroller had got it from her. She shewed some compunction at having separated mother and child, especially as the mother had nearly suffered death, being condemned, on the Scotch law, for the supposed murder of her infant. When it was asked what possible interest she could have had in exposing the unfortunate girl to suffer for a crime she had not committed, she asked, if they thought she was going to put her own daughter into trouble to save another? She did not know what the Scotch law would have done to her for carrying the child away. This answer was by no means satisfactory to the clergyman, and he discovered, by close examination, that she had a deep and revengeful hatred against the young person whom she had thus injured. But the paper intimated, that, whatever besides she had communicated upon this subject, was confided by her in private to the worthy and reverend Archdeacon who had bestowed such particular pains in affording her spiritual assistance. The broadside went on to intimate, that, after her execution, of which the particulars were given, her daughter, the insane person mentioned more than once, and who was generally known by the name of Madge Wildfire, had been very ill used by the populace, under the belief that she was a sorceress, and an accomplice in her mother's crimes, and had been with difficulty rescued by the prompt interference of the police.

Such (for we omit moral reflections, and all that may seem unnecessary to the explanation of our story) was the tenor of the broadside. To Mrs Butler it contained intelligence of the highest importance, since it seemed to afford the most unequivocal proof of her sister's innocence respecting the crime for which she had so nearly suffered. It is true, neither she, nor her husband, nor even her father, had ever believed her capable of touching her infant with an unkind hand when in possession of her reason; but there was a darkness on the subject, and what might have happened in a moment of insanity was dreadful to think upon. Besides, whatever was their own conviction, they had no means of establishing Effie's innocence to the world, which, according to the tenor of this fugitive publication, was now at length completely manifested by the dying confession of the person chiefly interested in concealing it.

After thanking God for a discovery so dear to her feelings, Mrs Butler began to consider what use she should make of it. To have shewn it to her husband would have been her first impulse; but, besides that he was absent from home, and the matter too delicate to be the subject of correspondence by an indifferent penwoman, Mrs Butler recollected that he was not possessed of the information necessary to form a judgment upon the occasion; and that, adhering to the rule which she had considered as most advisable, she had best transmit the information immediately to her sister, and leave her to adjust with her husband the mode in which they should avail themselves of it. Accordingly, she despatched a special messenger to Glasgow, with a packet, enclosing the Confession of Margaret Murdockson, addressed, as usual, under cover, to Mr Whiterose of York. She expected, with anxiety, an answer, but none arrived in the usual course of post, and she was left to imagine how many various causes might account for Lady Staunton's silence. She began to be half sorry that she had parted with the printed paper, both for fear of its having fallen into bad hands, and from the desire of regaining the document, which might be essential to establish her sister's innocence. She was even doubting whether she had not better commit the whole matter to her husband's consideration, when other incidents occurred to divert her purpose.

Jeanie (she is a favourite, and we beg her pardon for still using the familiar title) had walked down to the sea-side with her children one morning after breakfast, when the boys, whose sight was more discriminating than hers, exclaimed, that "the Captain's coach and six was coming right for the shore, with ladies in it." Jeanie instinctively bent her eyes on the approaching boat, and became soon sensible that there were two females in the stern, seated beside the gracious Duncan, who acted as pilot. It was a point of politeness to walk towards the landing-place, in order to receive them, especially as she saw that the Captain of Knockdunder was upon honour and ceremony. His piper was in the bow of the boat, sending forth music, of which one half sounded the better that the other was drowned by the waves and the breeze. Moreover, he himself had his brigadier wig newly frizzed, his bonnet (he had abjured the cocked-hat) decorated with Saint George's red cross, his uniform mounted as a captain of militia, the Duke's flag with the boar's head displayed — all intimated parade and gala.

As Mrs Butler approached the landing-place, she observed the Captain hand the ladies ashore with marks of great attention, and the parties advanced towards her, the Captain a few steps before the two ladies, of whom the taller and elder leaned on the shoulder of the other, who seemed to be an attendant or servant.

As they met, Duncan, in his best, most important, and deepest tone of Highland civility, "pegged leave to introduce to Mrs Putler, Lady — eh — eh — I hae forgotten your leddyship's name!"

"Never mind my name, sir," said the lady; "I trust Mrs Butler will be at no loss. The Duke's letter" —— And, as she observed Mrs Butler look confused, she said again to Duncan something sharply, "Did you not send the letter last night, sir?"

"In troth and I didna, and I crave your leddyship's pardon; but you see, matam, I thought it would do as weel to-tay, pecause Mrs Putler is never taen out o' sorts — never — and the coach was out fishing — and the gig was gane to Greenock for a cag of prandy — and —— Put here's his Grace's letter."

"Give it me, sir," said the lady, taking it out of his hand; "since you have not found it convenient to do me the favour to send it before me, I will deliver it myself."

Mrs Butler looked with great attention, and a certain dubious feeling of deep interest, on the lady, who thus expressed herself with authority over the man of authority, and to whose mandates he seemed to submit, resigning the letter with a "Just as your leddyship is pleased to order it."

The lady was rather above the middle size, beautifully made, though something *embonpoint*, with a hand and arm exquisitely formed. Her manner was easy, dignified, and commanding, and seemed to evince high birth and the habits of elevated society. She wore a travelling dress — a grey beaver hat, and a veil of Flanders lace. Two footmen, in rich liveries, who got out of the barge, and lifted out a trunk and portmanteau, appeared to belong to her suite.

"As you did not receive the letter, madam, which should have served for my introduction — for I presume you are Mrs Butler — I will not present it to you till you are so good as to admit me into your house without it."

"To pe sure, matam," said Knockdunder, "ye canna doubt Mrs Putler will do that.—Mrs Putler, this is Lady — Lady — these tamned Southern names rin out o' my head like a stane trowling down hill — put I believe she is a Scottish woman porn — the mair our credit — and I presume her leddyship is of the house of ——"

"The Duke of Argyle knows my family very well, sir," said the lady, in a tone which seemed designed to silence Duncan, or, at any rate, which had that effect completely.

There was something about the whole of this stranger's address, and tone, and manner, which acted upon Jeanie's feelings like the illusions of a dream, that teaze us with a puzzling approach to reality. Something there was of her sister in the gait and manner of the stranger, as well as in the sound of her voice, and something also, when, lifting her veil, she shewed features, to which, changed as they were in expression and complexion, she could not but attach many remembrances.

The stranger was turned of thirty certainly; but so well were her personal charms assisted by the power of dress, and arrangement of ornament, that she might well have passed for one-and-twenty. And her behaviour was so steady and so composed, that, as often as Mrs Butler perceived anew some point of resemblance to her unfortunate sister, so often the sustained self-command and absolute composure of the stranger destroyed the ideas which began to arise in her imagination. She led the way silently towards the Manse, lost in a confusion of reflections, and trusting the letter with which she was to be there intrusted, would afford her satisfactory explanation of what was a most puzzling and embarrassing scene.

The lady maintained in the meanwhile the manners of a stranger of rank. She admired the various points of view like one who has studied nature, and the best representations of art. At length she took notice of the children.

"These are two fine young mountaineers — Yours, madam, I presume?"

Jeanie replied in the affirmative. The stranger sighed, and sighed once more as they were presented to her by name.

"Come here, Femie," said Mrs Butler, "and hold your head up."

"What is your daughter's name, madam?" said the lady.

"Euphemia, madam," answered Mrs Butler.

"I thought the ordinary Scottish contraction of the name had been Effie," replied the stranger, in a tone which went to Jeanie's heart; for in that single word there was more of her sister — more of *lang syne* ideas — than in all the reminiscences which her own heart had anticipated, or the features and manner of the stranger had suggested.

When they reached the Manse, the lady gave Mrs Butler the letter which she had taken out of the hands of Knockdunder; and as she gave it she pressed her hand, adding aloud, "Perhaps, madam, you will have the goodness to get me a little milk."

"And me a drap of the grey-peard, if you please, Mrs Putler," added Duncan.

Mrs Butler withdrew; but, deputing to May

Hettly and to David the supply of the strangers' wants, she hastened into her own room to read the letter. The envelop was addressed in the Duke of Argyle's hand, and requested Mrs Butler's attentions and civility to a lady of rank, a particular friend of his late brother, Lady Staunton of Willingham, who, being recommended to drink goats' whey by the physicians, was to honour the Lodge at Roseneath with her residence, while her husband made a short tour in Scotland. But within the same cover, which had been given to Lady Staunton unsealed, was a letter from that lady, intended to prepare her sister for meeting her, and which, but for the Captain's negligence, she ought to have received on the preceding evening. It stated that the news in Jeanie's last letter had been so interesting to her husband, that he was determined to inquire farther into the confession made at Carlisle, and the fate of that poor innocent, and that, as he had been in some degree successful, she had, by the most earnest entreaties, extorted rather than obtained his permission, under promise of observing the most strict incognito, to spend a week or two with her sister, or in her neighbourhood, while he was prosecuting researches, to which (though it appeared to her very vainly) he seemed to attach some hopes of success.

There was a postscript, desiring that Jeanie would trust to Lady S. the management of their intercourse, and be content with assenting to what she should propose. After reading and again reading the letter, Mrs Butler hurried down stairs, divided betwixt the fear of betraying her secret, and the desire to throw herself upon her sister's neck. Effie received her with a glance at once affectionate and cautionary, and immediately proceeded to speak.

"I have been telling Mr ——, Captain ——, this gentleman, Mrs Butler, that if you could accommodate me with an apartment in your house, and a place for Ellis to sleep, and for the two men, it would suit me better than the Lodge, which his Grace has so kindly placed at my disposal. I am advised I should reside as near where the goats feed as possible."

"I have peen assuring my leddy, Mrs Putler," said Duncan, "that though it could not discommode you to receive any of his Grace's visiters or mine, yet she had mooch petter stay at the Lodge; and for the gaits, the creatures can be fetched there, in respect it is mair fitting they suld wait upon her Leddyship, than she upon the like of them."

"By no means derange the goats for me," said Lady Staunton; "I am certain the milk must be much better here." And this she said with languid negligence, as one whose slightest intimation of humour is to bear down all argument.

Mrs Butler hastened to intimate, that her house, such as it was, was heartily at the disposal of Lady Staunton; but the Captain continued to remonstrate.

"The Duke," he said, "had written—"

"I will settle all that with his Grace—"

"And there were the things had been sent down frae Glasco—"

"Any thing necessary might be sent over to the Parsonage — She would beg the favour of Mrs Butler to shew her an apartment, and of the Captain to have her trunks, &c. sent over from Roseneath."

So she curtseyed off poor Duncan, who departed, saying in his secret soul, "Cot tamn her English impudence!—she takes possession of the minister's house as an it were her ain—and speaks to shentlemens as if they were pounden servants, and pe tamned to her!—And there 's the deer that was shot too—but we will send it ower to the Manse, whilk will pe put civil, seeing I hae prought worthy Mrs Putler sic a fliskmahoy."—And with these kind intentions, he went to the shore to give his orders accordingly.

In the meantime, the meeting of the sisters was as affectionate as it was extraordinary, and each evinced her feelings in the way proper to her character. Jeanie was so much overcome by wonder, and even by awe, that her feelings were deep, stunning, and almost overpowering. Effie, on the other hand, wept, laughed, sobbed, screamed, and clapped her hands for joy, all in the space of five minutes, giving way at once, and without reserve, to a natural excessive vivacity of temper, which no one, however, knew better how to restrain under the rules of artificial breeding.

After an hour had passed like a moment in their expressions of mutual affection, Lady Staunton observed the Captain walking with impatient steps below the window. "That tiresome Highland fool has returned upon our hands," she said. "I will pray him to grace us with his absence."

"Hout no! hout no!" said Mrs Butler, in a tone of entreaty; "ye maunna affront the Captain."

"Affront?" said Lady Staunton; "nobody is ever affronted at what I do or say, my dear. However, I will endure him, since you think it proper."

The Captain was accordingly graciously requested by Lady Staunton to remain during dinner. During this visit his studious and punctilious complaisance towards the lady of rank was happily contrasted by the cavalier air of civil familiarity in which he indulged towards the minister's wife.

"I have not been able to persuade Mrs Butler," said Lady Staunton to the Captain, during the interval when Jeanie had left the parlour, "to let me talk of making any recompense for storming her house, and garrisoning it in the way I have done."

"Doubtless, matam," said the Captain, "it wad ill pecome Mrs Putler, wha is a very decent pody, to make any such sharge to a lady who comes from my house, or his Grace's, which is the same thing. —And, speaking of garrisons, in the year forty-five, I was poot with a garrison of twenty of my lads in the house of Inver-Garry, whilk had near been unhappily, for——"

"I beg your pardon, sir—But I wish I could think of some way of indemnifying this good lady."

"O, no need of intemnifying at all—no trouble for her, nothing at all.—So, peing in the house of Inver-Garry, and the people about it being uncanny, I doubted the warst, and——"

"Do you happen to know, sir," said Lady Staunton, "if any of these two lads, these young Butlers, I mean, shew any turn for the army?"

"Could not say, indeed, my leddy," replied Knockdunder—"So, I knowing the people to pe unchancy, and not to lippen to, and hearing a pibroch in the wood, I pegan to pid my lads look to their flints, and then——"

"For," said Lady Staunton, with the most ruthless disregard to the narrative which she mangled by these interruptions, "if that should be the case,

it should cost Sir George but the asking a pair of colours for one of them at the War-office, since we have always supported government, and never had occasion to trouble ministers."

"And if you please, my leddy," said Duncan, who began to find some savour in this proposal, "as I hae a braw weel-grown lad of a nevoy, ca'd Duncan MacGilligan, that is as pig as paith the Putler pairns putten thegither, Sir George could ask a pair for him at the same time, and it wad pe put ae asking for a'."

Lady Staunton only answered this hint with a well-bred stare, which gave no sort of encouragement.

Jeanie, who now returned, was lost in amazement at the wonderful difference betwixt the helpless and despairing girl, whom she had seen stretched on a flock-bed in a dungeon, expecting a violent and disgraceful death, and last as a forlorn exile upon the midnight beach, with the elegant, well-bred, beautiful woman before her. The features, now that her sister's veil was laid aside, did not appear so extremely different, as the whole manner, expression, look, and bearing. In outside show, Lady Staunton seemed completely a creature too soft and fair for sorrow to have touched; so much accustomed to have all her whims complied with by those around her, that she seemed to expect she should even be saved the trouble of forming them; and so totally unacquainted with contradiction, that she did not even use the tone of self-will, since to breathe a wish was to have it fulfilled. She made no ceremony of ridding herself of Duncan as soon as the evening approached; but complimented him out of the house under pretext of fatigue, with the utmost *nonchalance*.

When they were alone, her sister could not help expressing her wonder at the self-possession with which Lady Staunton sustained her part.

"I daresay you are surprised at it," said Lady Staunton composedly; "for you, my dear Jeanie, have been truth itself from your cradle upwards; but you must remember that I am a liar of fifteen years' standing, and therefore must by this time be used to my character."

In fact, during the feverish tumult of feelings excited during the two or three first days, Mrs Butler thought her sister's manner was completely contradictory of the desponding tone which pervaded her correspondence. She was moved to tears, indeed, by the sight of her father's grave, marked by a modest stone, recording his piety and integrity; but lighter impressions and associations had also power over her. She amused herself with visiting the dairy, in which she had so long been assistant, and was so near discovering herself to May Hettly, by betraying her acquaintance with the celebrated receipt for Dunlop cheese, that she compared herself to Bedreddin Hassan, whom the vizier, his father-in-law, discovered by his superlative skill in composing cream-tarts with pepper in them. But when the novelty of such avocations ceased to amuse her, she shewed to her sister but too plainly, that the gaudy colouring with which she veiled her unhappiness afforded as little real comfort, as the gay uniform of the soldier when it is drawn over his mortal wound. There were moods and moments, in which her despondence seemed to exceed even that which she herself had described in her letters, and which too well convinced Mrs Butler how little her sister's lot, which in apppearance was so brilliant, was in reality to be envied.

There was one source, however, from which Lady Staunton derived a pure degree of pleasure. Gifted in every particular with a higher degree of imagination than that of her sister, she was an admirer of the beauties of nature, a taste which compensates many evils to those who happen to enjoy it. Here her character of a fine lady stopped short, where she ought to have

> "Scream'd at ilk cleugh, and screech'd at ilka how,
> As loud as she had seen the worrie-cow."

On the contrary, with the two boys for her guides, she undertook long and fatiguing walks among the neighbouring mountains, to visit glens, lakes, waterfalls, or whatever scenes of natural wonder or beauty lay concealed among their recesses. It is Wordsworth, I think, who, talking of an old man under difficulties, remarks, with a singular attention to nature,

> "—— whether it was care that spurr'd him,
> God only knows; but to the very last,
> He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale."

In the same manner, languid, listless, and unhappy, within doors, at times even indicating something which approached near to contempt of the homely accommodations of her sister's house, although she instantly endeavoured, by a thousand kindnesses, to atone for such ebullitions of spleen, Lady Staunton appeared to feel interest and energy while in the open air, and traversing the mountain landscapes in society with the two boys, whose ears she delighted with stories of what she had seen in other countries, and what she had to shew them at Willingham Manor. And they, on the other hand, exerted themselves in doing the honours of Dunbartonshire to the lady who seemed so kind, insomuch that there was scarce a glen in the neighbouring hills to which they did not introduce her.

Upon one of these excursions, while Reuben was otherwise employed, David alone acted as Lady Staunton's guide, and promised to shew her a cascade in the hills, grander and higher than any they had yet visited. It was a walk of five long miles, and over rough ground, varied, however, and cheered, by mountain views, and peeps now of the firth and its islands, now of distant lakes, now of rocks and precipices. The scene itself, too, when they reached it, amply rewarded the labour of the walk. A single shoot carried a considerable stream over the face of a black rock, which contrasted strongly in colour with the white foam of the cascade, and, at the depth of about twenty feet, another rock intercepted the view of the bottom of the fall. The water, wheeling out far beneath, swept round the crag, which thus bounded their view, and tumbled down the rocky glen in a torrent of foam. Those who love nature always desire to penetrate into its utmost recesses, and Lady Staunton asked David whether there was not some mode of gaining a view of the abyss at the foot of the fall. He said that he knew a station on a shelf on the farther side of the intercepting rock, from which the whole waterfall was visible, but that the road to it was steep and slippery and dangerous. Bent, however, on gratifying her curiosity, she desired him to lead the way; and accordingly he did so over crag and stone, anxiously pointing out to her the resting-

places where she ought to step, for their mode of advancing soon ceased to be walking, and became scrambling.

In this manner, clinging like sea-birds to the face of the rock, they were enabled at length to turn round it, and came full in front of the fall, which here had a most tremendous aspect, boiling, roaring, and thundering with unceasing din, into a black cauldron, a hundred feet at least below them, which resembled the crater of a volcano. The noise, the dashing of the waters, which gave an unsteady appearance to all around them, the trembling even of the huge crag on which they stood, the precariousness of their footing, for there was scarce room for them to stand on the shelf of rock which they had thus attained, had so powerful an effect on the senses and imagination of Lady Staunton, that she called out to David she was falling, and would in fact have dropped from the crag had he not caught hold of her. The boy was bold and stout of his age—still he was but fourteen years old, and as his assistance gave no confidence to Lady Staunton, she felt her situation become really perilous. The chance was, that, in the appalling novelty of the circumstances, he might have caught the infection of her panic, in which case it is likely that both must have perished. She now screamed with terror, though without hope of calling any one to her assistance. To her amazement, the scream was answered by a whistle from above, of a tone so clear and shrill, that it was heard even amid the noise of the waterfall.

In this moment of terror and perplexity, a human face, black, and having grizzled hair hanging down over the forehead and cheeks, and mixing with mustaches and a beard of the same colour, and as much matted and tangled, looked down on them from a broken part of the rock above.

"It is the Enemy!" said the boy, who had very nearly become incapable of supporting Lady Staunton.

"No, no," she exclaimed, inaccessible to supernatural terrors, and restored to the presence of mind of which she had been deprived by the danger of her situation, "it is a man—For God's sake, my friend, help us!"

The face glared at them, but made no answer; in a second or two afterwards, another, that of a young lad, appeared beside the first, equally swart and begrimed, but having tangled black hair, descending in elf-locks, whicl gave an air of wildness and ferocity to the whole expression of the countenance. Lady Staunton repeated her entreaties, clinging to the rock with more energy, as she found that, from the superstitious terror of her guide, he became incapable of supporting her. Her words were probably drowned in the roar of the falling stream, for, though she observed the lips of the younger being whom she supplicated move as he spoke in reply, not a word reached her ear.

A moment afterwards it appeared he had not mistaken the nature of her supplication, which, indeed, was easy to be understood from her situation and gestures. The younger apparition disappeared, and immediately after lowered a ladder of twisted osiers, about eight feet in length, and made signs to David to hold it fast while the lady ascended. Despair gives courage, and finding herself in this fearful predicament, Lady Staunton did not hesitate to risk the ascent by the precarious means which this accommodation afforded; and, carefully assisted by the person who had thus providentially come to her aid, she reached the summit in safety. She did not, however, even look around her until she saw her nephew lightly and actively follow her example, although there was now no one to hold the ladder fast. When she saw him safe she looked round, and could not help shuddering at the place and company in which she found herself. They were on a sort of platform of rock, surrounded on every side by precipices, or overhanging cliffs, and which it would have been scarce possible for any research to have discovered, as it did not seem to be commanded by any accessible position. It was partly covered by a huge fragment of stone, which, having fallen from the cliffs above, had been intercepted by others in its descent, and jammed so as to serve for a sloping roof to the farther part of the broad shelf or platform on which they stood. A quantity of withered moss and leaves, strewed beneath this rude and wretched shelter, shewed the lairs,—they could not be termed the beds,—of those who dwelt in this eyry, for it deserved no other name. Of these, two were before Lady Staunton. One, the same who had afforded such timely assistance, stood upright before them, a tall, lathy, young savage; his dress a tattered plaid and philabeg, no shoes, no stockings, no hat or bonnet, the place of the last being supplied by his hair, twisted and matted like the *glibbe* of the ancient wild Irish, and, like theirs, forming a natural thickset, stout enough to bear off the cut of a sword. Yet the eyes of the lad were keen and sparkling; his gesture free and noble, like that of all savages. He took little notice of David Butler, but gazed with wonder on Lady Staunton, as a being different probably in dress, and superior in beauty, to any thing he had ever beheld. The old man, whose face they had first seen, remained recumbent in the same posture as when he had first looked down on them, only his face was turned towards them as he lay and looked up with a lazy and listless apathy, which belied the general expression of his dark and rugged features. He seemed a very tall man, but was scarce better clad than the younger. He had on a loose Lowland great-coat, and ragged tartan trews or pantaloons.

All around looked singularly wild and unpropitious. Beneath the brow of the incumbent rock was a charcoal fire, on which there was a still working, with bellows, pincers, hammers, a moveable anvil, and other smith's tools; three guns, with two or three sacks and barrels, were disposed against the wall of rock, under shelter of the superincumbent crag; a dirk and two swords, and a Lochaber-axe, lay scattered around the fire, of which the red glare cast a ruddy tinge on the precipitous foam and mist of the cascade. The lad, when he had satisfied his curiosity with staring at Lady Staunton, fetched an earthen jar and a horn cup, into which he poured some spirits, apparently hot from the still, and offered them successively to the lady and to the boy. Both declined, and the young savage quaffed off the draught, which could not amount to less than three ordinary glasses. He then fetched another ladder from the corner of the cavern, if it could be termed so, adjusted it against the transverse rock, which served as a roof, and made signs for the lady to ascend it, while he held it fast below. She did so, and found herself

on the top of a broad rock, near the brink of the chasm into which the brook precipitates itself. She could see the crest of the torrent flung loose down the rock, like the mane of a wild horse, but without having any view of the lower platform from which she had ascended.

David was not suffered to mount so easily; the lad, from sport or love of mischief, shook the ladder a good deal as he ascended, and seemed to enjoy the terror of young Butler, so that, when they had both come up, they looked on each other with no friendly eyes. Neither, however, spoke. The young caird, or tinker, or gipsy, with a good deal of attention, assisted Lady Staunton up a very perilous ascent which she had still to encounter, and they were followed by David Butler, until all three stood clear of the ravine on the side of a mountain, whose sides were covered with heather and sheets of loose shingle. So narrow was the chasm out of which they ascended, that, unless when they were on the very verge, the eye passed to the other side without perceiving the existence of a rent so fearful, and nothing was seen of the cataract, though its deep hoarse voice was still heard.

Lady Staunton, freed from the danger of rock and river, had now a new subject of anxiety. Her two guides confronted each other with angry countenances; for David, though younger by two years at least, and much shorter, was a stout, well-set, and very bold boy.

"You are the black-coat's son of Knocktarlitie," said the young caird; "if you come here again, I'll pitch you down the linn like a foot-ball."

"Ay, lad, ye are very short to be sae lang," retorted young Butler undauntedly, and measuring his opponent's height with an undismayed eye; "I am thinking you are a gillie of Black Donacha; if you come down the glen, we 'll shoot you like a wild buck."

"You may tell your father," said the lad, "that the leaf on the timber is the last he shall see — we will hae amends for the mischief he has done to us."

"I hope he will live to see mony simmers, and do ye muckle mair," answered David.

More might have passed, but Lady Staunton stepped between them with her purse in her hand, and taking out a guinea, of which it contained several, visible through the net-work, as well as some silver in the opposite end, offered it to the caird.

"The white siller, lady — the white siller," said the young savage, to whom the value of gold was probably unknown.

Lady Staunton poured what silver she had into his hand, and the juvenile savage snatched it greedily, and made a sort of half inclination of acknowledgment and adieu.

"Let us make haste now, Lady Staunton," said David, "for there will be little peace with them since they hae seen your purse."

They hurried on as fast as they could; but they had not descended the hill a hundred yards or two before they heard a halloo behind them, and looking back, saw both the old man and the young one pursuing them with great speed, the former with a gun on his shoulder. Very fortunately, at this moment a sportsman, a gamekeeper of the Duke, who was engaged in stalking deer, appeared on the face of the hill. The bandits stopped on seeing him, and Lady Staunton hastened to put herself under his protection. He readily gave them his escort home, and it required his athletic form and loaded rifle to restore to the lady her usual confidence and courage.

Donald listened with much gravity to the account of their adventure; and answered with great composure to David's repeated inquiries, whether he could have suspected that the cairds had been lurking there, — "Inteed, Master Tavie, I might hae had some guess that they were there, or thereabout, though maybe I had nane. But I am aften on the hill; and they are like wasps — they stang only them that fashes them; sae, for my part, I make a point not to see them, unless I were ordered out on the preceese errand by MacCallummore or Knockdunder, whilk is a clean different case."

They reached the Manse late; and Lady Staunton, who had suffered much both from fright and fatigue, never again permitted her love of the picturesque to carry her so far among the mountains without a stronger escort than David, though she acknowledged he had won the stand of colours by the intrepidity he had displayed, so soon as assured he had to do with an earthly antagonist. "I couldna maybe, hae made muckle o' a bargain wi' yon lang callant," said David, when thus complimented on his valour; "but when ye deal wi' thae folk, it 's tyne heart tyne a'."

CHAPTER LI.

> —— What see you there,
> That hath so cowarded and chased your blood
> Out of appearance?
>
> *Henry the Fifth.*

We are under the necessity of returning to Edinburgh, where the General Assembly was now sitting. It is well known, that some Scottish nobleman is usually deputed as High Commissioner, to represent the person of the King in this convocation; that he has allowances for the purpose of maintaining a certain outward show and solemnity, and supporting the hospitality of the representative of Majesty. Whoever are distinguished by rank, or office, in or near the capital, usually attend the morning levees of the Lord Commissioner, and walk with him in procession to the place where the Assembly meets.

The nobleman who held this office chanced to be particularly connected with Sir George Staunton, and it was in his train that he ventured to tread the High Street of Edinburgh for the first time since the fatal night of Porteous's execution. Walking at the right hand of the representative of Sovereignty, covered with lace and embroidery, and with all the paraphernalia of wealth and rank, the handsome though wasted figure of the English stranger attracted all eyes. Who could have recognized in a form so aristocratic the plebeian convict, that, disguised in the rags of Madge Wildfire, had led the formidable rioters to thier destined revenge? There was no possibility that this could happen, even if any of his ancient acquaintances, a race of men whose lives are so brief, had happened to survive the span commonly allotted to evil-doers. Besides, the whole affair had long fallen asleep, with the angry passions in which it origi-

nated. Nothing is more certain than that persons known to have had a share in that formidable riot, and to have fled from Scotland on that account, had made money abroad, returned to enjoy it in their native country, and lived and died undisturbed by the law.[1] The forbearance of the magistrate was in these instances wise, certainly, and just; for what good impression could be made on the public mind by punishment, when the memory of the offence was obliterated, and all that was remembered was the recent inoffensive, or perhaps exemplary, conduct of the offender?

Sir George Staunton might, therefore, tread the scene of his former audacious exploits, free from the apprehension of the law, or even of discovery or suspicion. But with what feelings his heart that day throbbed, must be left to those of the reader to imagine. It was an object of no common interest which had brought him to encounter so many painful remembrances.

In consequence of Jeanie's letter to Lady Staunton, transmitting the confession, he had visited the town of Carlisle, and had found Archdeacon Fleming still alive, by whom that confession had been received. This reverend gentleman, whose character stood deservedly very high, he so far admitted into his confidence, as to own himself the father of the unfortunate infant which had been spirited away by Madge Wildfire, representing the intrigue as a matter of juvenile extravagance on his own part, for which he was now anxious to atone, by tracing, if possible, what had become of the child. After some recollection of the circumstances, the clergyman was able to call to memory, that the unhappy woman had written a letter to George Staunton, Esq. younger, Rectory, Willingham, by Grantham; that he had forwarded it to the address accordingly, and that it had been returned, with a note from the Reverend Mr Staunton, Rector of Willingham, saying, he knew no such person as him to whom the letter was addressed. As this had happened just at the time when George had, for the last time, absconded from his father's house to carry off Effie, he was at no loss to account for the cause of the resentment, under the influence of which his father had disowned him. This was another instance in which his ungovernable temper had occasioned his misfortune; had he remained at Willingham but a few days longer, he would have received Margaret Murdockson's letter, in which was exactly described the person and haunts of the woman, Annaple Bailzou, to whom she had parted with the infant. It appeared that Meg Murdockson had been induced to make this confession, less from any feelings of contrition, than from the desire of obtaining, through George Staunton or his father's means, protection and support for her daughter Madge. Her letter to George Staunton said, "That while the writer lived, her daughter would have needed nought from any body, and that she would never have meddled in these affairs, except to pay back the ill that George had done to her and hers. But she was to die, and her daughter would be destitute, and without reason to guide her. She had lived in the world long enough to know that people did nothing for nothing;— so she had told George Staunton all he could wish to know about his wean, in hopes he would not see the demented young creature he had ruined perish for want. As for her motives for not telling them sooner, she had a long account to reckon for in the next world, and she would reckon for that too."

The clergyman said, that Meg had died in the same desperate state of mind, occasionally expressing some regret about the child which was lost, but oftener sorrow that the mother had not been hanged —her mind at once a chaos of guilt, rage, and apprehension for her daughter's future safety; that instinctive feeling of parental anxiety which she had in common with the she-wolf and lioness, being the last shade of kindly affection that occupied a breast equally savage.

The melancholy catastrophe of Madge Wildfire was occasioned by her taking the confusion of her mother's execution, as affording an opportunity of leaving the workhouse to which the clergyman had sent her, and presenting herself to the mob in their fury, to perish in the way we have already seen. When Dr Fleming found the convict's letter was returned from Lincolnshire, he wrote to a friend in Edinburgh, to inquire into the fate of the unfortunate girl whose child had been stolen, and was informed by his correspondent, that she had been pardoned, and that, with all her family, she had retired to some distant part of Scotland, or left the kingdom entirely. And here the matter rested, until, at Sir George Staunton's application, the clergyman looked out, and produced Margaret Murdockson's returned letter, and the other memoranda which he had kept concerning the affair.

Whatever might be Sir George Staunton's feelings in ripping up this miserable history, and listening to the tragical fate of the unhappy girl whom he had ruined, he had so much of his ancient wilfulness of disposition left, as to shut his eyes on every thing, save the prospect which seemed to open itself of recovering his son. It was true, it would be difficult to produce him, without telling much more of the history of his birth, and the misfortunes of his parents, than it was prudent to make known. But let him once be found, and, being found, let him but prove worthy of his father's protection, and many ways might be fallen upon to avoid such risk. Sir George Staunton was at liberty to adopt him as his heir, if he pleased, without communicating the secret of his birth; or an act of parliament might be obtained, declaring him legitimate, and allowing him the name and arms of his father. He was, indeed, already a legitimate child according to the law of Scotland, by the subsequent marriage of his parents. Wilful in every thing, Sir George's sole desire now was to see this son, even should his recovery bring with it a new series of misfortunes, as dreadful as those which followed on his being lost.

But where was the youth who might eventually be called to the honours and estates of this ancient family? On what heath was he wandering, and shrouded by what mean disguise? Did he gain his precarious bread by some petty trade, by menial toil, by violence, or by theft? These were questions on which Sir George's anxious investigations could obtain no light. Many remembered that Annaple Bailzou wandered through the country as a beggar and fortune-teller, or spae-wife—some remembered that she had been seen with an infant in 1737 or 1738, but for more than ten years she had not travelled that district; and that she had been heard

[1] See Arnot's Criminal Trials, 4to. ed. p. 235.

to say she was going to a distant part of Scotland, of which country she was a native. To Scotland, therefore, came Sir George Staunton, having parted with his lady at Glasgow; and his arrival at Edinburgh happening to coincide with the sitting of the General Assembly of the Kirk, his acquaintance with the nobleman who held the office of Lord High Commissioner forced him more into public than suited either his views or inclinations.

At the public table of this nobleman, Sir George Staunton was placed next to a clergyman of respectable appearance, and well-bred, though plain demeanour, whose name he discovered to be Butler. It had been no part of Sir George's plan to take his brother-in-law into his confidence, and he had rejoiced exceedingly in the assurances he received from his wife, that Mrs Butler, the very soul of integrity and honour, had never suffered the account he had given of himself at Willingham Rectory to transpire, even to her husband. But he was not sorry to have an opportunity to converse with so near a connection, without being known to him, and to form a judgment of his character and understanding. He saw much, and heard more, to raise Butler very high in his opinion. He found he was generally respected by those of his own profession, as well as by the laity who had seats in the Assembly. He had made several public appearances in the Assembly, distinguished by good sense, candour, and ability; and he was followed and admired as a sound, and, at the same time, an eloquent preacher.

This was all very satisfactory to Sir George Staunton's pride, which had revolted at the idea of his wife's sister being obscurely married. He now began, on the contrary, to think the connection so much better than he expected, that, if it should be necessary to acknowledge it, in consequence of the recovery of his son, it would sound well enough that Lady Staunton had a sister, who, in the decayed state of the family, had married a Scottish clergyman, high in the opinion of his countrymen, and a leader in the church.

It was with these feelings, that, when the Lord High Commissioner's company broke up, Sir George Staunton, under pretence of prolonging some inquiries concerning the constitution of the Church of Scotland, requested Butler to go home to his lodgings in the Lawnmarket, and drink a cup of coffee. Butler agreed to wait upon him, providing Sir George would permit him, in passing, to call at a friend's house where he resided, and make his apology for not coming to partake her tea. They proceeded up the High Street, entered the Krames, and passed the begging-box, placed to remind those at liberty of the distresses of the poor prisoners. Sir George paused there one instant, and next day a L.20 note was found in that receptacle for public charity.

When he came up to Butler again, he found him with his eyes fixed on the entrance of the Tolbooth, and apparently in deep thought.

"That seems a very strong door," said Sir George, by way of saying something.

"It is so, sir," said Butler, turning off and beginning to walk forward, "but it was my misfortune at one time to see it prove greatly too weak."

At this moment, looking at his companion, he asked him whether he felt himself ill? and Sir George Staunton admitted, that he had been so foolish as to eat ice, which sometimes disagreed with him. With kind officiousness, that would not be gainsaid, and ere he could find out where he was going, Butler hurried Sir George into the friend's house, near to the prison, in which he himself had lived since he came to town, being, indeed, no other than that of our old friend Bartoline Saddletree, in which Lady Staunton had served a short noviciate as a shop-maid. This recollection rushed on her husband's mind, and the blush of shame which it excited overpowered the sensation of fear which had produced his former paleness. Good Mrs Saddletree, however, bustled about to receive the rich English baronet as the friend of Mr Butler, and requested an elderly female in a black gown to sit still, in a way which seemed to imply a wish, that she would clear the way for her betters. In the meanwhile, understanding the state of the case, she ran to get some cordial waters, sovereign, of course, in all cases of faintishness whatsoever. During her absence, her visiter, the female in black, made some progress out of the room, and might have left it altogether without particular observation, had she not stumbled at the threshold, so near Sir George Staunton, that he, in point of civility, raised her and assisted her to the door.

"Mrs Porteous is turned very doited now, puir body," said Mrs Saddletree, as she returned with her bottle in her hand — "She is no sae auld, but she got a sair back-cast wi' the slaughter o' her husband — Ye had some trouble about that job, Mr Butler. — I think, sir," to Sir George, "ye had better drink out the haill glass, for to my een ye look waur than when ye came in."

And, indeed, he grew as pale as a corpse, on recollecting who it was that his arm had so lately supported — the widow whom he had so large a share in making such.

"It is a prescribed job that case of Porteous now," said old Saddletree, who was confined to his chair by the gout — "clean prescribed and out of date."

"I am not clear of that, neighbour," said Plumdamas, "for I have heard them say twenty years should rin, and this is but the fifty-ane — Porteous's mob was in thretty-seven."

"Ye 'll no teach me law, I think, neighbour — me that has four gaun pleas, and might hae had fourteen, an it hadna been the gudewife? I tell ye, if the foremost of the Porteous mob were standing there where that gentleman stands, the King's Advocate wadna meddle wi' him — it fa's under the negative prescription."

"Haud your din, carles," said Mrs Saddletree, "and let the gentleman sit down and get a dish of comfortable tea."

But Sir George had had quite enough of their conversation; and Butler, at his request, made an apology to Mrs Saddletree, and accompanied him to his lodgings. Here they found another guest waiting Sir George Staunton's return. This was no other than our reader's old acquaintance Ratcliffe.

This man had exercised the office of turnkey with so much vigilance, acuteness, and fidelity, that he gradually rose to be governor, or captain of the Tolbooth. And it is yet remembered in tradition, that young men, who rather sought amusing than select society in their merry-meetings, used some-

times to request Ratcliffe's company, in order that he might regale them with legends of his extraordinary feats in the way of robbery and escape.[1] But he lived and died without resuming his original vocation, otherwise than in his narratives over a bottle.

Under these circumstances, he had been recommended to Sir George Staunton by a man of the law in Edinburgh, as a person likely to answer any questions he might have to ask about Annaple Bailzou, who, according to the colour which Sir George Staunton gave to his cause of inquiry, was supposed to have stolen a child in the west of England, belonging to a family in which he was interested. The gentleman had not mentioned his name, but only his official title; so that Sir George Staunton, when told that the captain of the Tolbooth was waiting for him in his parlour, had no idea of meeting his former acquaintance, Jem Ratcliffe.

This, therefore, was another new and most unpleasant surprise, for he had no difficulty in recollecting this man's remarkable features. The change, however, from George Robertson to Sir George Staunton, baffled even the penetration of Ratcliffe, and he bowed very low to the baronet and his guest, hoping Mr Butler would excuse his recollecting that he was an old acquaintance.

"And onee rendered my wife a piece of great service," said Mr Butler, "for which she sent you a token of grateful acknowledgment, which I hope came safe and was welcome."

"Deil a doubt on't," said Ratcliffe, with a knowing nod; "but ye are muckle changed for the better since I saw ye, Maister Butler."

"So much so, that I wonder you knew me."

"Aha, then!—Deil a face I see I ever forget," said Ratcliffe; while Sir George Staunton, tied to the stake, and incapable of escaping, internally cursed the accuracy of his memory. "And yet, sometimes," continued Ratcliffe, "the sharpest hand will be ta'en in. There is a face in this very room, if I might presume to be sae bauld, that if I didna ken the honourable person it belangs to, I might think it had some cast of an auld acquaintance.

"I should not be much flattered," answered the Baronet, sternly, and roused by the risk in which he saw himself placed, "if it is to me you mean to apply that compliment."

"By no manner of means, sir," said Ratcliffe, bowing very low; "I am come to receive your honour's commands, and no to trouble your honour wi' my poor observations."

"Well, sir," said Sir George, "I am told you understand police matters—So do I.—To convince you of which, here are ten guineas of retaining fee—I make them fifty when you can find me certain notice of a person, living or dead, whom you will find described in that paper. I shall leave town presently—you may send your written answer to me to the care of Mr ——," (naming his highly respectable agent,) "or of his Grace the Lord High Commissioner." Ratcliffe bowed and withdrew.

"I have angered the proud peat now," he said to himself, "by finding out a likeness; but if George Robertson's father had lived within a mile of his mother, d—n me if I should know what to think, for as high as he carries his head."

When he was left alone with Butler, Sir George Staunton ordered tea and coffee, which were brought by his valet, and then, after considering with himself for a minute, asked his guest whether he had lately heard from his wife and family. Butler, with some surprise at the question, replied, "that he had received no letter for some time; his wife was a poor pen-woman."

"Then," said Sir George Staunton, "I am the first to inform you there has been an invasion of your quiet premises since you left home. My wife, whom the Duke of Argyle had the goodness to permit to use Roseneath Lodge, while she was spending some weeks in your country, has sallied across and taken up her quarters in the Manse, as she says, to be nearer the goats, whose milk she is using; but I believe, in reality, because she prefers Mrs Butler's company to that of the respectable gentleman who acts as seneschal on the Duke's domains."

Mr Butler said, "he had often heard the late Duke and the present speak with high respect of Lady Staunton, and was happy if his house could accommodate any friend of theirs—it would be but a very slight acknowledgment of the many favours he owed them."

"That does not make Lady Staunton and myself the less obliged to your hospitality, sir," said Sir George. "May I inquire if you think of returning home soon?"

"In the course of two days," Mr Butler answered, "his duty in the Assembly would be ended; and the other matters he had in town being all finished, he was desirous of returning to Dunbartonshire as soon as he could; but he was under the necessity of transporting a considerable sum in bills and money with him, and therefore wished to travel in company with one or two of his brethren of the clergy."

"My escort will be more safe," said Sir George Staunton, "and I think of setting off to-morrow or next day. If you will give me the pleasure of your company, I will undertake to deliver you and your charge safe at the Manse, provided you will admit me along with you."

Mr Butler gratefully accepted of this proposal; the appointment was made accordingly, and by despatches with one of Sir George's servants, who was sent forward for the purpose, the inhabitants of the manse of Knocktarlitie were made acquainted with the intended journey; and the news rung through the whole vicinity, "that the minister was coming back wi' a braw English gentleman and a' the siller that was to pay for the estate of Craigsture."

This sudden resolution of going to Knocktarlitie had been adopted by Sir George Staunton in consequence of the incidents of the evening. In spite of his present consequence, he felt he had presumed too far in venturing so near the scene of his former audacious acts of violence, and he knew too well, from past experience, the acuteness of a man like Ratcliffe, again to encounter him. The next two days he kept his lodgings, under pretence of indisposition, and took leave, by writing, of his noble friend, the High Commissioner, alleging the opportunity of Mr Butler's company as a reason for leaving Edinburgh sooner than he had proposed. He had a long conference with his agent on the subject of Annaple Bailzou; and the professional gentleman, who was the agent also of the Argyle

[1] See Note B B. *Ratcliffe.*

family, had directions to collect all the information which Ratcliffe or others might be able to obtain concerning the fate of that woman and the unfortunate child, and, so soon as any thing transpired which had the least appearance of being important, that he should send an express with it instantly to Knocktarlitie. These instructions were backed with a deposit of money, and a request that no expense might be spared; so that Sir George Staunton had little reason to apprehend negligence on the part of the persons intrusted with the commission.

The journey, which the brothers made in company, was attended with more pleasure, even to Sir George Staunton, than he had ventured to expect. His heart lightened in spite of himself when they lost sight of Edinburgh; and the easy, sensible conversation of Butler was well calculated to withdraw his thoughts from painful reflections. He even began to think whether there could be much difficulty in removing his wife's connections to the rectory of Willingham; it was only on his part procuring some still better preferment for the present incumbent, and on Butler's, that he should take orders according to the English Church, to which he could not conceive a possibility of his making objection, and then he had them residing under his wing. No doubt, there was pain in seeing Mrs Butler, acquainted, as he knew her to be, with the full truth of his evil history—But then her silence, though he had no reason to complain of her indiscretion hitherto, was still more absolutely ensured. It would keep his lady, also, both in good temper and in more subjection; for she was sometimes troublesome to him, by insisting on remaining in town when he desired to retire to the country, alleging the total want of society at Willingham. "Madam, your sister is there," would, he thought, be a sufficient answer to this ready argument.

He sounded Butler on this subject, asking what he would think of an English living of twelve hundred pounds yearly, with the burden of affording his company now and then to a neighbour whose health was not strong, or his spirits equal. "He might meet," he said, "occasionally, a very learned and accomplished gentleman, who was in orders as a Catholic priest, but he hoped that would be no insurmountable objection to a man of his liberality of sentiment. What," he said, "would Mr Butler think of as an answer, if the offer should be made to him?"

"Simply that I could not accept of it," said Mr Butler. "I have no mind to enter into the various debates between the churches; but I was brought up in mine own, have received her ordination, am satisfied of the truth of her doctrines, and will die under the banner I have enlisted to."

"What may be the value of your preferment?" said Sir George Staunton, "unless I am asking an indiscreet question."

"Probably one hundred a-year, one year with another, besides my glebe and pasture-ground."

"And you scruple to exchange that for twelve hundred a-year, without alleging any damning difference of doctrine betwixt the two churches of England and Scotland?"

"On that, sir, I have reserved my judgment; there may be much good, and there are certainly saving means in both, but every man must act according to his own lights. I hope I have done, and am in the course of doing, my Master's work in this Highland parish; and it would ill become me, for the sake of lucre, to leave my sheep in the wilderness. But, even in the temporal view which you have taken of the matter, Sir George, this hundred pounds a-year of stipend hath fed and clothed us, and left us nothing to wish for; my father-in-law's succession, and other circumstances, have added a small estate of about twice as much more, and how we are to dispose of it I do not know—So I leave it to you, sir, to think if I were wise, not having the wish or opportunity of spending three hundred a-year, to covet the possession of four times that sum."

"This is philosophy," said Sir George; "I have heard of it, but I never saw it before."

"It is common sense," replied Butler, "which accords with philosophy and religion more frequently than pedants or zealots are apt to admit."

Sir George turned the subject, and did not again resume it. Although they travelled in Sir George's chariot, he seemed so much fatigued with the motion, that it was necessary for him to remain for a day at a small town called Mid-Calder, which was their first stage from Edinburgh. Glasgow occupied another day, so slow were their motions.

They travelled on to Dunbarton, where they had resolved to leave the equipage, and to hire a boat to take them to the shores near the Manse, as the Gare-Loch lay betwixt them and that point, besides the impossibility of travelling in that district with wheel-carriages. Sir George's valet, a man of trust, accompanied them, as also a footman; the grooms were left with the carriage. Just as this arrangement was completed, which was about four o'clock in the afternoon, an express arrived from Sir George's agent in Edinburgh, with a packet, which he opened and read with great attention, appearing much interested and agitated by the contents. The packet had been despatched very soon after their leaving Edinburgh, but the messenger had missed the travellers by passing through Mid-Calder in the night, and over-shot his errand by getting to Roseneath before them. He was now on his return, after having waited more than four-and-twenty hours. Sir George Staunton instantly wrote back an answer, and, rewarding the messenger liberally, desired him not to sleep till he placed it in his agent's hands.

At length they embarked in the boat, which had waited for them some time. During their voyage, which was slow, for they were obliged to row the whole way, and often against the tide, Sir George Staunton's inquiries ran chiefly on the subject of the Highland banditti who had infested that country since the year 1745. Butler informed him, that many of them were not native Highlanders, but gipsies, tinkers, and other men of desperate fortunes, who had taken advantage of the confusion introduced by the civil war, the general discontent of the mountaineers, and the unsettled state of police, to practise their plundering trade with more audacity. Sir George next inquired into their lives, their habits, whether the violences which they committed were not sometimes atoned for by acts of generosity, and whether they did not possess the virtues, as well as the vices, of savage tribes?

Butler answered, that certainly they did sometimes shew sparks of generosity, of which even the worst class of malefactors are seldom utterly divested; but that their evil propensities were certain and regular principles of action, while any occa-

sional burst of virtuous feeling was only a transient impulse not to be reckoned upon, and excited probably by some singular and unusual concatenation of circumstances. In discussing these inquiries, which Sir George pursued with an apparent eagerness that rather surprised Butler, the latter chanced to mention the name of Donacha Dhu na Dunaigh, with which the reader is already acquainted. Sir George caught the sound up eagerly, and as if it conveyed particular interest to his ear. He made the most minute inquiries concerning the man whom he mentioned, the number of his gang, and even the appearance of those who belonged to it. Upon these points Butler could give little answer. The man had a name among the lower class, but his exploits were considerably exaggerated; he had always one or two fellows with him, but never aspired to the command of above three or four. In short, he knew little about him, and the small acquaintance he had, had by no means inclined him to desire more.

"Nevertheless, I should like to see him some of these days."

"That would be a dangerous meeting, Sir George, unless you mean we are to see him receive his deserts from the law, and then it were a melancholy one."

"Use every man according to his deserts, Mr Butler, and who shall escape whipping? But I am talking riddles to you. I will explain them more fully to you when I have spoken over the subject with Lady Staunton. — Pull away, my lads," he added, addressing himself to the rowers; "the clouds threaten us with a storm."

In fact, the dead and heavy closeness of the air, the huge piles of clouds which assembled in the western horizon, and glowed like a furnace under the influence of the setting sun — that awful stillness in which nature seems to expect the thunderburst, as a condemned soldier waits for the platoon-fire which is to stretch him on the earth, all betokened a speedy storm. Large broad drops fell from time to time, and induced the gentlemen to assume the boat-cloaks; but the rain again ceased, and the oppressive heat, so unusual in Scotland in the end of May, inclined them to throw them aside. "There is something solemn in this delay of the storm," said Sir George; "it seems as if it suspended its peal till it solemnized some important event in the world below."

"Alas!" replied Butler, "what are we, that the laws of nature should correspond in their march with our ephemeral deeds or sufferings? The clouds will burst when surcharged with the electric fluid, whether a goat is falling at that instant from the cliffs of Arran, or a hero expiring on the field of battle he has won."

"The mind delights to deem it otherwise," said Sir George Staunton; "and to dwell on the fate of humanity as on that which is the prime central movement of the mighty machine. We love not to think that we shall mix with the ages that have gone before us, as these broad black raindrops mingle with the waste of waters, making a trifling and momentary eddy, and are then lost for ever."

"*For ever!* — we are not — we cannot be lost for ever," said Butler, looking upward; "death is to us change, not consummation; and the commencement of a new existence, corresponding in character to the deeds which we have done in the body."

While they agitated these grave subjects, to which the solemnity of the approaching storm naturally led them, their voyage threatened to be more tedious than they expected, for gusts of wind, which rose and fell with sudden impetuosity, swept the bosom of the firth, and impeded the efforts of the rowers. They had now only to double a small head-land, in order to get to the proper landing-place in the mouth of the little river; but in the state of the weather, and the boat being heavy, this was like to be a work of time, and in the meanwhile they must necessarily be exposed to the storm.

"Could we not land on this side of the head-land," asked Sir George, "and so gain some shelter?"

Butler knew of no landing-place, at least none affording a convenient or even practicable passage up the rocks which surrounded the shore.

"Think again," said Sir George Staunton; "the storm will soon be violent."

"Hout, ay," said one of the boatmen, "there 's the Caird's Cove; but we dinna tell the minister about it, and I am no sure if I can steer the boat to it, the bay is sae fu' o' shoals and sunk rocks."

"Try," said Sir George, "and I will give you half-a-guinea."

The old fellow took the helm, and observed, "that if they could get in, there was a steep path up from the beach, and half-an-hour's walk from thence to the Manse."

"Are you sure you know the way?" said Butler to the old man.

"I maybe kend it a wee better fifteen years syne, when Dandie Wilson was in the firth wi' his cleanganging lugger. I mind Dandie had a wild young Englisher wi' him, that they ca'd ——"

"If you chatter so much," said Sir George Staunton, "you will have the boat on the Grindstone — bring that white rock in a line with the steeple."

"By G—," said the veteran, staring, "I think your honour kens the bay as weel as me. — Your honour's nose has been on the Grindstone ere now, I 'm thinking."

As they spoke thus, they approached the little cove, which, concealed behind crags, and defended on every point by shallows and sunken rocks, could scarce be discovered or approached, except by those intimate with the navigation. An old shattered boat was already drawn up on the beach within the cove, close beneath the trees, and with precautions for concealment.

Upon observing this vessel, Butler remarked to his companion, "It is impossible for you to conceive, Sir George, the difficulty I have had with my poor people, in teaching them the guilt and the danger of this contraband trade — yet they have perpetually before their eyes all its dangerous consequences. I do not know any thing that more effectually depraves and ruins their moral and religious principles."

Sir George forced himself to say something in a low voice, about the spirit of adventure natural to youth, and that unquestionably many would become wiser as they grew older.

"Too seldom, sir," replied Butler. "If they have been deeply engaged, and especially if they have mingled in the scenes of violence and blood to which their occupation naturally leads, I have

observed, that, sooner or later, they come to an evil end. Experience, as well as Scripture, teaches us, Sir George, that mischief shall hunt the violent man, and that the bloodthirsty man shall not live half his days — But take my arm to help you ashore."

Sir George needed assistance, for he was contrasting in his altered thought the different feelings of mind and frame with which he had formerly frequented the same place. As they landed, a low growl of thunder was heard at a distance.

"That is ominous, Mr Butler," said Sir George.

"*Intonuit lævum* — it is ominous of good, then," answered Butler, smiling.

The boatmen were ordered to make the best of their way round the head-land to the ordinary landing-place; the two gentlemen, followed by their servant, sought their way by a blind and tangled path, through a close copsewood to the Manse of Knocktarlitie, where their arrival was anxiously expected.

The sisters in vain had expected their husbands' return on the preceding day, which was that appointed by Sir George's letter. The delay of the travellers at Calder had occasioned this breach of appointment. The inhabitants of the Manse began even to doubt whether they would arrive on the present day. Lady Staunton felt this hope of delay as a brief reprieve; for she dreaded the pangs which her husband's pride must undergo at meeting with a sister-in-law, to whom the whole of his unhappy and dishonourable history was too well known. She knew, whatever force or constraint he might put upon his feelings in public, that she herself must be doomed to see them display themselves in full vehemence in secret,— consume his health, destroy his temper, and render him at once an object of dread and compassion. Again and again she cautioned Jeanie to display no tokens of recognition, but to receive him as a perfect stranger,—and again and again Jeanie renewed her promise to comply with her wishes.

Jeanie herself could not fail to bestow an anxious thought on the awkwardness of the approaching meeting; but her conscience was ungalled—and then she was cumbered with many household cares of an unusual nature, which, joined to the anxious wish once more to see Butler, after an absence of unusual length, made her extremely desirous that the travellers should arrive as soon as possible. And — why should I disguise the truth? — ever and anon a thought stole across her mind that her gala dinner had now been postponed for two days; and how few of the dishes, after every art of her simple *cuisine* had been exerted to dress them, could with any credit or propriety appear again upon the third; and what was she to do with the rest? — Upon this last subject she was saved the trouble of farther deliberation, by the sudden appearance of the Captain at the head of half-a-dozen stout fellows, dressed and armed in the Highland fashion.

"Goot-morrow morning to ye, Leddy Staunton, and I hope I hae the pleasure to see ye weel — And goot-morrow to you, goot Mrs Putler — I do peg you will order some victuals and ale and prandy for the lads, for we hae peen out on firth and moor since afore daylight, and a' to no purpose neither — Cot tam!"

So saying, he sate down, pushed back his brigadier wig, and wiped his head with an air of easy importance; totally regardless of the look of well-bred astonishment by which Lady Staunton endeavoured to make him comprehend that he was assuming too great a liberty.

"It is some comfort, when one has had a sair tussel," continued the Captain, addressing Lady Staunton, with an air of gallantry, "that it is in a fair leddy's service, or in the service of a gentleman whilk has a fair leddy, whilk is the same thing, since serving the husband is serving the wife, as Mrs Putler does very weel know."

"Really, sir," said Lady Staunton, "as you seem to intend this compliment for me, I am at a loss to know what interest Sir George or I can have in your movements this morning."

"O Cot tam!—this is too cruel, my leddy—as if it was not py special express from his Grace's honourable agent and commissioner at Edinburgh, with a warrant conform, that I was to seek for and apprehend Donacha dhu na Dunaigh, and pring him pefore myself and Sir George Staunton, that he may have his deserts, that is to say, the gallows, whilk he has doubtless deserved, py peing the means of frightening your leddyship, as weel as for something of less importance."

"Frightening me!" said her ladyship; "why, I never wrote to Sir George about my alarm at the waterfall."

"Then he must have heard it otherwise; for what else can give him sic an earnest tesire to see this rapscallion, that I maun ripe the haill mosses and muirs in the country for him, as if I were to get something for finding him, when the pest o't might pe a pall through my prains?"

"Can it be really true, that it is on Sir George's account that you have been attempting to apprehend this fellow?"

"Py Cot, it is for no other cause that I know than his honour's pleasure; for the creature might hae gone on in a decent quiet way for me, sae lang as he respectit the Duke's pounds — put reason goot he suld be taen, and hangit to poot, if it may pleasure ony honourable shentleman that is the Duke's friend — Sae I got the express over night, and I caused warn half a score of pretty lads, and was up in the morning pefore the sun, and I garr'd the lads take their kilts and short coats."

"I wonder you did that, Captain," said Mrs Butler, "when you know the act of parliament against wearing the Highland dress."

"Hout, tout, ne'er fash your thumb, Mrs Putler The law is put twa-three years auld yet, and is ower young to hae come our length; and pesides, how is the lads to climb the praes wi' thae tamn'd breekens on them? It makes me sick to see them. Put ony how, I thought I kend Donacha's haunts gey and weel, and I was at the place where he had rested yestreen; for I saw the leaves the limmers had lain on, and the ashes of them; by the same token, there was a pit greeshoch purning yet. I am thinking they got some word out o' the island what was intended — I sought every glen and cleuch, as if I had been deer-stalking, but teil a wauff of his coat-tail could I see — Cot tam!"

"He 'll be away down the firth to Cowal," said David; and Reuben, who had been out early that morning a-nutting, observed, "That he had seen a boat making for the Caird's Cove;" a place well known to the boys, though their less adventurous father was ignorant of its existence.

"Py Cot," said Duncan, "then I will stay here no longer than to trink this very horn of prandy and water, for it 's very possible they will pe in the wood. Donacha 's a clever fellow, and maype thinks it pest to sit next the chimley when the lum reeks. He thought naebody would look for him sae near hand! I peg your leddyship will excuse my aprupt departure, as I will return forthwith, and I will either pring you Donacha in life, or else his head, whilk I dare to say will be as satisfactory. And I hope to pass a pleasant evening with your leddyship; and I hope to have mine revenges on Mr Putler at packgammon, for the four pennies whilk he won, for he will pe surely at home soon, or else he will have a wet journey, seeing it is apout to pe a scud."

Thus saying, with many scrapes and bows, and apologies for leaving them, which were very readily received, and reiterated assurances of his speedy return, (of the sincerity whereof Mrs Butler entertained no doubt, so long as her best greybeard of brandy was upon duty,) Duncan left the Manse, collected his followers, and began to scour the close and entangled wood which lay between the little glen and the Caird's Cove. David, who was a favourite with the Captain, on account of his spirit and courage, took the opportunity of escaping, to attend the investigations of that great man.

CHAPTER LII.

——I did send for thee,
* * * * *
That Talbot's name might be in thee revived,
When sapless age, and weak unable limbs,
Should bring thy father to his drooping chair.
But — O malignant and ill-boding stars! —
First Part of Henry the Sixth.

Duncan and his party had not proceeded very far in the direction of the Caird's Cove before they heard a shot, which was quickly followed by one or two others. "Some tamn'd villains among the roe-deer," said Duncan; "look sharp out, lads."

The clash of swords was next heard, and Duncan and his myrmidons, hastening to the spot, found Butler and Sir George Staunton's servant in the hands of four ruffians. Sir George himself lay stretched on the ground, with his drawn sword in his hand. Duncan, who was as brave as a lion, instantly fired his pistol at the leader of the band, unsheathed his sword, cried out to his men, *Claymore!* and run his weapon through the body of the fellow whom he had previously wounded, who was no other than Donacha dhu na Dunaigh himself. The other banditti were speedily overpowered, excepting one young lad, who made wonderful resistance for his years, and was at length secured with difficulty.

Butler, so soon as he was liberated from the ruffians, ran to raise Sir George Staunton, but life had wholly left him.

"A creat misfortune," said Duncan; "I think it will pe pest that I go forward to intimate it to the coot leddy.—Tavie, my dear, you hae smelled pouther for the first time this day — take my sword and hack off Donacha's head, whilk will pe coot practice for you against the time you may wish to do the same kindness to a living shentleman — or hould, as your father does not approve, you may leave it alone, as he will pe a greater object of satisfaction to Leddy Staunton to see him entire; and I hope she will do me the credit to pelieve that I can afenge a shentleman's plood fery speedily and well."

Such was the observation of a man too much accustomed to the ancient state of manners in the Highlands, to look upon the issue of such a skirmish as any thing worthy of wonder or emotion.

We will not attempt to describe the very contrary effect which the unexpected disaster produced upon Lady Staunton, when the bloody corpse of her husband was brought to the house, where she expected to meet him alive and well. All was forgotten, but that he was the lover of her youth; and whatever were his faults to the world, that he had towards her exhibited only those that arose from the inequality of spirits and temper, incident to a situation of unparalleled difficulty. In the vivacity of her grief she gave way to all the natural irritability of her temper; shriek followed shriek, and swoon succeeded to swoon. It required all Jeanie's watchful affection to prevent her from making known, in these paroxysms of affliction, much which it was of the highest importance that she should keep secret.

At length silence and exhaustion succeeded to frenzy, and Jeanie stole out to take counsel with her husband, and to exhort him to anticipate the Captain's interference, by taking possession in Lady Staunton's name, of the private papers of her deceased husband. To the utter astonishment of Butler, she now, for the first time, explained the relation betwixt herself and Lady Staunton, which authorized, nay, demanded, that he should prevent any stranger from being unnecessarily made acquainted with her family affairs. It was in such a crisis that Jeanie's active and undaunted habits of virtuous exertion were most conspicuous. While the Captain's attention was still engaged by a prolonged refreshment, and a very tedious examination, in Gaelic and English, of all the prisoners, and every other witness of the fatal transaction, she had the body of her brother-in-law undressed and properly disposed. It then appeared, from the crucifix, the beads, and the shirt of hair which he wore next his person, that his sense of guilt had induced him to receive the dogmata of a religion, which pretends, by the maceration of the body, to expiate the crimes of the soul. In the packet of papers which the express had brought to Sir George Staunton from Edinburgh, and which Butler, authorized by his connection with the deceased, did not scruple to examine, he found new and astonishing intelligence, which gave him reason to thank God he had taken that measure.

Ratcliffe, to whom all sorts of misdeeds and misdoers were familiar, instigated by the promised reward, soon found himself in a condition to trace the infant of these unhappy parents. The woman to whom Meg Murdockson had sold that most unfortunate child, had made it the companion of her wanderings and her beggary, until he was about seven or eight years old, when, as Ratcliffe learned from a companion of hers, then in the Correction house of Edinburgh, she sold him in her turn to Donacha dhu na Dunaigh. This man, to whom no act of mischief was unknown, was occasionally

an agent in a horrible trade then carried on betwixt Scotland and America, for supplying the plantations with servants, by means of *kidnapping*, as it was termed, both men and women, but especially children under age. Here Ratcliffe lost sight of the boy, but had no doubt but Donacha Dhu could give an account of him. The gentleman of the law, so often mentioned, despatched therefore an express, with a letter to Sir George Staunton, and another covering a warrant for apprehension of Donacha, with instructions to the Captain of Knockdunder to exert his utmost energy for that purpose.

Possessed of this information, and with a mind agitated by the most gloomy apprehensions, Butler now joined the Captain, and obtained from him with some difficulty a sight of the examinations. These, with a few questions to the elder of the prisoners, soon confirmed the most dreadful of Butler's anticipations. We give the heads of the information, without descending into minute details.

Donacha Dhu had indeed purchased Effie's unhappy child, with the purpose of selling it to the American traders, whom he had been in the habit of supplying with human flesh. But no opportunity occurred for some time; and the boy, who was known by the name of "The Whistler," made some impression on the heart and affections even of this rude savage, perhaps because he saw in him flashes of a spirit as fierce and vindictive as his own. When Donacha struck or threatened him—a very common occurrence—he did not answer with complaints and entreaties like other children, but with oaths and efforts at revenge—he had all the wild merit, too, by which Woggarwolfe's arrow-bearing page won the hard heart of his master:

> Like a wild cub, rear'd at the ruffian's feet,
> He could say biting jests, bold ditties sing,
> And quaff his foaming bumper at the board,
> With all the mockery of a little man.[1]

In short, as Donacha Dhu said, the Whistler was a born imp of Satan, and *therefore* he should never leave him. Accordingly, from his eleventh year forward, he was one of the band, and often engaged in acts of violence. The last of these was more immediately occasioned by the researches which the Whistler's real father made after him whom he had been taught to consider as such. Donacha Dhu's fears had been for some time excited by the strength of the means which began now to be employed against persons of his description. He was sensible he existed only by the precarious indulgence of his namesake, Duncan of Knockdunder, who was used to boast that he could put him down or string him up when he had a mind. He resolved to leave the kingdom by means of one of those sloops which were engaged in the traffic of his old kidnapping friends, and which was about to sail for America; but he was desirous first to strike a bold stroke.

The ruffian's cupidity was excited by the intelligence, that a wealthy Englishman was coming to the Manse—he had neither forgotten the Whistler's report of the gold he had seen in Lady Staunton's purse, nor his old vow of revenge against the minister; and, to bring the whole to a point, he conceived the hope of appropriating the money, which, according to the general report of the country, the minister was to bring from Edinburgh to pay for his new purchase. While he was considering how he might best accomplish his purpose, he received the intelligence from one quarter, that the vessel in which he proposed to sail was to sail immediately from Greenock; from another, that the minister and a rich English lord, with a great many thousand pounds, were expected the next evening at the Manse; and from a third, that he must consult his safety by leaving his ordinary haunts as soon as possible, for that the Captain had ordered out a party to scour the glens for him at break of day. Donacha laid his plans with promptitude and decision. He embarked with the Whistler and two others of his band, (whom, by the by, he meant to sell to the kidnappers,) and set sail for the Caird's Cove. He intended to lurk till night-fall in the wood adjoining to this place, which he thought was too near the habitation of men to excite the suspicion of Duncan Knock, then break into Butler's peaceful habitation, and flesh at once his appetite for plunder and revenge. When his villainy was accomplished, his boat was to convey him to the vessel, which according to previous agreement with the master, was instantly to set sail.

This desperate design would probably have succeeded, but for the ruffians being discovered in their lurking-place by Sir George Staunton and Butler, in their accidental walk from the Caird's Cove towards the Manse. Finding himself detected, and at the same time observing that the servant carried a casket, or strong-box, Donacha conceived that both his prize and his victims were within his power, and attacked the travellers without hesitation. Shots were fired and swords drawn on both sides; Sir George Staunton offered the bravest resistance till he fell, as there was too much reason to believe, by the hand of a son, so long sought, and now at length so unhappily met.

While Butler was half-stunned with this intelligence, the hoarse voice of Knockdunder added to his consternation.

"I will take the liperty to take down the pell-ropes, Mr Putler, as I must pe taking order to hang these idle people up to-morrow morning, to teach them more consideration in their doings in future."

Butler entreated him to remember the act abolishing the heritable jurisdictions, and that he ought to send them to Glasgow or Inverary, to be tried by the Circuit. Duncan scorned the proposal.

"The Jurisdiction Act," he said, "had nothing to do put with the rebels, and specially not with Argyle's country; and he would hang the men up all three in one row before coot Leddy Staunton's windows, which would be a great comfort to her in the morning to see that the coot gentleman, her husband, had been suitably afenged."

And the utmost length that Butler's most earnest entreaties could prevail was, that he would reserve "the twa pig carles for the Circuit, but as for him they ca'd the Fustler, he should try how he could fustle in a swinging tow, for it suldna be said that a shentleman, friend to the Duke, was killed in his country, and his people didna take at least twa lives for ane."

Butler entreated him to spare the victim for his soul's sake. But Knockdunder answered, "that the soul of such a scum had been long the tefil's property, and that, Cot tam! he was determined to gif the tefil his due."

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[1] Ethwald.

All persuasion was in vain, and Duncan issued his mandate for execution on the succeeding morning. The child of guilt and misery was separated from his companions, strongly pinioned, and committed to a separate room, of which the Captain kept the key.

In the silence of the night, however, Mrs Butler arose, resolved, if possible, to avert, at least to delay, the fate which hung over her nephew, especially if, upon conversing with him, she should see any hope of his being brought to better temper. She had a master-key that opened every lock in the house; and at midnight, when all was still, she stood before the eyes of the astonished young savage, as, hard bound with cords, he lay, like a sheep designed for slaughter, upon a quantity of the refuse of flax which filled a corner in the apartment. Amid features sunburnt, tawny, grimed with dirt, and obscured by his shaggy hair of a rusted black colour, Jeanie tried in vain to trace the likeness of either of his very handsome parents. Yet how could she refuse compassion to a creature so young and so wretched,—so much more wretched than even he himself could be aware of, since the murder he had too probably committed with his own hand, but in which he had at any rate participated, was in fact a parricide. She placed food on a table near him, raised him, and slacked the cords on his arms, so as to permit him to feed himself. He stretched out his hands, still smeared with blood, perhaps that of his father, and he ate voraciously and in silence.

"What is your first name?" said Jeanie, by way of opening the conversation.

"The Whistler."

"But your Christian name, by which you were baptized?"

"I never was baptized that I know of—I have no other name than the Whistler."

"Poor unhappy abandoned lad!" said Jeanie. "What would ye do if you could escape from this place, and the death you are to die to-morrow morning?"

"Join wi' Rob Roy, or wi' Sergeant More Cameron," (noted freebooters at that time,) "and revenge Donacha's death on all and sundry."

"O ye unhappy boy," said Jeanie, "do ye ken what will come o' ye when ye die?"

"I shall neither feel cauld nor hunger more," said the youth doggedly.

"To let him be execute in this dreadful state of mind would be to destroy baith body and soul—and to let him gang I dare not—what will be done?—But he is my sister's son—my own nephew—our flesh and blood—and his hands and feet are yerked as tight as cords can be drawn.—Whistler, do the cords hurt you?"

"Very much."

"But, if I were to slacken them, you would harm me?"

"No, I would not—you never harmed me or mine."

There may be good in him yet, thought Jeanie; I will try fair play with him.

She cut his bonds—he stood upright, looked round with a laugh of wild exultation, clapped his hands together, and sprung from the ground, as if in transport on finding himself at liberty. He looked so wild, that Jeanie trembled at what she had done.

"Let me out," said the young savage.

"I wunna, unless you promise——"

"Then I 'll make you glad to let us both out."

He seized the lighted candle and threw it among the flax, which was instantly in a flame. Jeanie screamed, and ran out of the room; the prisoner rushed past her, threw open a window in the passage, jumped into the garden, sprung over its enclosure, bounded through the woods like a deer, and gained the sea-shore. Meantime, the fire was extinguished, but the prisoner was sought in vain. As Jeanie kept her own secret, the share she had in his escape was not discovered; but they learned his fate some time afterwards—it was as wild as his life had hitherto been.

The anxious inquiries of Butler at length learned, that the youth had gained the ship in which his master, Donacha, had designed to embark. But the avaricious shipmaster, inured by his evil trade to every species of treachery, and disappointed of the rich booty which Donacha had proposed to bring aboard, secured the person of the fugitive, and having transported him to America, sold him as a slave, or indented servant, to a Virginian planter, far up the country. When these tidings reached Butler, he sent over to America a sufficient sum to redeem the lad from slavery, with instructions that measures should be taken for improving his mind, restraining his evil propensities, and encouraging whatever good might appear in his character. But this aid came too late. The young man had headed a conspiracy in which his inhuman master was put to death, and had then fled to the next tribe of wild Indians. He was never more heard of; and it may therefore be presumed that he lived and died after the manner of that savage people, with whom his previous habits had well fitted him to associate.

All hopes of the young man's reformation being now ended, Mr and Mrs Butler thought it could serve no purpose to explain to Lady Staunton a history so full of horror. She remained their guest more than a year, during the greater part of which period her grief was excessive. In the latter months, it assumed the appearance of listlessness and low spirits, which the monotony of her sister's quiet establishment afforded no means of dissipating. Effie, from her earliest youth, was never formed for a quiet low content. Far different from her sister, she required the dissipation of society to divert her sorrow, or enhance her joy. She left the seclusion of Knocktarlitie with tears of sincere affection, and after heaping its inmates with all she could think of that might be valuable in their eyes. But she *did* leave it; and when the anguish of the parting was over, her departure was a relief to both sisters.

The family at the Manse of Knocktarlitie, in their own quiet happiness, heard of the well-dowered and beautiful Lady Staunton resuming her place in the fashionable world. They learned it by more substantial proofs, for David received a commission; and as the military spirit of Bible Butler seemed to have revived in him, his good behaviour qualified the envy of five hundred young Highland cadets, "come of good houses," who were astonished at the rapidity of his promotion. Reuben followed the law, and rose more slowly, yet surely. Euphemia Butler, whose fortune, augmented by her aunt's generosity, and added to her own beauty, rendered

her no small prize, married a Highland laird, who never asked the name of her grandfather, and was loaded on the occasion with presents from Lady Staunton, which made her the envy of all the beauties in Dunbarton and Argyle-shires.

After blazing nearly ten years in the fashionable world, and hiding, like many of her compeers, an aching heart with a gay demeanour—after declining repeated offers of the most respectable kind for a second matrimonial engagement, Lady Staunton betrayed the inward wound by retiring to the Continent, and taking up her abode in the convent where she had received her education. She never took the veil, but lived and died in severe seclusion, and in the practice of the Roman Catholic religion, in all its formal observances, vigils, and austerities.

Jeanie had so much of her father's spirit as to sorrow bitterly for this apostacy, and Butler joined in her regret. "Yet any religion, however imperfect," he said, "was better than cold scepticism, or the hurrying din of dissipation, which fills the ears of worldlings, until they care for none of these things."

Meanwhile, happy in each other, in the prosperity of their family, and the love and honour of all who knew them, this simple pair lived beloved, and died lamented.

Reader— This tale will not be told in vain, if it shall be found to illustrate the great truth, that guilt, though it may attain temporal splendour, can never confer real happiness; that the evil consequences of our crimes long survive their commission, and, like the ghosts of the murdered, for ever haunt the steps of the malefactor; and that the paths of virtue, though seldom those of worldly greatness, are always those of pleasantness and peace.

L'Envoy, by Jedediah Cleishbotham.

Thus concludeth the Tale of "The Heart of Mid-Lothian," which hath filled more pages than I opined. The Heart of Mid-Lothian is now no more, or rather it is transferred to the extreme side of the city, even as the Sieur Jean Baptiste Poquelin hath it, in his pleasant comedy called *Le Médecin Malgré lui*, where the simulated doctor wittily replieth to a charge, that he had placed the heart on the right side, instead of the left, "*Cela étoit autrefois ainsi, mais nous avons changé tout cela.*" Of which witty speech, if any reader shall demand the purport, I have only to respond, that I teach the French as well as the Classical tongues, at the easy rate of five shillings per quarter, as my advertisements are periodically making known to the public.

NOTES

TO

The Heart of Mid-Lothian.

Note A, p. 15. The City Guard.

This ancient corps is now entirely disbanded. Their last march to do duty at Hallow-fair, had something in it affecting. Their drums and fifes had been wont on better days to play, on this joyous occasion, the lively tune of

"Jockey to the fair;"

but on this final occasion the afflicted veterans moved slowly to the dirge of

"The last time I came ower the muir."

Note B, p. 17. The Kelpie.

There is a tradition, that while a little stream was swollen into a torrent by recent showers, the discontented voice of the Water Spirit was heard to pronounce these words. At the same moment a man, urged on by his fate, or, in Scottish language, *fey*, arrived at a gallop, and prepared to cross the water. No remonstrance from the bystanders was of power to stop him—he plunged into the stream, and perished.

Note C, p. 27. Tolbooth of Edinburgh.

The ancient Tolbooth of Edinburgh, situated and described as in the last chapter, was built by the citizens in 1561, and destined for the accommodation of Parliament, as well as of the High Courts of Justice; and at the same time for the confinement of prisoners for debt, or on criminal charges. Since the year 1640, when the present Parliament House was erected, the Tolbooth was occupied as a prison only. Gloomy and dismal as it was, the situation in the centre of the High Street rendered it so particularly well-aired, that when the plague laid waste the city in 1645, it affected none within these melan-

choly precincts. The Tolbooth was removed, with the mass of buildings in which it was incorporated, in the autumn of the year 1817. At that time the kindness of his old schoolfellow and friend, Robert Johnstone, Esquire, then Dean of Guild of the city, with the liberal acquiescence of the persons who had contracted for the work, procured for the Author of Waverley the stones which composed the gateway, together with the door, and its ponderous fastenings, which he employed in decorating the entrance of his kitchen-court at Abbotsford. "To such base offices may we return." The application of these relics of the Heart of Mid-Lothian to serve as the postern gate to a court of modern offices, may be justly ridiculed as whimsical; but yet it is not without interest, that we see the gateway through which so much of the stormy politics of a rude age, and the vice and misery of later times, had found their passage, now occupied in the service of rural economy. Last year, to complete the change, a tom-tit was pleased to build her nest within the lock of the Tolbooth, — a strong temptation to have committed a sonnet, had the author, like Tony Lumpkin, been in a concatenation accordingly.

It is worth mentioning, that an act of beneficence celebrated the demolition of the Heart of Mid-Lothian. A subscription, raised and applied by the worthy Magistrate above-mentioned, procured the manumission of most of the unfortunate debtors confined in the old jail, so that there were few or none transferred to the new place of confinement.

Note D. p. 31. Memorial concerning the Murder of Captain Porteous.

The following interesting and authentic account of the inquiries made by Crown Counsel into the affair of the Porteous Mob, seems to have been drawn up by the Solicitor-General. The office was held in 1737 by Charles Erskine, Esq.

I owe this curious illustration to the kindness of a professional friend. It throws, indeed, little light on the origin of the tumult; but shews how profound the darkness must have been, which so much investigation could not dispel.

"Upon the 7th of September last, when the unhappy wicked murder of Captain Porteus was committed, His Majesty's Advocate and Solicitor were out of town; the first beyond Inverness, and the other in Annandale, not far from Carlyle; neither of them knew any thing of the reprieve, nor did they in the least suspect that any disorder was to happen.

"When the disorder happened, the magistrates and other persons concerned in the management of the town, seemed to be all struck of a heap; and whether, from the great terror that had seized all the inhabitants, they thought ane immediate enquiry would be fruitless, or whether, being a direct insult upon the prerogative of the crown, they did not care rashly to intermeddle; but no proceedings was had by them. Only, soon after, ane express was sent to his Majestie's Solicitor, who came to town as soon as was possible for him; but, in the meantime, the persons who had been most guilty, had either run off, or, at least, kept themselves upon the wing until they should see what steps were taken by the Government.

"When the Solicitor arrived, he perceived the whole inhabitants under a consternation. He had no materials furnished him; nay, the inhabitants were so much afraid of being reputed informers, that very few people had so much as the courage to speak with him on the streets. However, having received her Majestie's orders, by a letter from the Duke of Newcastle, he resolved to sett about the matter in earnest, and entered upon ane enquiry, gropeing in the dark. He had no assistance from the magistrates worth mentioning, but called witness after witness in the privatest manner, before himself in his own house, and for six weeks time, from morning to evening, went on in the enquiry without taking the least diversion, or turning his thoughts to any other business.

"He tried at first what he could do by declarations, by engaging secresy, so that those who told the truth should never be discovered; made use of no clerk, but wrote all the declarations with his own hand, to encourage them to speak out. After all, for some time, he could get nothing but ends of stories which, when pursued, broke off; and those who appeared and knew any thing of the matter, were under the utmost terror, lest it should take air that they had mentioned any one man as guilty.

"During the course of the enquiry, the run of the town, which was strong for the villanous actors, begun to alter a little, and when they saw the King's servants in earnest to do their best, the generality, who before had spoke very warmly in defence of the wickedness, begun to be silent, and at that period more of the criminals begun to abscond.

"At length the enquiry began to open a little, and the Sollicitor was under some difficulty how to proceed. He very well saw that the first warrand that was issued out would start the whole gang; and as he had not come at any of the most notorious offenders, he was unwilling, upon the slight evidence he had, to begin. However, upon notice given him by Generall Moyle, that one King, a butcher in the Canongate, had boasted, in presence of Bridget Knell, a soldier's wife, the morning after Captain Porteus was hanged, that he had a very active hand in the mob, a warrand was issued out, and King was apprehended and imprisoned in the Canongate tolbooth.

"This obliged the Sollicitor immediately to proceed to take up those against whom he had any information. By a signed declaration, William Stirling, apprentice to James Stirling, merchant in Edinburgh, was charged as haveing been at the Nether-Bow, after the gates were shutt, with a Lochaber ax, or halbert in his hand, and haveing begun a huzza, marched upon the head of the mob towards the Guard.

"James Braidwood, son to a candlemaker in town, was, by a signed declaration, charged as haveing been at the Tolbooth door, giveing directions to the mob about setting fire to the door, and that the mob named him by his name, and asked his advice.

"By another declaration, one Stoddart, a journeyman smith, was charged of haveing boasted publickly, in a smith's shop at Leith, that he had assisted in breaking open the Tolbooth door.

"Peter Traill, a journeyman wright, by one of the declarations, was also accused of haveing lockt the Nether-bow Port when it was shutt by the mob.

"His Majesties Sollicitor having these informations, imployed privately such persons as he could best rely on, and the truth was, there were very few in whom he could repose confidence. But he was, indeed, faithfully served by one Webster, a soldier in the Welsh fuzileers, recommended him by Lieutenant Alshton, who, with very great address, informed himself, and really run some risque in getting his information, concerning the places where the persons informed against used to haunt, and how they might be seized. In consequence of which, a party of the Guard from the Canongate was agreed on to march up at a certain hour, when a message should be sent. The Solicitor wrote a letter and gave it to one of the town officers, ordered to attend Captain Maitland, one of the town Captains, promoted to that command since the unhappy accident, who, indeed, was extremely diligent and active throughout the whole; and haveing got Stirling and Braidwood apprehended, dispatched the officer with the letter to the military in the Canongate, who immediately begun their march, and by the time the Sollicitor had half examined the said two persons in the Burrow-room, where the magistrates were present, a party of fifty men, drums beating, marched into the Parliament close, and drew up, which was the first thing that struck a terror, and from that time forward, the insolence was succeeded by fear.

"Stirling and Braidwood were immediately sent to the Castle, and imprisoned. That same night, Stoddart the smith was seized, and he was committed to the Castle also; as was likewise Traill the journeyman wright, who were all severally examined, and denyed the least accession.

"In the meantime, the enquiry was going on, and it haveing cast up in one of the declarations, that a hump'd-backed creature marched with a gun as one of the guards to Porteus when he went up to the Lawn Markett, the person who emitted this declaration, was employed to walk the streets to see if he could find him out; at last he came to the Solicitor and told him he had found him, and that he was in a certain house. Whereupon a warrand was issued out against him, and he was apprehended and sent to the Castle, and he proved to be one Birnie, a helper to the Countess of Weemys's coachman.

"Thereafter, ane information was given in against William M'Lauchlan, ffootman to the said Countess, he haveing been very active in the mob; ffor sometime he kept himself out of the way, but at last he was apprehended and likewise committed to the Castle.

"And these were all the prisoners who were putt under confinement in that place.

"There were other persons imprisoned in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and severalls against whom warrands were issued, but could not be apprehended, whose names and cases shall afterwards be more particularly taken notice of.

"The ffriends of Stirling made an application to the Earl of Islay, Lord Justice-Generall, setting furth, that he was seized with a bloody ffiux; that his life was in danger; and that upon ane examination of witnesses whose names were given in, it would appear to conviction, that he had not the least access to any of the riotous proceedings of that wicked mob.

"This petition was by his Lordship putt in the hands of his Majesties Sollicitor, who examined the witnesses; and by their testimonies it appeared, that the young man, who was not above eighteen years of age, was that night in company with about half a dozen companions, in a public house in Stephen Law's closs, near the back of the Guard, where they all remained untill the noise came to the house, that the mob had shut the gates and seized the Guard, upon which the company broke up, and he, and one of his companions, went towards his master's house; and, in the course of the after examination, there was a witness who declared, nay, indeed swore, (for the Sollicitor, by this time, saw it necessary to put those he examined upon oath,) that he met him [Stirling] after he entered into the alley where his master lives, going towards his house; and another witness, fellow-prentice with Stirling, declares, that after the mob had seized the Guard, he went home, where he found Stirling before him; and that his master lockt the door, and kept them both at home till after twelve at night: upon weighing of which testimonies, and upon consideration had, That he was charged by the declaration only of

one person, who really did not appear to be a witness of the greatest weight, and that his life was in danger from the imprisonment, he was admitted to baill by the Lord Justice-Generall, by whose warrand he was committed.

"Braidwood's friends applyed in the same manner; but as he stood charged by more than one witness, he was not released — tho', indeed, the witnesses adduced for him say somewhat in his exculpation — that he does not seem to have been upon any original concert; and one of the witnesses says he was along with him at the Tolbooth door, and refuses what is said against him, with regard to his having advised the burning of the Tolbooth door. But he remains still in prison.

"As to Traill, the journeyman wright, he is charged by the same witness who declared against Stirling, and there is none concurrs with him; and to say the truth concerning him, he seemed to be the most ingenuous of any of them whom the Solicitor examined, and pointed out a witness by whom one of the first accomplices was discovered, and who escaped when the warrand was to be putt in execution against them. He positively denys his having shutt the gate, and 'tis thought Traill ought to be admitted to baill.

"As to Birnie, he is charged only by one witness, who had never seen him before, nor knew his name; so, tho' I dare say the witness honestly mentioned him, 'tis possible he may be mistaken; and in the examination of above 200 witnesses, there is no body concurrs with him, and he is ane insignificant little creature.

"With regard to M'Lauchlan, the proof is strong against him by one witness, that he acted as a serjeant or sort of commander, for some time, of a Guard, that stood cross between the upper end of the Luckenbooths and the north side of the street, to stop all but friends from going towards the Tolbooth; and by other witnesses, that he was at the Tolbooth door with a link in his hand, while the operation of beating and burning it was going on: that he went along with the mob with a halbert in his hand, untill he came to the gallows stone in the Grassmarket, and that he stuck the halbert into the hole of the gallows stone: that afterwards he went in amongst the mob when Captain Porteus was carried to the dyer's tree; so that the proof seems very heavy against him.

"To sum up this matter with regard to the prisoners in the Castle, 'tis believed there is strong proof agaist M'Lauchlan; there is also proof against Braidwood. But as it consists only in emission of words said to have been had by him while at the Tolbooth door, and that he is ane insignificant pitifull creature, and will find people to swear heartily in his favours, 'tis at best doubtfull whether a jury will be got to condemn him.

"As to those in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, John Crawford, who had for some time been employed to ring the bells in the steeple of the New Church of Edinburgh, being in company with a soldier accidentally, the discourse falling in concerning the Captain Porteus and his murder, as he appears to be a light-headed fellow, he said, that he knew people that were more guilty than any that were putt in prison. Upon this information, Crawford was seized, and being examined, it appeared, that when the mob begun, as he was comeing down from the steeple, the mob took the keys from him; that he was that night in several corners, and did indeed delate severall persons whom he saw there, and immediately warrands were dispatched, and it was found they had absconded and fled. But there was no evidence against him of any kind. Nay, on the contrary, it appeared, that he had been with the Magistrates in Clerk's the vintner's, relating to them what he had seen in the streets. Therefore, after haveing detained him in prison ffor a very considerable time, his Majestie's Advocate and Sollicitor signed a warrand for his liberation.

"There was also one James Wilson incarcerated in the said Tolbooth, upon the declaration of one witness, who said he saw him on the streets with a gun; and there he remained for some time, in order to try if a concurring witness could be found, or that he acted any part in the tragedy and wickedness. But nothing farther appeared against him; and being seized with a severe sickness, he is, by a warrand signed by his Majestie's Advocate and Sollicitor, liberated upon giveing sufficient baill.

"As to King, enquiry was made, and the ffact comes out beyond all exception, that he was in the lodge at the Nether-Bow with Lindsay the waiter, and several other people, not at all concerned in the mob. But after the affair was over, he went up towards the guard, and having met with Sandie the Turk and his wife, who escaped out of prison, they returned to his house at the Abbey, and then 'tis very possible he may have thought fitt in his beer to boast of villany, in which he could not possibly have any share for that reason; he was desired to find baill and he should be set at liberty. But he is a stranger and a fellow of very indifferent character, and 'tis believed it won't be easy for him to find baill. Wherefore, it 's thought he must be sett at liberty without it. Because he is a burden upon the Government while kept in confinement, not being able to maintain himself.

"What is above is all that relates to persons in custody. But there are warrands out against a great many other persons who had fled, particularly against one William White, a journeyman baxter, who, by the evidence, appears to have been at the beginning of the mob, and to have gone along with the drum, from the West-Port to the Nether-Bow, and is said to have been one of those who attacked the guard, and probably was as deep as any one there.

"Information was given that he was lurking at Falkirk, where he was born. Whereupon directions were sent to the Sheriff of the County, and a warrand from his Excellency Generall Wade, to the commanding officers at Stirling and Linlithgow, to assist, and all possible endeavours were used to catch hold of him, and 'tis said he escaped very narrowly, having been concealed in some outhouse; and the misfortune was, that those who were employed in the search did not know him personally. Nor, indeed, was it easy to trust any of the acquaintances of so low obscure a fellow with the secret of the warrand to be putt in execution.

"There was also strong evidence found against Robert Taylor, servant to William and Charles Thomsons, periwigmakers, that he acted as ane officer among the mob, and he was traced from the guard to the well at the head of Forrester's Wynd, where he stood and had the appellation of Captain from the mob, and from that walking down the Bow before Captain Porteus, with his Lochaber-axe; and by the description given of one who hawl'd the rope by which Captain Porteus was pulled up, 'tis believed Taylor was the person; and 'tis farther probable, that the witness who delated Stirling had mistaken Taylor for him, their stature and age (so far as can be gathered from the description) being the same.

"A great deal of pains were taken, and no charge was saved, in order to have catched hold of this Taylor, and warrands were sent to the country where he was born; but it appears he had shipt himself off for Holland, where it is said he now is.

"There is strong evidence also against Thomas Burns, butcher, that he was ane active person from the beginning of the mob to the end of it. He lurkt for some time amongst those of his trade; and artfully enough a train was laid to catch him, under pretence of a message that had come from his father in Ireland, so that he came to a blind alehouse in the Flesh-market closs, and a party being ready, was by Webster the soldier, who was upon this exploit, advertised to come down. However, Burns escaped out at a back window, and hid himself in some of the houses which are heaped together upon one another in that place, so that it was not possible to catch him. 'Tis now said he is gone to Ireland to his father, who lives there.

"There is evidence also against one Robert Anderson, journeyman and servant to Colin Alison, wright; and against Thomas Linnen and James Maxwell, both servants also to the said Colin Alison, who all seem to have been deeply concerned in the matter. Anderson is one of those who putt the rope upon Captain Porteus's neck. Linnen seems also to have been very active; and Maxwell (which is pretty remarkable) is proven to have come to a shop upon the Friday before, and charged the journeymen and prentices there to attend in the Parliament close on Tuesday night, to assist to hang Captain Porteus. These three did early abscond, and though warrands had been issued out against them, and all endeavours used to apprehend them, could not be found.

"One Waldie, a servant to George Campbell, wright, has also absconded, and many others, and 'tis informed that numbers of them have shipt themselves off ffor the Plantations; and upon an information that a ship was going off ffrom Glasgow, in which severall of the rogues were to transport themselves beyond seas, proper warrands were obtained, and persons dispatched to search the said ship, and seize any that can be found.

"The like warrands had been issued with regard to ships from Leith. But whether they had been scard, or whether the information had been groundless, they had no effect.

"This is a summary of the enquiry, ffrom which it appears there is no prooff on which one can rely, but against M'Lauchlan. There is a prooff also against Braidwood, but more exceptionable. His Majestie's Advocate, since he came to town, has join'd with the Sollicitor, and has done his utmost to gett at the bottom of this matter, but hitherto it stands as is above represented. They are resolved to have their eyes and their ears open, and to do what they can. But they laboured exceedingly against the stream; and it may truly be said, that nothing was wanting on their part. Nor have they declined any labour to answer the commands laid upon them to search the matter to the bottom."

The Porteous Mob.

In the preceding chapters, (II. to VII.) the circumstances of that extraordinary riot and conspiracy, called the Porteous Mob, are given with as much accuracy as the author was able to collect them. The order, regularity, and determined resolution with which such a violent action was devised and executed, were only equalled by the secrecy which was observed concerning the principal actors.

Although the fact was performed by torch-light, and in presence of a great multitude, to some of whom, at least, the individual actors must have been known, yet no discovery was ever made concerning any of the perpetrators of the slaughter.

Two men only were brought to trial for an offence which the government were so anxious to detect and punish. William M'Lauchlan, footman to the Countess of Wemyss, who is mentioned in the report of the Solicitor-General, (page 197,) against whom strong evidence had been obtained, was brought to trial in March 1737, charged as having been accessory to the riot, armed with a Lochaber-axe. But this man (who was at all times a silly creature) proved, that he was in a state of mortal intoxication, during the time he was present with the rabble, incapable of giving them either advice or assistance, or, indeed, of knowing what he or they were doing. He was also able to prove, that he was forced into the riot, and upheld while there by two bakers, who put a Lochaber-axe into his hand. The jury, wisely judging this poor creature could be no proper subject of punishment, found the panel Not Guilty. The same verdict was given in the case of Thomas Linning, also mentioned in the Solicitor's memorial, who was tried in 1738. In short, neither then, nor for a long period afterwards, was any thing discovered relating to the organization of the Porteous Plot.

The imagination of the people of Edinburgh was long irritated, and their curiosity kept awake, by the mystery attending this extraordinary conspiracy. It was generally reported of such natives of Edinburgh as, having left the city in youth, returned with a fortune amassed in foreign countries, that they had originally fled on account of their share in the Porteous Mob. But little credit can be attached to these surmises, as in most of the cases they are contradicted by dates, and in none supported by any thing but vague rumours, grounded on the ordinary wish of the vulgar, to impute the success of prosperous men to some unpleasant source. The secret history of the Porteous Mob has been till this day unravelled; and it has always been quoted as a close, daring, and calculated act of violence, of a nature peculiarly characteristic of the Scottish people.

Nevertheless, the author, for a considerable time, nourished hopes to have found himself enabled to throw some light on this mysterious story. An old man, who died about twenty years ago, at the advanced age of ninety-three, was said to have made a communication to the clergyman who attended upon his death-bed, respecting the origin of the Porteous Mob. This person followed the trade of a carpenter, and had been employed as such on the estate of a family of opulence and condition. His character in his line of life and amongst his neighbours, was excellent, and never underwent the slightest suspicion. His confession was said to have been to the following purpose: That he was one of twelve young men belonging to the village of Pathhead, whose animosity against Porteous, on account of the execution of Wilson, was so extreme, that they resolved to execute vengeance on him with their own hands, rather than he should escape punishment. With this resolution they crossed the Forth at different ferries, and rendezvoused at the suburb called Portsburgh, where their appearance in a body soon called numbers around them. The public mind was in such a state of irritation, that it only wanted a single spark to create an explosion; and this was afforded by the exertions of the small and determined band of associates. The appearance of premeditation and order which distinguished the riot, according to his account, had its origin, not in any previous plan or conspiracy, but in the character of those who were engaged in it. The story also serves to shew why nothing of the origin of the riot has ever been discovered, since, though in itself a great conflagration, its source, according to this account, was from an obscure and apparently inadequate cause.

I have been disappointed, however, in obtaining the evidence on which this story rests. The present proprietor of the estate on which the old man died, (a particular friend of the author,) undertook to question the son of the deceased on the subject. This person follows his father's trade, and holds the employment of carpenter to the same family. He admits, that his father's going abroad at the time of the Porteous Mob was popularly attributed to his having been concerned in that affair; but adds, that, so far as is known to him, the old man had never made any confession to that effect; and, on the contrary, had uniformly denied being present. My kind friend, therefore, had recourse to a person from whom he had formerly heard the story; but who, either from respect to an old friend's memory, or from failure of his own, happened to have forgotten that ever such a communication was made. So my obliging correspondent (who is a fox-hunter) wrote to me that he was completely *planted*; and all that can be said with respect to the tradition is, that it certainly once existed, and was generally believed.

Note E, p. 32. Dumbiedikes.

Dumbiedikes, selected as descriptive of the taciturn character of the imaginary owner, is really the name of a house bordering on the King's Park, so called because the late Mr Braidwood, an instructor of the deaf and dumb, resided there with his pupils. The situation of the real house is different from that assigned to the ideal mansion.

Note F. p. 33. Students.

Immediately previous to the Revolution, the students at the Edinburgh College were violent anti-catholics. They were strongly suspected of burning the house of Priestfield, belonging to the Lord Provost; and certainly were guilty of creating considerable riots in 1688-9.

Note G. p. 33. Arboriculture.

The author has been flattered by the assurance, that this *naive* mode of recommending arboriculture (which was actually delivered in these very words by a Highland laird, while on his death-bed, to his son) had so much weight with a Scottish earl, as to lead to his planting a large tract of country.

Note H. p. 38. Carspharn John.

John Semple, called Carspharn John, because minister of the parish in Galloway so called, was a presbyterian clergyman of singular piety and great zeal, of whom Patrick Walker records the following passage: "That night after his wife died, he spent the whole ensuing night in prayer and meditation in his garden. The next morning, one of his elders coming to see him, and lamenting his great loss and want of rest, he replied, —'I declare I have not, all night, had one thought of the death of my wife, I have been so taken up in meditating on heavenly things. I have been this night on the banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there.'"— *Walker's Remarkable Passages of the Life and Death of Mr John Semple.*

Note I. p. 41. Peter Walker.

This personage, whom it would be base ingratitude in the author to pass over without some notice, was by far the most zealous and faithful collector and recorder of the actions and opinions of the Cameronians. He resided, while stationary, at the Bristo Port of Edinburgh, but was by trade an itinerant merchant, or pedlar, which profession he seems to have exercised in Ireland as well as Britain. He composed biographical notices of Alexander Peden, John Semple, John Welwood, and Richard Cameron, all ministers of the Cameronian persuasion, to which the last mentioned member gave the name.

It is from such tracts as these, written in the sense, feeling, and spirit of the sect, and not from the sophisticated narratives of a later period, that the real character of the persecuted class is to be gathered. Walker writes with a simplicity which sometimes slides into the burlesque, and sometimes attains a tone of simple pathos, but always expressing the most daring confidence in his own correctness of creed and sentiments, sometimes with narrow-minded and disgusting bigotry. His turn for the marvellous was that of his time and sect; but there is little room to doubt his veracity concerning whatever he quotes on his own knowledge. His small tracts now bring a very high price, especially the earlier and authentic editions.

The tirade against dancing, pronounced by David Deans, is, as intimated in the text, partly borrowed from Peter Walker. He notices, as a foul reproach upon the name of Richard Cameron, that his memory was vituperated "by pipers and fiddlers playing the Cameronian march — carnal vain springs, which too many professors of religion dance to; a practice unbecoming the professors of Christianity to dance to any spring, but somewhat more to this. Whatever," he proceeds, "be the many foul blots recorded of the saints in Scripture, none of them is charged with this regular fit of distraction. We find it has been practised by the wicked and profane, as the dancing at that brutish, base action of the calf-making; and it had been good for that unhappy lass, who danced off the head of John the Baptist, that she had been born a cripple, and never drawn a limb to her. Historians say, that her sin was written upon her judgment, who sometime thereafter was dancing upon the ice, and it broke, and snapt the head off her; her head danced above, and her feet beneath. There is ground to think and conclude, that when the world's wickedness was great, dancing at their marriages was practised; but when the heavens above, and the earth beneath, were let loose upon them with that overflowing flood, their mirth was soon staid; and when the Lord in holy justice rained fire and justice from heaven upon that wicked people and city Sodom, enjoying fulness of bread and idleness, their fiddlestrings and hands went all in a flame; and the whole people in thirty miles of length, and ten of breadth, as historians say, were all made to fry in their skins; and at the end, whoever are giving in marriages and dancing when all will go in a flame, they will quickly change their note.

"I have often wondered thorow my life, how any that ever knew what it was to bow a knee in earnest to pray, durst crook a hough to fyke and fling at a piper's and fiddler's springs. I bless the Lord that ordered my lot so in my dancing days, that made the fear of the bloody rope and bullets to my neck and head, the pain of boots, thumikens, and irons, cold and hunger, wetness and weariness, to stop the lightness of my head, and the wantonness of my feet. What the

never-to-be-forgotten Man of God, John Knox, said to Queen Mary, when she gave him that sharp challenge, which would strike our mean-spirited, tongue-tacked ministers dumb, for his giving public faithful warning of the danger of the church and nation, through her marrying the Dauphine of France, when he left her bubbling and greeting, and came to an outer court, where her Lady Maries were fyking and dancing, he said, 'O brave ladies, a brave world, if it would last, and heaven at the hinder end! But fye upon the knave Death, that will seize upon those bodies of yours; and where will all your fiddling and flinging be then?' Dancing being such a common evil, especially amongst young professors, that all the lovers of the Lord should hate, has caused me to insist the more upon it, especially that foolish spring the Cameronian march!"—*Life and Death of three Famous Worthies, &c. by Peter Walker*, 12mo. p. 59.

It may be here observed, that some of the milder class of Cameronians made a distinction between the two sexes dancing separately, and allowed of it as a healthy and not unlawful exercise; but when men and women mingled in sport, it was then called *promiscuous dancing*, and considered as a scandalous enormity.

Note K, p. 46. Muschat's Cairn.

Nichol Muschat, a debauched and profligate wretch, having conceived a hatred against his wife, entered into a conspiracy with another brutal libertine and gambler, named Campbell of Burnbank, (repeatedly mentioned in Fennycuick's satirical poems of the time,) by which Campbell undertook to destroy the woman's character, so as to enable Muschat, on false pretences, to obtain a divorce from her. The brutal devices to which these worthy accomplices resorted for that purpose having failed, they endeavoured to destroy her by administering medicine of a dangerous kind, and in extraordinary quantities.

This purpose also failing, Nichol Muschat, or Muschet, did finally, on the 17th October, 1720, carry his wife under cloud of night to the King's Park, adjacent to what is called the Duke's Walk, near Holyrood Palace, and there took her life by cutting her throat almost quite through, and inflicting other wounds. He pleaded guilty to the indictment, for which he suffered death. His associate, Campbell, was sentenced to transportation for his share in the previous conspiracy. See *Mac-Laurin's Criminal Cases*, pages 64 and 738.

In memory, and at the same time execration, of the deed, a *cairn*, or pile of stones, long marked the spot. It is now almost totally removed, in consequence of an alteration on the road in that place.

Note L, p. 56. Hangman, or Lockman.

Lockman, so called from the small quantity of meal (Scottice, *lock*) which he was entitled to take out of every boll exposed to market in the city. In Edinburgh, the duty has been very long commuted; but in Dumfries, the finisher of the law still exercises, or did lately exercise, his privilege, the quantity taken being regulated by a small iron ladle, which he uses as the measure of his perquisite. The expression *lock*, for a small quantity of any readily divisible dry substance, as corn, meal, flax, or the like, is still preserved, not only popularly, but in a legal description, as the *lock* and *gowpen*, or small quantity and handful, payable in thirlage cases, as in-town multure.

Note M, p. 60. The Fairy Boy of Leith.

This legend was in former editions inaccurately said to exist in Baxter's "World of Spirits;" but is, in fact, to be found in "Pandæmonium, or the Devil's Cloyster; being a further blow to Modern Sadducism," by Richard Barton, Gentleman, 12mo, 1684. The work is inscribed to Dr Henry More. The story is entitled, "A remarkable passage of one named the Fairy Boy of Leith, in Scotland, given me by my worthy friend Captain George Burton, and attested under his hand;" and is as follows:—

"About fifteen years since, having business that detained me for some time in Leith, which is near Edenborough, in the kingdom of Scotland, I often met some of my acquaintance at a certain house there, where we used to drink a glass of wine for our refection. The woman which kept the house, was of honest reputation amongst the neighbours, which made me give the more attention to what she told me one day about a Fairy Boy (as they called him) who lived about that town. She had given me so strange an account of him, that I desired her I might see him the first opportunity, which she promised; and not long after, passing that way, she told me there was the Fairy Boy but a little before I came by; and casting her eye into the street, said, 'Look you, sir, yonder he is at play with those other boys,' and designing him to me, I went, and by smooth words, and a piece of money, got him to come into the house with me; where, in the presence of divers people, I demanded of him several astrological questions, which he answered with great subtility, and through all his discourse carried it with a cunning much beyond his years, which seemed not to exceed ten or eleven. He seemed to make a motion like drumming upon the table with his fingers, upon which I asked him, whether he could beat a drum, to which he replied, 'Yes, sir, as well as any man in Scotland; for every Thursday night I beat all points to a sort of people that use to meet under yonder hill,' (pointing to the great hill between Edenborough and Leith.) 'How, boy,' quoth I; 'what company have you there?'—'There are, sir,' said he, 'a great company both of men and women, and they are entertained with many sorts of music besides my drum; they have, besides, plenty variety of meats and wine; and many times we are carried into France or Holland in a night, and return again; and whilst we are there, we enjoy all the pleasures the country doth afford.' I demanded of him, how they got under that hill? To which he replied, 'that there were a great pair of gates that opened to them, though they were invisible to others, and that within there were brave large rooms, as well accommodated as most in Scotland.' I then asked him, how I should know what he said to be true? upon which he told me he would read my fortune, saying I should have two wives, and that he saw the forms of them sitting on my shoulders; that both would be very handsome women.

"As he was thus speaking, a woman of the neighbourhood, coming into the room, demanded of him what her fortune should be? He told her that she had two bastards before she was married; which put her in such a rage, that she desired not to hear the rest. The woman of the house told me that all the people in Scotland could not keep him from the rendezvous on Thursday night; upon which, by promising him some more money, I got a promise of him to meet me at the same place, in the afternoon of the Thursday following, and so dismissed him at that time. The boy came again at the place and time appointed, and I had prevailed with some friends to continue with me, if possible, to prevent his moving that night; he was placed between us, and answered many questions, without offering to go from us, until about eleven of the clock, he was got away unperceived of the company; but I suddenly missing him, hasted to the door, and took hold of him, and so returned him into the same room: we all watched him, and on a sudden he was again out of the doors. I followed him close, and he made a noise in the street as if he had been set upon; but from that time I could never see him.

"George Burton."

Note N, p. 60. Intercourse of the Covenanters with the Invisible World.

The gloomy, dangerous, and constant wanderings of the persecuted sect of Cameronians, naturally led to their entertaining with peculiar credulity the belief, that they were sometimes persecuted, not only by the wrath of men, but by the secret wiles and open terrors of Satan. In fact, a flood could not happen, a horse cast a shoe, or any other the most ordinary interruption thwart a minister's wish to perform service at a particular spot, than the accident was imputed to the immediate agency of fiends. The encounter of Alexander Peden with the Devil in the cave, and that of John Semple with the demon in the ford, are given by Peter Walker almost in the language of the text.

Note O, p. 62. Child Murder.

The Scottish Statute Book, anno 1690, chapter 21, in consequence of the great increase of the crime of child murder, both from the temptations to commit the offence and the difficulty of discovery, enacted a certain set of presumptions, which, in the absence of direct proof, the jury were directed to receive as evidence of the crime having actually been committed. The circumstances selected for this purpose were, that the woman should have concealed her situation during the whole period of pregnancy; that she should not have called for help at her delivery; and that, combined with these grounds of suspicion, the child should be either found dead or be altogether missing. Many persons suffered death during the last century under this severe act. But during the author's memory a more lenient course was followed, and the female accused under the act, and conscious of no competent defence, usually lodged a petition to the Court of Justiciary, denying, for form's sake, the tenor of the indictment, but stating, that as her good name had been destroyed by the charge, she was willing to submit to sentence of banishment, to which the crown counsel usually consented. This lenity in practice, and the comparative infrequency of the crime since the doom of public ecclesiastical penance has been generally dispensed with, have led to the abolition of the statute of William and Mary, which is now replaced by another, imposing banishment in those circumstances in which the crime was formerly capital. This alteration took place in 1803.

Note P, p. 72. Calumniator of the Fair Sex.

The journal of Graves, a Bow Street officer, despatched to Holland to obtain the surrender of the unfortunate William Brodie, bears a reflection on the ladies somewhat like that put in the mouth of the police-officer Sharpitlaw. It had been found difficult to identify the unhappy criminal; and, when a Scotch gentleman of respectability had seemed disposed to give evidence on the point required, his son-in-law, a clergyman in

Amsterdam, and his daughter, were suspected by Graves to have used arguments with the witness to dissuade him from giving his testimony. On which subject the journal of the Bow Street officer proceeds thus:

"Saw then a manifest reluctance in Mr ——, and had no doubt the daughter and parson would endeavour to persuade him to decline troubling himself in the matter, but judged he could not go back from what he had said to Mr Rich.—NOTA BENE. *No mischief but a woman or a priest in it*—here both."

Note Q, p. 75. EDINBURGH MAGISTRATES.

The Magistrates were closely interrogated before the House of Peers, concerning the particulars of the Porteous Mob, and the *patois* in which these functionaries made their answers, sounded strange in the ears of the Southern nobles. The Duke of Newcastle having demanded to know with what kind of shot the guard which Porteous commanded had loaded their muskets, was answered naïvely, "Ow, just sic as ane shoots *dukes and fools* with." This reply was considered as a contempt of the House of Lords, and the Provost would have suffered accordingly, but that the Duke of Argyle explained, that the expression, properly rendered into English, meant *ducks and waterfowls*.

Note R, p. 75. SIR WILLIAM DICK OF BRAID.

This gentleman formed a striking example of the instability of human prosperity. He was once the wealthiest man of his time in Scotland, a merchant in an extensive line of commerce, and a farmer of the public revenue; insomuch that, about 1640, he estimated his fortune at two hundred thousand pounds sterling. Sir William Dick was a zealous Covenanter; and in the memorable year 1641, he lent the Scottish Convention of Estates one hundred thousand merks at once, and thereby enabled them to support and pay their army, which must otherwise have broken to pieces. He afterwards advanced L.20,000 for the service of King Charles, during the usurpation; and having, by owning the royal cause, provoked the displeasure of the ruling party, he was fleeced of more money, amounting in all to L.65,000 sterling.

Being in this manner reduced to indigence, he went to London to try to recover some part of the sums which had been lent on government security. Instead of receiving any satisfaction, the Scottish Cœsus was thrown into prison, in which he died, 19th December, 1655. It is said his death was hastened by the want of common necessaries. But this statement is somewhat exaggerated, if it be true, as is commonly said, that though he was not supplied with bread, he had plenty of pie-crust, thence called "Sir William Dick's necessity."

The changes of fortune are commemorated in a folio pamphlet entitled, "The lamentable state of the deceased Sir William Dick." It contains several copperplates, one representing Sir William on horseback, and attended with guards as Lord Provost of Edinburgh, superintending the unloading of one of his rich argosies. A second exhibiting him as arrested, and in the hands of the bailiffs. A third presents him dead in prison. The tract is esteemed highly valuable by collectors of prints. The only copy I ever saw upon sale, was rated at L.30.

Note S, p. 77. MEETING AT TALLA-LINNS.

This remarkable convocation took place upon 15th June, 1682, and an account of its confused and divisive proceedings may be found in Michael Shield's Faithful Contendings Displayed, Glasgow, 1780, p. 21. It affords a singular and melancholy example how much a metaphysical and polemical spirit had crept in amongst these unhappy sufferers, since amid so many real injuries which they had to sustain, they were disposed to add disagreement and disunion concerning the character and extent of such as were only imaginary.

Note T, p. 94. DOOMSTER, OR DEMPSTER, OF COURT.

The name of this officer is equivalent to the pronouncer of doom, or sentence. In this comprehensive sense, the Judges of the Isle of Man were called Dempsters. But in Scotland the word was long restricted to the designation of an official person, whose duty it was to recite the sentence after it had been pronounced by the Court, and recorded by the clerk; on which occasion the Dempster legalized it by the words of form, "*And this I pronounce for doom.*" For a length of years, the office, as mentioned in the text, was held *in commendam* with that of the executioner; for when this odious but necessary officer of justice received his appointment, he petitioned the Court of Justiciary to be received as their Dempster, which was granted as a matter of course.

The production of the executioner in open court, and in presence of the wretched criminal, had something in it hideous and disgusting to the more refined feelings of later times. But if an old tradition of the Parliament House of Edinburgh may be trusted, it was the following anecdote which occasioned the disuse of the Dempster's office.

It chanced at one time that the office of public executioner was vacant. There was occasion for some one to act as Dempster, and, considering the party who generally held the office, it is not wonderful that a *locum tenens* was hard to be found. At length, one Hume, who had been sentenced to transportation, for an attempt to burn his own house, was induced to consent that he would pronounce the doom on this occasion. But when brought forth to officiate, instead of repeating the doom to the criminal, Mr Hume addressed himself to their lordships in a bitter complaint of the injustice of his own sentence. It was in vain that he was interrupted, and reminded of the purpose for which he had come hither; "I ken what ye want of me weel eneugh," said the fellow, "ye want me to be your Dempster; but I am come to be none of your Dempster, I am come to summon you, Lord T—, and you, Lord E—, to answer at the bar of another world for the injustice you have done me in this." In short, Hume had only made a pretext of complying with the proposal, in order to have an opportunity of reviling the Judges to their faces, or giving them, in the phrase of his country, "a sloan." He was hurried off amid the laughter of the audience, but the indecorous scene which had taken place contributed to the abolition of the office of Dempster. The sentence is now read over by the clerk of court, and the formality of pronouncing doom is altogether omitted.

Note U, p. 95. JOHN DUKE OF ARGYLE AND GREENWICH.

This nobleman was very dear to his countrymen, who were justly proud of his military and political talents, and grateful for the ready zeal with which he asserted the rights of his native country. This was never more conspicuous than in the matter of the Porteous Mob, when the Ministers brought in a violent and vindictive bill, for declaring the Lord Provost of Edinburgh incapable of bearing any public office in future, for not foreseeing a disorder which no one foresaw, or interrupting the course of a riot too formidable to endure opposition. The same bill made provision for pulling down the city gates, and abolishing the city guard,—rather a Hibernian mode of enabling them better to keep the peace within burgh in future.

The Duke of Argyle opposed this bill as a cruel, unjust, and fanatical proceeding, and an encroachment upon the privileges of the royal burghs of Scotland, secured to them by the treaty of Union. "In all the proceedings of that time," said his Grace, "the nation of Scotland treated with the English as a free and independent people; and as that treaty, my Lords, had no other guarantee for the due performance of its articles, but the faith and honour of a British Parliament, it would be both unjust and ungenerous, should this House agree to any proceedings that have a tendency to injure it."

Lord Hardwicke, in reply to the Duke of Argyle, seemed to insinuate, that his Grace had taken up the affair in a party point of view, to which the nobleman replied in the spirited language quoted in the text. Lord Hardwicke apologized. The bill was much modified, and the clauses concerning the dismantling the city, and disbanding the guard, were departed from. A fine of L.2000 was imposed on the city for the benefit of Porteous's widow. She was contented to accept three-fourths of the sum, the payment of which closed the transaction. It is remarkable, that, in our day, the Magistrates of Edinburgh have had recourse to both those measures, held in such horror by their predecessors, as necessary steps for the improvement of the city.

It may be here noticed, in explanation of another circumstance mentioned in the text, that there is a tradition in Scotland, that George II., whose irascible temper is said sometimes to have hurried him into expressing his displeasure *par voie du fait*, offered to the Duke of Argyle, in angry audience, some menace of this nature, on which he left the presence in high disdain, and with little ceremony. Sir Robert Walpole, having met the Duke as he retired, and learning the cause of his resentment and discomposure, endeavoured to reconcile him to what had happened by saying, "Such was his Majesty's way, and that he often took such liberties with himself without meaning any harm." This did not mend matters in Mac-Callummore's eyes, who replied, in great disdain, "You will please to remember, Sir Robert, the infinite distance there is betwixt you and me." Another frequent expression of passion on the part of the same monarch, is alluded to in the old Jacobite song—

> The fire shall get both hat and wig,
> As oft times they've got a' that.

Note X, p. 155. MADGE WILDFIRE.

In taking leave of the poor maniac, the author may here observe, that the first conception of the character, though afterwards greatly altered, was taken from that of a person calling herself, and called by others, Feckless Fannie, (weak or feeble Fannie,) who always travelled with a small flock of sheep. The following account, furnished by the persevering kindness of Mr Train, contains probably all that can now be known of her history, though many, among whom is the author, may remember having heard of Feckless Fannie, in the days of their youth.

"My leisure hours," says Mr Train, "for some time past

have been mostly spent in searching for particulars relating to the maniac called Feckless Fannie, who travelled over all Scotland and England, between the years 1767 and 1775, and whose history is altogether so like a romance, that I have been at all possible pains to collect every particular that can be found relative to her in Galloway, or in Ayrshire.

"When Feckless Fannie appeared in Ayrshire, for the first time, in the summer of 1769, she attracted much notice, from being attended by twelve or thirteen sheep, who seemed all endued with faculties so much superior to the ordinary race of animals of the same species, as to excite universal astonishment. She had for each a different name, to which it answered when called by its mistress, and would likewise obey in the most surprising manner any command she thought proper to give. When travelling, she always walked in front of her flock, and they followed her closely behind. When she lay down at night in the fields, for she would never enter into a house, they always disputed who should lie next to her, by which means she was kept warm, while she lay in the midst of them; when she attempted to rise from the ground, an old ram, whose name was Charlie, always claimed the sole right of assisting her; pushing any that stood in his way aside, until he arrived right before his mistress; he then bowed his head nearly to the ground that she might lay her hands on his horns, which were very large; he then lifted her gently from the ground by raising his head. If she chanced to leave her flock feeding, as soon as they discovered she was gone, they all began to bleat most piteously, and would continue to do so till she returned; they would then testify their joy by rubbing their sides against her petticoat, and frisking about.

"Feckless Fannie was not, like most other demented creatures, fond of fine dress; on her head she wore an old slouched hat, over her shoulders an old plaid, and carried always in her hand a shepherd's crook; with any of these articles, she invariably declared she would not part for any consideration whatever. When she was interrogated why she set so much value on things seemingly so insignificant, she would sometimes relate the history of her misfortune, which was briefly as follows:

"'I am the only daughter of a wealthy squire in the north of England, but I loved my father's shepherd, and that has been my ruin; for my father, fearing his family would be disgraced by such an alliance, in a passion mortally wounded my lover with a shot from a pistol. I arrived just in time to receive the last blessing of the dying man, and to close his eyes in death. He bequeathed me his little all, but I only accepted these sheep to be my sole companions through life, and this hat, this plaid, and this crook, all of which I will carry until I descend into the grave.'

"This is the substance of a ballad, eighty-four lines of which I copied down lately from the recitation of an old woman in this place, who says she has seen it in print, with a plate on the title page, representing Fannie with her sheep behind her. As this ballad is said to have been written by Lowe, the author of Mary's Dream, I am surprised that it has not been noticed by Cromek, in his Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song; but he perhaps thought it unworthy of a place in his collection, as there is very little merit in the composition; which want of room prevents me from transcribing at present. But if I thought you had never seen it, I would take an early opportunity of doing so.

"After having made the tour of Galloway in 1769, as Fannie was wandering in the neighbourhood of Moffat, on her way to Edinburgh, where, I am informed, she was likewise well known, Old Charlie, her favourite ram, chanced to break into a kale-yard, which the proprietor observing, let loose a mastiff that hunted the poor sheep to death. This was a sad misfortune; it seemed to renew all the pangs which she formerly felt on the death of her lover. She would not part from the side of her old friend for several days, and it was with much difficulty she consented to allow him to be buried; but, still wishing to pay a tribute to his memory, she covered his grave with moss, and fenced it round with osiers, and annually returned to the same spot, and pulled the weeds from the grave and repaired the fence. This is altogether like a romance; but I believe it is really true that she did so. The grave of Charlie is still held sacred even by the school-boys of the present day in that quarter. It is now, perhaps, the only instance of the law of Kenneth being attended to, which says, 'The grave where anie that is slaine lieth buried, leave untilled for seven years. Repute every grave holie so as thou be well advised, that in no wise with thy feet thou tread upon it.'

"Through the storms of winter, as well as in the milder seasons of the year, she continued her wandering course, nor could she be prevented from doing so, either by entreaty or promise of reward. The late Dr Fullarton of Rosemount, in the neighbourhood of Ayr, being well acquainted with her father when in England, endeavoured, in a severe season, by every means in his power, to detain her at Rosemount for a few days until the weather should become more mild; but when she found herself rested a little, and saw her sheep fed, she raised her crook, which was the signal she always gave for the sheep to follow her, and off they all marched together.

"But the hour of poor Fannie's dissolution was now at hand, and she seemed anxious to arrive at the spot where she was to terminate her mortal career. She proceeded to Glasgow, and, while passing through that city, a crowd of idle boys, attracted by her singular appearance, together with the novelty of seeing so many sheep obeying her command, began to torment her with their pranks, till she became so irritated that she pelted them with bricks and stones, which they returned in such a manner, that she was actually stoned to death between Glasgow and Anderston.

"To the real history of this singular individual, credulity has attached several superstitious appendages. It is said, that the farmer who was the cause of Charlie's death, shortly afterwards drowned himself in a peat-hag; and that the hand, with which a butcher in Kilmarnock struck one of the other sheep, became powerless and withered to the very bone. In the summer of 1769, when she was passing by New Cumnock, a young man, whose name was William Forsyth, son of a farmer in the same parish, plagued her so much that she wished he might never see the morn; upon which he went home and hanged himself in his father's barn. And I doubt not many such stories may yet be remembered in other parts where she had been."

So far Mr Train. The author can only add to this narrative, that Feckless Fannie and her little flock were well known in the pastoral districts.

In attempting to introduce such a character into fiction, the author felt the risk of encountering a comparison with the Maria of Sterne; and, besides, the mechanism of the story would have been as much retarded by Feckless Fannie's flock, as the night-march of Don Quixote was delayed by Sancho's tale of the sheep that were ferried over the river.

The author has only to add, that notwithstanding the preciseness of his friend Mr Train's statement, there may be some hopes that the outrage on Feckless Fannie and her little flock was not carried to extremity. There is no mention of any trial on account of it, which, had it occurred in the manner stated, would have certainly taken place; and the author has understood that it was on the Border she was last seen, about the skirts of the Cheviot hills, but without her little flock.

Note Y, p. 157. Shawfield's Mob.

In 1725, there was a great riot in Glasgow on account of the malt-tax. Among the troops brought in to restore order, was one of the independent companies of Highlanders levied in Argyleshire, and distinguished, in a lampoon of the period, as "Campbell of Carrick and his Highland thieves." It was called Shawfield's Mob, because much of the popular violence was directed against Daniel Campbell, Esq. of Shawfield, M.P., Provost of the town.

Note Z, p. 164. Death of Francis Gordon.

This exploit seems to have been one in which Patrick Walker prided himself not a little; and there is reason to fear, that that excellent person would have highly resented the attempt to associate another with him, in the slaughter of a King's Life-Guardsman. Indeed, he would have had the more right to be offended at losing any share of the glory, since the party against Gordon was already three to one, besides having the advantage of fire-arms. The manner in which he vindicates his claim to the exploit, without committing himself by a direct statement of it, is not a little amusing. It is as follows:—

"I shall give a brief and true account of that man's death, which I did not design to do while I was upon the stage; I resolve, indeed, (if it be the Lord's will,) to leave a more full account of that and many other remarkable steps of the Lord's dispensations towards me through my life. It was then commonly said, that Francis Gordon was a volunteer out of wickedness of principles, and could not stay with the troop, but was still raging and ranging to catch hiding suffering people. Meldrum and Airly's troops, lying at Lanark upon the first day of March, 1682, Mr Gordon and another wicked comrade, with their two servants and four horses, came to Kilcaigow, two miles from Lanark, searching for William Caigow and others, under hiding.

"Mr Gordon, rambling throw the town, offered to abuse the women. At night, they came a mile further to the Easter-Seat, to Robert Muir's, he being also under hiding. Gordon's comrade and the two servants went to bed, but he could sleep none, roaring all night for women. When day came, he took only his sword in his hand, and came to Moss-platt, and some new men (who had been in the fields all night) seeing him, they fled, and he pursued. James Wilson, Thomas Young, and myself, having been in a meeting all night, were lying down in the morning. We were alarmed, thinking there were many more than one; he pursued hard, and overtook us. Thomas Young said, 'Sir, what do ye pursue us for?' he said, 'he was come to send us to hell.' James Wilson said, 'that shall not be, for we will defend ourselves.' He said, 'that either he or we should go to it now.' He run his sword furiously throw James Wilson's coat. James fired upon him, but missed him. All this time he cried, Damn his soul! He got a shot in his head out of a pocket pistol, rather fit for diverting a boy than killing such a furious, mad, brisk man, which, notwithstanding, killed him dead. The foresaid William Caigow and Robert Muir came to us. We searched him for papers,

and found a long scroll of sufferers' names, either to kill or take. I tore it all in pieces. He had also some Popish books and bonds of money, with one dollar, which a poor man took off the ground; all which we put in his pocket again. Thus, he was four miles from Lanark, and near a mile from his comrade, seeking his own death, and got it. And for as much as we have been condemned for this, I could never see how any one could condemn us that allows of self-defence, which the laws both of God and nature allow to every creature. For my own part, my heart never smote me for this. When I saw his blood run, I wished that all the blood of the Lord's stated and avowed enemies in Scotland had been in his veins. Having such a clear call and opportunity, I would have rejoiced to have seen it all gone out with a gush. I have many times wondered at the greater part of the indulged, lukewarm ministers and professors in that time, who made more noise of murder, when one of these enemies had been killed even in our own defence, than of twenty of us being murdered by them. None of these men present was challenged for this but myself. Thomas Young thereafter suffered at Mauchline, but was not challenged for this; Robert Muir was banished; James Wilson outlived the persecution; William Caigow died in the Canongate Tolbooth, in the beginning of 1685. Mr Wodrow is misinformed; who says, that he suffered unto death."

Note AA, p. 170. Tolling to Service in Scotland.

In the old days of Scotland, when persons of property (unless they happened to be non-jurors) were as regular as their inferiors in attendance on parochial worship, there was a kind of etiquette, in waiting till the patron or acknowledged great man of the parish should make his appearance. This ceremonial was so sacred in the eyes of a parish beadle in the Isle of Bute, that the kirk bell being out of order, he is said to have mounted the steeple every Sunday, to imitate with his voice the successive summonses which its mouth of metal used to send forth. The first part of this imitative harmony was simply the repetition of the words *Bell bell, bell bell*, two or three times, in a manner as much resembling the sound as throat of flesh could imitate throat of iron. *Bellùm! bellùm!* was sounded forth in a more urgent manner; but he never sent forth the third and conclusive peal, the varied tone of which is called in Scotland the *ringing-in*, until the two principal heritors of the parish approached, when the chime ran thus:—

Bellùm Bellèllum,
Bernera and Knockdow's coming!
Bellùm Bellèllum,
Bernera and Knockdow's coming!

Thereby intimating, that service was instantly to proceed.

Note BB, p. 191. Ratcliffe.

There seems an anachronism in the history of this person. Ratcliffe, among other escapes from justice, was released by the Porteous mob when under sentence of death; and he was again under the same predicament when the Highlanders made a similar jail-delivery in 1715. He was too sincere a whig to embrace liberation at the hands of the Jacobites, and in reward was made one of the keepers of the Tolbooth. So at least runs constant tradition.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN.

THE

BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

With all his Illustrations and Notes.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it!—BURNS.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLVII.

The Bride of Lammermoor.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Johnny Groats',
If there 's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it;
A chiel 's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he 'll prent it! — BURNS.

INTRODUCTION — (1829.)

THE author, on a former occasion,[1] declined giving the real source from which he drew the tragic subject of this history, because, though occurring at a distant period, it might possibly be unpleasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties. But as he finds an account of the circumstances given in the Notes to Law's Memorials,[2] by his ingenious friend Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., and also indicated in his reprint of the Rev. Mr Symson's Poems, appended to the Description of Galloway, as the original of the Bride of Lammermoor, the author feels himself now at liberty to tell the tale as he had it from connections of his own, who lived very near the period, and were closely related to the family of the Bride.

It is well known that the family of Dalrymple, which has produced, within the space of two centuries, as many men of talent, civil and military, and of literary, political, and professional eminence, as any house in Scotland, first rose into distinction in the person of James Dalrymple, one of the most eminent lawyers that ever lived, though the labours of his powerful mind were unhappily exercised on a subject so limited as Scottish Jurisprudence, on which he has composed an admirable work.

He married Margaret, daughter to Ross of Balniel, with whom he obtained a considerable estate. She was an able, politic, and high-minded woman, so successful in what she undertook, that the vulgar, no way partial to her husband or her family, imputed her success to necromancy. According to the popular belief, this Dame Margaret purchased the temporal prosperity of her family from the Master whom she served, under a singular condition, which is thus narrated by the historian of her grandson, the great Earl of Stair. "She lived to a great age, and at her death desired that she might not be put under ground, but that her coffin should be placed upright on one end of it, promising, that while she remained in that situation, the Dalrymples should continue in prosperity. What was the old lady's motive for such a request, or whether she really made such a promise, I cannot take upon me to determine; but it is certain her coffin stands upright in the aisle of the church of Kirkliston, the burial place of the family."[3] The talents of this accomplished race were sufficient to have accounted for the dignities which many members of the family attained, without any supernatural assistance. But their extraordinary prosperity was attended by some equally singular family misfortunes, of which that which befell their eldest daughter was at once unaccountable and melancholy.

Miss Janet Dalrymple, daughter of the first Lord Stair and Dame Margaret Ross, had engaged herself without the knowledge of her parents to the Lord Rutherford, who was not acceptable to them either on account of his political principles, or his want of fortune. The young couple broke a piece of gold together, and pledged their troth in the most solemn manner; and it is said the young lady imprecated dreadful evils on herself should she break her plighted faith. Shortly after, a suitor who was favoured by Lord Stair, and still more so by his lady, paid his addresses to Miss Dalrymple. The young lady refused the proposal, and being pressed on the subject, confessed her secret

1 See Introduction to the Chronicles of the Canongate.
2 Law's Memorials, p. 226.
3 Memoirs of John Earl of Stair, by an Impartial Hand London, printed for C. Cobbet, p. 7.

engagement. Lady Stair, a woman accustomed to universal submission, (for even her husband did not dare to contradict her,) treated this objection as a trifle, and insisted upon her daughter yielding her consent to marry the new suitor, David Dunbar, son and heir to David Dunbar of Baldoon, in Wigtonshire. The first lover, a man of very high spirit, then interfered by letter, and insisted on the right he had acquired by his troth plighted with the young lady. Lady Stair sent him for answer, that her daughter, sensible of her undutiful behaviour in entering into a contract unsanctioned by her parents, had retracted her unlawful vow, and now refused to fulfil her engagement with him.

The lover, in return, declined positively to receive such an answer from any one but his mistress in person; and as she had to deal with a man who was both of a most determined character, and of too high condition to be trifled with, Lady Stair was obliged to consent to an interview between Lord Rutherford and her daughter. But she took care to be present in person, and argued the point with the disappointed and incensed lover with pertinacity equal to his own. She particularly insisted on the Levitical law, which declares, that a woman shall be free of a vow which her parents dissent from. This is the passage of Scripture she founded on:—

"If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

"If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth;

"And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

"But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."—Numbers, xxx. 2, 3, 4, 5.

While the mother insisted on these topics, the lover in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings. She remained totally overwhelmed, as it seemed,—mute, pale, and motionless as a statue. Only at her mother's command, sternly uttered, she summoned strength enough to restore to her plighted suitor the piece of broken gold, which was the emblem of her troth.

On this he burst forth into a tremendous passion, took leave of the mother with maledictions, and as he left the apartment, turned back to say to his weak, if not fickle mistress, "For you, madam, you will be a world's wonder;" a phrase by which some remarkable degree of calamity is usually implied. He went abroad, and returned not again. If the last Lord Rutherford was the unfortunate party, he must have been the third who bore that title, and who died in 1685.

The marriage betwixt Janet Dalrymple and David Dunbar of Baldoon now went forward, the bride shewing no repugnance, but being absolutely passive in every thing her mother commanded or advised. On the day of the marriage, which, as was then usual, was celebrated by a great assemblage of friends and relations, she was the same—sad, silent, and resigned, as it seemed, to her destiny. A lady, very nearly connected with the family, told the author that she had conversed on the subject with one of the brothers of the bride, a mere lad at the time, who had ridden before his sister to church. He said her hand, which lay on his as she held her arm round his waist, was as cold and damp as marble. But, full of his new dress, and the part he acted in the procession, the circumstance, which he long afterwards remembered with bitter sorrow and compunction, made no impression on him at the time.

The bridal feast was followed by dancing; the bride and bridegroom retired as usual, when of a sudden the most wild and piercing cries were heard from the nuptial chamber. It was then the custom, to prevent any coarse pleasantry which old times perhaps admitted, that the key of the nuptial chamber should be intrusted to the bride-man. He was called upon, but refused at first to give it up, till the shrieks became so hideous that he was compelled to hasten with others to learn the cause. On opening the door, they found the bridegroom lying across the threshold, dreadfully wounded, and streaming with blood. The bride was then sought for: She was found in the corner of the large chimney, having no covering save her shift, and that dabbled in gore. There she sat grinning at them, mopping and mowing, as I heard the expression used; in a word, absolutely insane. The only words she spoke were, "Tak up your bonny bridegroom." She survived this horrible scene little more than a fortnight, having been married on the 24th of August, and dying on the 12th of September, 1669.

The unfortunate Baldoon recovered from his wounds, but sternly prohibited all inquiries respecting the manner in which he had received them. If a lady, he said, asked him any question upon the subject, he would neither answer her nor speak to her again while he lived; if a gentleman, he would consider it as a mortal affront, and demand satisfaction as having received such. He did not very long survive the dreadful catastrophe, having met with a fatal injury by a fall from his horse, as he rode between Leith and Holyrood-house, of which he died the next day, 28th March, 1682. Thus a few years removed all the principal actors in this frightful tragedy.

Various reports went abroad on this mysterious affair, many of them very inaccurate, though they could hardly be said to be exaggerated. It was

difficult at that time to become acquainted with the history of a Scottish family above the lower rank; and strange things sometimes took place there, into which even the law did not scrupulously inquire.

The credulous Mr Law says, generally, that the Lord President Stair had a daughter, who "being married, the night she was *bride in*, [that is, bedded bride,] was taken from her bridegroom and *harled* [dragged] through the house, (by spirits, we are given to understand,) and soon afterwards died. Another daughter," he says, "was possessed by an evil spirit."

My friend, Mr Sharpe, gives another edition of the tale. According to his information, it was the bridegroom who wounded the bride. The marriage, according to this account, had been against her mother's inclination, who had given her consent in these ominous words: "You may marry him, but soon shall you repent it."

I find still another account darkly insinuated in some highly scurrilous and abusive verses, of which I have an original copy. They are docketed as being written "Upon the late Viscount Stair and his family, by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw. The marginals by William Dunlop, writer in Edinburgh, a son of the Laird of Househill, and nephew to the said Sir William Hamilton." There was a bitter and personal quarrel and rivalry betwixt the author of this libel, a name which it richly deserves, and Lord President Stair; and the lampoon, which is written with much more malice than art, bears the following motto:—

"Stair's neck, mind, wife, sons, grandson, and the rest,
Are wry, false, witch, pests, parricide, possessed."

This malignant satirist, who calls up all the misfortunes of the family, does not forget the fatal bridal of Baldoon. He seems, though his verses are as obscure as unpoetical, to intimate, that the violence done to the bridegroom was by the intervention of the foul fiend to whom the young lady had resigned herself, in case she should break her contract with her first lover. His hypothesis is inconsistent with the account given in the note upon Law's Memorials, but easily reconcileable to the family tradition.

"In al Stair's offspring we no difference know,
They doe the females as the males bestow;
So he of's daughter's marriage gave the ward,
Like a true vassal, to Glenluce's Laird;
He knew what she did to her suitor plight,
If she her faith to Rutherfurd should slight,
Which, like his own, for greed he broke outright.
Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,
And, as first substitute, did seize the bride;
Whate'er he to his mistress did or said,
He threw the bridegroom from the nuptial bed,
Into the chimney did so his rival maul,
His bruised bones ne'er were cured but by the fall."[1]

One of the marginal notes ascribed to William Dunlop, applies to the above lines. "She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherfoord under horrid imprecations, and afterwards married Baldoon, his nevoy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith."

The same tragedy is alluded to in the following couplet and note:—

"What train of curses that base brood pursues,
When the young nephew weds old uncle's spouse."

The note on the word *uncle* explains it as meaning "Rutherfoord, who should have married the Lady Baldoon, was Baldoon's uncle." The poetry of this satire on Lord Stair and his family was, as already noticed, written by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw, a rival of Lord Stair for the situation of President of the Court of Session; a person much inferior to that great lawyer in talents, and equally ill-treated by the calumny or just satire of his contemporaries, as an unjust and partial judge. Some of the notes are by that curious and laborious antiquary Robert Milne, who, as a virulent Jacobite, willingly lent a hand to blacken the family of Stair.[2]

Another poet of the period, with a very different purpose, has left an elegy, in which he darkly hints at and bemoans the fate of the ill-starred young person, whose very uncommon calamity Whitelaw, Dunlop, and Milne, thought a fitting subject for buffoonery and ribaldry. This bard of milder mood was Andrew Symson, before the Revolution minister of Kirkinner, in Galloway, and after his expulsion as an Episcopalian, following the humble occupation of a printer in Edinburgh. He furnished the family of Baldoon, with which he appears to have been intimate, with an elegy on the tragic event in their family. In this piece he treats the mournful occasion of the bride's death with mysterious solemnity.

The verses bear this title,—"On the unexpected death of the virtuous Lady Mrs Janet Dalrymple, Lady Baldoon, younger," and afford us the precise dates of the catastrophe, which could not otherwise have been easily ascertained. "Nupta August 12. Domum Ducta August 24. Obiit September 12. Sepult. September 30, 1669." The form of the elegy is a dialogue betwixt a passenger and a domestic servant. The first, recollecting that he had passed that way lately, and seen all around enlivened by the appearances of mirth and festivity, is desirous to know what had changed so gay a scene into mourning. We preserve the reply of the servant as a specimen of Mr Symson's verses, which are not of the first quality:—

——— "Sir, 'tis truth you 've told,
We did enjoy great mirth; but now, ah me!

[1] The fall from his horse, by which he was killed.

[2] I have compared the satire, which occurs in the first volume of the curious little collection called a Book of Scottish Pasquils, 1827, with that which has a more full text, and more extended notes, and which is in my own possession, by gift of Thomas Thomson, Esq. Register-Depute. In the second Book of Pasquils, p. 72, is a most abusive epitaph on Sir James Hamilton of Whitelaw.

Our joyful song's turn'd to an elegie.
A virtuous lady, not long since a bride,
Was to a hopeful plant by marriage tied,
And brought home hither. We did all rejoice,
Even for her sake. But presently our voice
Was turn'd to mourning for that little time
That she'd enjoy: She waned in her prime,
For Atropos, with her impartial knife,
Soon cut her thread, and therewithal her life;
And for the time we may it well remember,
It being in unfortunate September;
Where we must leave her till the resurrection,
'Tis then the Saints enjoy their full perfection."

Mr Symson also poured forth his elegiac strains upon the fate of the widowed bridegroom, on which subject, after a long and querulous effusion, the poet arrives at the sound conclusion, that if Baldoon had walked on foot, which it seems was his general custom, he would have escaped perishing by a fall from horseback. As the work in which it occurs is so scarce as almost to be unique, and as it gives us the most full account of one of the actors in this tragic tale which we have rehearsed, we will, at the risk of being tedious, insert some short specimens of Mr Symson's composition. It is entitled, —

"A Funeral Elegie, occasioned by the sad and much lamented death of that worthily respected, and very much accomplished gentleman, David Dunbar, younger of Baldoon, only son and apparent heir to the right worshipful Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, Knight Baronet. He departed this life on March 28, 1682, having received a bruise by a fall, as he was riding the day preceding betwixt Leith and Holy-Rood-House; and was honourably interred in the Abbey church of Holy-Rood-House, on April 4, 1682."

"Men might, and very justly too, conclude
Me guilty of the worst ingratitude,
Should I be silent, or should I forbear
At this sad accident to shed a tear;
A tear! said I? ah! that 's a petit thing,
A very lean, slight, slender offering,
Too mean, I 'm sure, for me, wherewith t 'attend
The unexpected funeral of my friend —
A glass of briny tears charged up to th' brim,
Would be too few for me to shed for him."

The poet proceeds to state his intimacy with the deceased, and the constancy of the young man's attendance on public worship, which was regular, and had such effect upon two or three others that were influenced by his example,

"So that my Muse 'gainst Priscian avers,
He, only he, *were* my parishioners;
Yea, and my only hearers."

He then describes the deceased in person and manners, from which it appears that more accomplishments were expected in the composition of a fine gentleman in ancient than modern times:

"His body, though not very large or tall,
Was sprightly, active, yea and strong withal.
His constitution was, if right I 've guess'd,
Blood mixt with choler, said to be the best.
In 's gesture, converse, speech, discourse, attire,
He practis'd that which wise men still admire,
Commend, and recommend. What 's that? you 'l say:
'Tis this: He ever choos'd the middle way
'Twixt both th' extremes. Amost in ev'ry thing
He did the like, 'tis worth our noticing:
Sparing, yet not a niggard; liberal,
And yet not lavish or a prodigal,
As knowing when to spend and when to spare;
And that 's a lesson which not many are
Acquainted with. He bashful was, yet daring
When he saw cause, and yet therein but sparing;
Familiar, yet not common, for he knew
To condescend, and keep his distance too.
He us'd, and that most commonly, to go
On foot; I wish that he had still done so.
Th' affairs of court were unto him well known:
And yet mean while he slighted not his own.
He knew full well how to behave at court,
And yet but seldome did thereto resort;
But lov'd the country life, choos'd to inure
Himself to past'rage and agriculture;
Proving, improving, ditching, trenching, draining,
Viewing, reviewing, and by those means gaining;
Planting, transplanting, levelling, erecting
Walls, chambers, houses, terraces; projecting
Now this, now that device, this draught, that measure,
That might advance his profit with his pleasure.
Quick in his bargains, honest in commerce,
Just in his dealings, being much averse
From quirks of law, still ready to refer
His cause t' an honest country arbiter.
He was acquainted with cosmography,
Arithmetic, and modern history;
With architecture and such arts as these,
Which I may call specifick sciences
Fit for a gentleman; and surely he
That knows them not, at least in some degree,
May brook the title, but he wants the thing,
Is but a shadow scarce worth noticing.
He learned the French, be 't spoken to his praise,
In very little more than fourty days."

Then comes the full burst of wo, in which, instead of saying much himself, the poet informs us what the ancients would have said on such an occasion:

"A heathen poet, at the news, no doubt,
Would have exclaimed, and furiously cry'd out
Against the fates, the destinies and starrs,
What! this the effect of planetarie warrs!
We might have seen him rage and rave, yea worse,
'Tis very like we might have heard him curse
The year, the month, the day, the hour, the place,
The company, the wager, and the race;
Decry all recreations, with the names
Of Isthmian, Pythian, and Olympic games;
Exclaim against them all both old and new,
Both the Nemæan and the Lethæan too:
Adjudge all persons under highest pain,
Always to walk on foot, and then again
Order all horses to be hough'd, that we
Might never more the like adventure see."

Supposing our readers have had enough of Mr Symson's verses, and finding nothing more in his poem worthy of transcription, we return to the tragic story.

It is needless to point out to the intelligent reader, that the witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendency of a powerful mind over

[1] This elegy is reprinted in the appendix to a topographical work by the same author, entitled "A Large Description of Galloway, by Andrew Symson, Minister of Kirkinner," 8vo, Taits, Edinburgh, 1823. The reverend gentleman's elegies are extremely rare, nor did the author ever see a copy but his own, which is bound up with the Tripatriarchicon, a religious poem from the Biblical History, by the same author.

a weak and melancholy one, and that the harshness with which she exercised her superiority in a case of delicacy, had driven her daughter first to despair, then to frenzy. Accordingly, the author has endeavoured to explain the tragic tale on this principle. Whatever resemblance Lady Ashton may be supposed to possess to the celebrated Dame Margaret Ross, the reader must not suppose that there was any idea of tracing the portrait of the first Lord Viscount Stair in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton. Lord Stair, whatever might be his moral qualities, was certainly one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age.

The imaginary castle of Wolf's Crag has been identified by some lover of locality with that of Fast Castle. The author is not competent to judge of the resemblance betwixt the real and imaginary scene, having never seen Fast Castle except from the sea. But fortalices of this description are found occupying, like osprey's nests, projecting rocks, or promontories, in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland, and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble that of Wolf's Crag as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor, renders the assimilation a probable one.

We have only to add, that the death of the unfortunate bridegroom by a fall from horseback, has been in the novel transferred to the no less unfortunate lover.

The Bride of Lammermoor.

CHAPTER I.

By cauk and keel to win your bread,
Wi' whigmaleeries for them wha need,
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed
To carry the gaberlunzie on.
Old Song.

Few have been in my secret while I was compiling these narratives, nor is it probable that they will ever become public during the life of their author. Even were that event to happen, I am not ambitious of the honoured distinction, *digito monstrari*. I confess, that, were it safe to cherish such dreams at all, I should more enjoy the thought of remaining behind the curtain unseen, like the ingenious manager of Punch and his wife Joan, and enjoying the astonishment and conjectures of my audience. Then might I, perchance, hear the productions of the obscure Peter Pattieson praised by the judicious, and admired by the feeling, engrossing the young, and attracting even the old; while the critic traced their fame up to some name of literary celebrity, and the question when, and by whom, these tales were written, filled up the pause of conversation in a hundred circles and coteries. This I may never enjoy during my lifetime; but farther than this, I am certain, my vanity should never induce me to aspire.

I am too stubborn in habits, and too little polished in manners, to envy or aspire to the honours assigned to my literary contemporaries. I could not think a whit more highly of myself were I even found worthy to "come in place as a lion," for a winter in the great metropolis. I could not rise, turn round, and shew all my honours, from the shaggy mane to the tufted tail, roar you an 'twere any nightingale, and so lie down again like a well-behaved beast of show, and all at the cheap and easy rate of a cup of coffee, and a slice of bread and butter as thin as a wafer. And I could ill stomach the fulsome flattery with which the lady of the evening indulges her show-monsters on such occasions, as she crams her parrots with sugar-plums, in order to make them talk before company. I cannot be tempted to "come aloft" for these marks of distinction, and, like imprisoned Sampson, I would rather remain — if such must be the alternative — all my life in the mill-house, grinding for my very bread, than be brought forth to make sport for the Philistine lords and ladies. This proceeds from no dislike, real or affected, to the aristocracy of these realms. But they have their place, and I have mine; and, like the iron and earthen vessels in the old fable, we can scarce come into collision without my being the sufferer in every sense. It may be otherwise with the sheets which I am now writing. These may be opened and laid aside at pleasure; by amusing themselves with the perusal, the great will excite no false hopes; by neglecting or condemning them, they will inflict no pain; and how seldom can they converse with those whose minds have toiled for their delight, without doing either the one or the other.

In the better and wiser tone of feeling, which Ovid only expresses in one line to retract in that which follows, I can address these quires —

Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem.

Nor do I join the regret of the illustrious exile, that he himself could not in person accompany the volume, which he sent forth to the mart of literature, pleasure, and luxury. Were there not a hundred similar instances on record, the fate of my poor friend and schoolfellow, Dick Tinto, would be sufficient to warn me against seeking happiness, in the celebrity which attaches itself to a successful cultivator of the fine arts.

Dick Tinto, when he wrote himself artist, was wont to derive his origin from the ancient family of Tinto, of that ilk, in Lanarkshire, and occasionally hinted that he had somewhat derogated from his gentle blood, in using the pencil for his principal means of support. But if Dick's pedigree was correct, some of his ancestors must have suffered a more heavy declension, since the good man his father executed the necessary, and, I trust, the honest, but certainly not very distinguished employment, of tailor in ordinary to the village of Langdirdum in the west. Under his humble roof was Richard born, and to his father's humble trade was Richard, greatly contrary to his inclination, early indentured. Old Mr Tinto had, however, no reason to congratulate himself upon having compelled the youthful genius of his son to forsake its natural bent. He fared like the schoolboy, who attempts to stop with his finger the spout of a water cistern, while the stream, exasperated at this compression, escapes by a thousand uncalculated spirts, and wets him all over for his pains. Even so fared the senior Tinto, when his hopeful apprentice not only exhausted all the chalk in making sketches upon the shopboard, but even executed several caricatures of his father's best customers who began loudly to murmur, that it was too hard to have their persons deformed by the vestments of the father, and to be at the same time turned into ridicule by the pencil of the son. This led to discredit and loss of practice, until the old tailor, yielding to destiny and to the entreaties of his son,

permitted him to attempt his fortune in a line for which he was better qualified.

There was about this time, in the village of Langdirdum, a peripatetic brother of the brush, who exercised his vocation *sub Jove frigido*, the object of admiration to all the boys of the village, but especially to Dick Tinto. The age had not yet adopted, amongst other unworthy retrenchments, that illiberal measure of economy, which, supplying by written characters the lack of symbolical representation, closes one open and easily accessible avenue of instruction and emolument against the students of the fine arts. It was not yet permitted to write upon the plastered door-way of an ale-house, or the suspended sign of an inn, "The Old Magpie," or "The Saracen's Head," substituting that cold description for the lively effigies of the plumed chatterer, or the turban'd frown of the terrific soldan. That early and more simple age considered alike the necessities of all ranks, and depicted the symbols of good cheer so as to be obvious to all capacities; well judging, that a man who could not read a syllable, might nevertheless love a pot of good ale as well as his better educated neighbours, or even as the parson himself. Acting upon this liberal principle, publicans as yet hung forth the painted emblems of their calling, and sign-painters, if they seldom feasted, did not at least absolutely starve.

To a worthy of this decayed profession, as we have already intimated, Dick Tinto became an assistant; and thus, as is not unusual among heaven-born geniuses in this department of the fine arts, began to paint before he had any notion of drawing.

His talent for observing nature soon induced him to rectify the errors, and soar above the instructions, of his teacher. He particularly shone in painting horses, that being a favourite sign in the Scottish villages; and, in tracing his progress, it is beautiful to observe, how by degrees he learned to shorten the backs, and prolong the legs, of these noble animals, until they came to look less like crocodiles, and more like nags. Detraction, which always pursues merit with strides proportioned to its advancement, has indeed alleged, that Dick once upon a time painted a horse with five legs, instead of four. I might have rested his defence upon the licence allowed to that branch of his profession, which, as it permits all sorts of singular and irregular combinations, may be allowed to extend itself so far as to bestow a limb supernumerary on a favourite subject. But the cause of a deceased friend is sacred; and I disdain to bottom it so superficially. I have visited the sign in question, which yet swings exalted in the village of Langdirdum; and I am ready to depone upon oath, that what has been idly mistaken or misrepresented as being the fifth leg of the horse is, in fact, the tail of that quadruped, and, considered with reference to the posture in which he is delineated, forms a circumstance, introduced and managed with great and successful, though daring art. The nag being represented in a rampant or rearing posture, the tail, which is prolonged till it touches the ground, appears to form a *point d' appui*, and gives the firmness of a tripod to the figure, without which it would be difficult to conceive, placed as the feet are, how the courser could maintain his ground without tumbling backwards. This bold conception has fortunately fallen into the custody of one by whom it is duly valued; for, when Dick, in his more advanced state of proficiency, became dubious of the propriety of so daring a deviation from the established rules of art, and was desirous to execute a picture of the publican himself in exchange for this juvenile production, the courteous offer was declined by his judicious employer, who had observed, it seems, that when his ale failed to do its duty in conciliating his guests, one glance at his sign was sure to put them in good humour.

It would be foreign to my present purpose to trace the steps by which Dick Tinto improved his touch, and corrected, by the rules of art, the luxuriance of a fervid imagination. The scales fell from his eyes on viewing the sketches of a contemporary, the Scottish Teniers, as Wilkie has been deservedly styled. He threw down the brush, took up the crayons, and, amid hunger and toil, and suspense and uncertainty, pursued the path of his profession under better auspices than those of his original master. Still the first rude emanations of his genius (like the nursery rhymes of Pope, could these be recovered) will be dear to the companions of Dick Tinto's youth. There is a tankard and gridiron painted over the door of an obscure change-house in the Back-wynd of Gandercleugh — But I feel I must tear myself from the subject, or dwell on it too long.

Amid his wants and struggles, Dick Tinto had recourse, like his brethren, to levying that tax upon the vanity of mankind which he could not extract from their taste and liberality — in a word he painted portraits. It was in this more advanced state of proficiency, when Dick had soared above his original line of business, and highly disdained any allusion to it, that, after having been estranged for several years, we again met in the village of Gandercleugh, I holding my present situation, and Dick painting copies of the human face divine at a guinea per head. This was a small premuim, yet, in the first burst of business, it more than sufficed for all Dick's moderate wants; so that he occupied an apartment at the Wallace Inn, cracked his jest with impunity even upon mine host himself, and lived in respect and observance with the chambermaid, hostler, and waiter.

Those halcyon days were too serene to last long. When his honour the Laird of Gandercleugh, with his wife and three daughters, the minister, the gauger, mine esteemed patron Mr Jedediah Cleishbotham, and some round dozen of the feuars and farmers, had been consigned to immortality by Tinto's brush, custom began to slacken, and it was impossible to wring more than crowns and half-crowns from the hard hands of the peasants, whose ambition led them to Dick's painting room.

Still, though the horizon was overclouded, no storm for some time ensued. Mine host had Christian faith with a lodger, who had been a good paymaster as long as he had the means. And from a portrait of our landlord himself, grouped with his wife and daughters, in the style of Reubens, which suddenly appeared in the best parlour, it was evident that Dick had found some mode of bartering art for the necessaries of life.

Nothing, however, is more precarious than resources of this nature. It was observed, that Dick became in his turn the whetstone of mine host's

wit, without venturing either at defence or retaliation; that his easel was transferred to a garret-room, in which there was scarce space for it to stand upright; and that he no longer ventured to join the weekly club, of which he had been once the life and soul. In short, Dick Tinto's friends feared that he had acted like the animal called the sloth, which, having eaten up the last green leaf upon the tree where it has established itself, ends by tumbling down from the top, and dying of inanition. I ventured to hint this to Dick, recommended his transferring the exercise of his inestimable talent to some other sphere, and forsaking the common which he might be said to have eaten bare.

"There is an obstacle to my change of residence," said my friend, grasping my hand with a look of solemnity.

"A bill due to my landlord, I am afraid?" replied I, with heartfelt sympathy; "if any part of my slender means can assist in this emergence——"

"No, by the soul of Sir Joshua!" answered the generous youth, "I will never involve a friend in the consequences of my own misfortune. There is a mode by which I can regain my liberty; and to creep even through a common sewer, is better than to remain in prison."

I did not perfectly understand what my friend meant. The muse of painting appeared to have failed him, and what other goddess he could invoke in his distress was a mystery to me. We parted, however, without farther explanation, and I did not again see him until three days after, when he summoned me to partake of the *foy* with which his landlord proposed to regale him ere his departure for Edinburgh.

I found Dick in high spirits, whistling while he buckled the small knapsack, which contained his colours, brushes, pallets, and clean shirt. That he parted on the best terms with mine host, was obvious from the cold beef set forth in the low parlour, flanked by two mugs of admirable brown stout; and I own my curiosity was excited concerning the means through which the face of my friend's affairs had been so suddenly improved. I did not suspect Dick of dealing with the devil, and by what earthly means he had extricated himself thus happily, I was at a total loss to conjecture.

He perceived my curiosity, and took me by the hand. "My friend," he said, "fain would I conceal, even from you, the degradation to which it has been necessary to submit, in order to accomplish an honourable retreat from Gandercleugh. But what avails attempting to conceal that, which must needs betray itself even by its superior excellence? All the village—all the parish—all the world—will soon discover to what poverty has reduced Richard Tinto."

A sudden thought here struck me—I had observed that our landlord wore, on that memorable morning, a pair of bran new velveteens, instead of his ancient thicksets.

"What," said I, drawing my right hand, with the fore-finger and thumb pressed together, nimbly from my right haunch to my left shoulder, "you have condescended to resume the paternal arts to which you were first bred—long stitches, ha, Dick?"

He repelled this unlucky conjecture with a frown and a pshaw, indicative of indignant contempt, and leading me into another room, shewed me, resting against the wall, the majestic head of Sir William Wallace, grim as when severed from the trunk by the orders of the felon Edward.

The painting was executed on boards of a substantial thickness, and the top decorated with irons, for suspending the honoured effigy upon a sign-post.

"There," he said, "my friend, stands the honour of Scotland, and my shame—yet not so—rather the shame of those, who, instead of encouraging art in its proper sphere, reduce it to these unbecoming and unworthy extremities."

I endeavoured to smooth the ruffled feelings of my misused and indignant friend. I reminded him, that he ought not, like the stag in the fable, to despise the quality which had extricated him from difficulties, in which his talents, as a portrait or landscape painter, had been found unavailing. Above all, I praised the execution, as well as conception, of his painting, and reminded him, that far from feeling dishonoured by so superb a specimen of his talents being exposed to the general view of the public, he ought rather to congratulate himself upon the augmentation of his celebrity, to which its public exhibition must necessarily give rise.

"You are right, my friend—you are right," replied poor Dick, his eye kindling with enthusiasm; "why should I shun the name of an—an"—(he hesitated for a phrase)—"an out-of-doors artist? Hogarth has introduced himself in that character in one of his best engravings—Domenichino, or somebody else, in ancient times—Moreland in our own, have exercised their talents in this manner. And wherefore limit to the rich and higher classes alone the delight which the exhibition of works of art is calculated to inspire into all classes? Statues are placed in the open air, why should Painting be more niggardly in displaying her master-pieces than her sister Sculpture? And yet, my friend, we must part suddenly; the carpenter is coming in an hour to put up the—the emblem; and truly, with all my philosophy, and your consolatory encouragement to boot, I would rather wish to leave Gandercleugh before that operation commences."

We partook of our genial host's parting banquet, and I escorted Dick on his walk to Edinburgh. We parted about a mile from the village, just as we heard the distant cheer of the boys which accompanied the mounting of the new symbol of the Wallace-Head. Dick Tinto mended his pace to get out of hearing—so little had either early practice or recent philosophy reconciled him to the character of a sign-painter.

In Edinburgh, Dick's talents were discovered and appreciated, and he received dinners and hints from several distinguished judges of the fine arts. But these gentlemen dispensed their criticism more willingly than their cash, and Dick thought he needed cash more than criticism. He therefore sought London, the universal mart of talent, and where, as is usual in general marts of most descriptions, much more of each commodity is exposed to sale than can ever find purchasers.

Dick, who, in serious earnest, was supposed to have considerable natural talents for his profession, and whose vain and sanguine disposition never permitted him to doubt for a moment of ultimate

success, threw himself headlong into the crowd which jostled and struggled for notice and preferment. He elbowed others, and was elbowed himself; and finally, by dint of intrepidity, fought his way into some notice, painted for the prize at the Institution, had pictures at the exhibition at Somerset-house, and damned the hanging committee. But poor Dick was doomed to lose the field he fought so gallantly. In the fine arts, there is scarce an alternative betwixt distinguished success and absolute failure; and as Dick's zeal and industry were unable to ensure the first, he fell into the distresses which, in his condition, were the natural consequences of the latter alternative. He was for a time patronized by one or two of those judicious persons who make a virtue of being singular, and of pitching their own opinions against those of the world in matters of taste and criticism. But they soon tired of poor Tinto, and laid him down as a load, upon the principle of which a spoilt child throws away its plaything. Misery, I fear, took him up, and accompanied him to a premature grave, to which he was carried from an obscure lodging in Swallow-street, where he had been dunned by his landlady within doors, and watched by bailiffs without, until death came to his relief. A corner of the Morning Post noticed his death, generously adding, that his manner displayed considerable genius, though his style was rather sketchy; and referred to an advertisement, which announced that Mr Varnish, a well-known print-seller, had still on hand a very few drawings and paintings by Richard Tinto, Esquire, which those of the nobility and gentry, who might wish to complete their collections of modern art, were invited to visit without delay. So ended Dick Tinto! a lamentable proof of the great truth, that in the fine arts mediocrity is not permitted, and that he who cannot ascend to the very top of the ladder, will do well not to put his foot upon it at all.

The memory of Tinto is dear to me, from the recollection of the many conversations which we have had together, most of them turning upon my present task. He was delighted with my progress, and talked of an ornamented and illustrated edition, with heads, vignettes, and *culs de lampe*, all to be designed by his own patriotic and friendly pencil. He prevailed upon an old sergeant of invalids to sit to him in the character of Bothwell, the life-guard's-man of Charles the Second, and the bell-man of Gandercleugh in that of David Deans. But while he thus proposed to unite his own powers with mine for the illustration of these narratives, he mixed many a dose of salutary criticism with the panegyrics which my composition was at times so fortunate as to call forth.

"Your characters," he said, "my dear Pattieson, make too much use of the *gob box;* they *patter* too much — (an elegant phraseology, which Dick had learned while painting the scenes of an itinerant company of players) — there is nothing in whole pages but mere chat and dialogue."

"The ancient philosopher," said I in reply, "was wont to say, 'Speak, that I may know thee;' and how is it possible for an author to introduce his *personæ dramatis* to his readers in a more interesting and effectual manner, than by the dialogue in which each is represented as supporting his own appropriate character?"

"It is a false conclusion," said Tinto; "I hate it, Peter, as I hate an unfilled cann. I will grant you, indeed, that speech is a faculty of some value in the intercourse of human affairs, and I will not even insist on the doctrine of that Pythagorean toper, who was of opinion, that over a bottle speaking spoiled conversation. But I will not allow that a professor of the fine arts has occasion to embody the idea of his scene in language, in order to impress upon the reader its reality and its effect. On the contrary, I will be judged by most of your readers, Peter, should these tales ever become public, whether you have not given us a page of talk for every single idea which two words might have communicated, while the posture, and manner, and incident, accurately drawn, and brought out by appropriate colouring, would have preserved all that was worthy of preservation, and saved these everlasting said he's and said she's, with which it has been your pleasure to encumber your pages."

I replied, "that he confounded the operations of the pencil and the pen; that the serene and silent art, as painting has been called by one of our first living poets, necessarily appealed to the eye, because it had not the organs for addressing the ear; whereas poetry, or that species of composition which approached to it, lay under the necessity of doing absolutely the reverse, and addressed itself to the ear, for the purpose of exciting that interest which it could not attain through the medium of the eye."

Dick was not a whit staggered by my argument, which he contended was founded on misrepresentation. "Description," he said, "was to the author of a romance exactly what drawing and tinting were to a painter; words were his colours, and, if properly employed, they could not fail to place the scene, which he wished to conjure up, as effectually before the mind's eye, as the tablet or canvass presents it to the bodily organ. The same rules," he contended, "applied to both, and an exuberance of dialogue, in the former case, was a verbose and laborious mode of composition which went to confound the proper art of fictitious narrative with that of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue was the very essence, because all, excepting the language to be made use of, was presented to the eye by the dresses, and persons, and actions of the performers upon the stage. But as nothing," said Dick, "can be more dull than a long narrative written upon the plan of a drama, so where you have approached most near to that species of composition, by indulging in prolonged scenes of mere conversation, the course of your story has become chill and constrained, and you have lost the power of arresting the attention and exciting the imagination, in which upon other occasions you may be considered as having succeeded tolerably well."

I made my bow in requital of the compliment, which was probably thrown in by way of *placebo*, and expressed myself willing at least to make one trial of a more straight-forward style of composition, in which my actors should do more, and say less, than in my former attempts of this kind. Dick gave me a patronizing and approving nod, and observed, that, finding me so docile, he would communicate, for the benefit of my muse, a subject which he had studied with a view to his own art.

"The story," he said, "was, by tradition, affirmed to be truth, although as upwards of a hundred years had passed away since the events took place, come

doubts upon the accuracy of all the particulars might be reasonably entertained."

When Dick Tinto had thus spoken, he rummaged his portfolio for the sketch from which he proposed one day to execute a picture of fourteen feet by eight. The sketch, which was cleverly executed, to use the appropriate phrase, represented an ancient hall, fitted up and furnished in what we now call the taste of Queen Elizabeth's age. The light, admitted from the upper part of a high casement, fell upon a female figure of exquisite beauty, who, in an attitude of speechless terror, appeared to watch the issue of a debate betwixt two other persons. The one was a young man, in the Vandyke dress common to the time of Charles I., who, with an air of indignant pride, testified by the manner in which he raised his head and extended his arm, seemed to be urging a claim of right, rather than of favour, to a lady, whose age, and some resemblance in their features, pointed her out as the mother of the younger female, and who appeared to listen with a mixture of displeasure and impatience.

Tinto produced his sketch with an air of mysterious triumph, and gazed on it as a fond parent looks upon a hopeful child, while he anticipates the future figure he is to make in the world, and the height to which he will raise the honour of his family. He held it at arms' length from me,—he held it closer, —he placed it upon the top of a chest of drawers, closed the lower shutters of the casement, to adjust a downward and favourable light,—fell back to the due distance, dragged me after him,—shaded his face with his hand, as if to exclude all but the favourite object,—and ended by spoiling a child's copy book, which he rolled up so as to serve for the darkened tube of an amateur. I fancy my expressions of enthusiasm had not been in proportion to his own, for he presently exclaimed with vehemence, "Mr Pattieson, I used to think you had an eye in your head."

I vindicated my claim to the usual allowance of visual organs.

"Yet, on my honour," said Dick, "I would swear you had been born blind, since you have failed at the first glance to discover the subject and meaning of that sketch. I do not mean to praise my own performance, I leave these arts to others; I am sensible of my deficiencies, conscious that my drawing and colouring may be improved by the time I intend to dedicate to the art. But the conception—the expression—the positions—these tell the story to every one who looks at the sketch; and if I can finish the picture without diminution of the original conception, the name of Tinto shall no more be smothered by the mists of envy and intrigue."

I replied, "That I admired the sketch exceedingly; but that to understand its full merit, I felt it absolutely necessary to be informed of the subject."

"That is the very thing I complain of," answered Tinto; "you have accustomed yourself so much to these creeping twilight details of yours, that you are become incapable of receiving that instant and vivid flash of conviction, which darts on the mind from seeing the happy and expressive combinations of a single scene, and which gather from the position, attitude, and countenance of the moment, not only the history of the past lives of the personages represented, and the nature of the business on which they are immediately engaged, but lifts even the veil of futurity, and affords a shrewd guess at their future fortunes."

"In that case," replied I, "Painting excels the Ape of the renowned Gines de Passamont, which only meddled with the past and the present; nay, she excels that very Nature who affords her subjects; for I protest to you, Dick, that were I permitted to peep into that Elizabeth-chamber, and see the persons you have sketched conversing in flesh and blood, I should not be a jot nearer guessing the nature of their business, than I am at this moment while looking at your sketch. Only generally, from the languishing look of the young lady, and the care you have taken to present a very handsome leg on the part of the gentleman, I presume there is some reference to a love affair between them."

"Do you really presume to form such a bold conjecture?" said Tinto. "And the indignant earnestness with which you see the man urge his suit—the unresisting and passive despair of the younger female—the stern air of inflexible determination in the elder woman, whose looks express at once consciousness that she is acting wrong, and a firm determination to persist in the course she has adopted——"

"If her looks express all this, my dear Tinto," replied I, interrupting him, "your pencil rivals the dramatic art of Mr Puff in the Critic, who crammed a whole complicated sentence into the expressive shake of Lord Burleigh's head."

"My good friend, Peter," replied Tinto, "I observe you are perfectly incorrigible; however, I have compassion on your dulness, and am unwilling you should be deprived of the pleasure of understanding my picture, and of gaining, at the same time, a subject for your own pen. You must know then, last summer, while I was taking sketches on the coast of East Lothian and Berwickshire, I was seduced into the mountains of Lammermoor by the account I received of some remains of antiquity in that district. Those with which I was most struck, were the ruins of an ancient castle in which that Elizabeth-chamber, as you call it, once existed. I resided for two or three days at a farm house in the neighbourhood, where the aged goodwife was well acquainted with the history of the castle, and the events which had taken place in it. One of these was of a nature so interesting and singular, that my attention was divided between my wish to draw the old ruins in landscape, and to represent, in a history-piece, the singular events which have taken place in it. Here are my notes of the tale," said poor Dick, handing a parcel of loose scraps, partly scratched over with his pencil, partly with his pen, where outlines of caricatures, sketches of turrets, mills, old gables, and dovecots, disputed the ground with his written memoranda.

I proceeded, however, to decipher the substance of the manuscript as well as I could, and wove it into the following Tale, in which, following in part, though not entirely, my friend Tinto's advice, I endeavoured to render my narrative rather descriptive than dramatic. My favourite propensity, however, has at times overcome me, and my persons, like many others in this talking world, speak now and then a great deal more than they act.

CHAPTER II.

> Well, lords, we have not got that which we have;
> 'Tis not enough our foes are this time fled,
> Being opposites of such repairing nature.
> *Second Part of Henry VI.*

In the gorge of a pass or mountain glen, ascending from the fertile plains of East Lothian, there stood in former times an extensive castle, of which only the ruins are now visible. Its ancient proprietors were a race of powerful and warlike barons, who bore the same name with the castle itself, which was Ravenswood. Their line extended to a remote period of antiquity, and they had intermarried with the Douglasses, Humes, Swintons, Hays, and other families of power and distinction in the same country. Their history was frequently involved in that of Scotland itself, in whose annals their feats are recorded. The Castle of Ravenswood, occupyng, and in some measure commanding, a pass betwixt Berwickshire, or the Merse, as the south-eastern province of Scotland is termed, and the Lothians, was of importance both in times of foreign war and domestic discord. It was frequently besieged with ardour, and defended with obstinacy, and, of course, its owners played a conspicuous part in story. But their house had its revolutions, like all sublunary things; it became greatly declined from its splendour about the middle of the 17th century; and towards the period of the Revolution, the last proprietor of Ravenswood Castle saw himself compelled to part with the ancient family seat, and to remove himself to a lonely and sea-beaten tower, which, situated on the bleak shores between Saint Abb's Head and the village of Eyemouth, looked out on the lonely and boisterous German Ocean. A black domain of wild pasture-land surrounded their new residence, and formed the remains of their property.

Lord Ravenswood, the heir of this ruined family, was far from bending his mind to his new condition of life. In the civil war of 1689, he had espoused the sinking side, and although he had escaped without the forfeiture of life or land, his blood had been attainted, and his title abolished. He was now called Lord Ravenswood only in courtesy.

This forfeited nobleman inherited the pride and turbulence, though not the fortune of his house, and, as he imputed the final declension of his family to a particular individual, he honoured that person with his full portion of hatred. This was the very man who had now become, by purchase, proprietor of Ravenswood, and the domains of which the heir of the house now stood dispossessed. He was descended of a family much less ancient than that of Lord Ravenswood, and which had only risen to wealth and political importance during the great civil wars. He himself had been bred to the bar, and had held high offices in the state, maintaining through life the character of a skilful fisher in the troubled waters of a state divided by factions, and governed by delegated authority; and of one who contrived to amass considerable sums of money in a country where there was but little to be gathered, and who equally knew the value of wealth, and the various means of augmenting it, and using it as an engine of increasing his power and influence.

Thus qualified and gifted, he was a dangerous antagonist to the fierce and imprudent Ravenswood. Whether he had given him good cause for the enmity with which the Baron regarded him, was a point on which men spoke differently. Some said the quarrel arose merely from the vindictive spirit and envy of Lord Ravenswood, who could not patiently behold another, though by just and fair purchase, become the proprietor of the estate and castle of his forefathers. But the greater part of the public, prone to slander the wealthy in their absence, as to flatter them in their presence, held a less charitable opinion. They said, that the Lord Keeper (for to this height Sir William Ashton had ascended) had, previous to the final purchase of the estate of Ravenswood, been concerned in extensive pecuniary transactions with the former proprietor; and, rather intimating what was probable, than affirming any thing positively, they asked which party was likely to have the advantage in stating and enforcing the claims arising out of these complicated affairs, and more than hinted the advantages which the cool lawyer and able politician must necessarily possess over the hot, fiery, and imprudent character, whom he had involved in legal toils, and pecuniary snares.

The character of the times aggravated these suspicions. "In those days there was no king in Israel." Since the departure of James VI. to assume the richer and more powerful crown of England, there had existed in Scotland contending parties, formed among the aristocracy, by whom, as their intrigues at the court of St James's chanced to prevail, the delegated powers of sovereignty were alternately swayed. The evils attending upon this system of government, resemble those which afflict the tenants of an Irish estate, the property of an absentee. There was no supreme power, claiming and possessing a general interest with the community at large, to whom the oppressed might appeal from subordinate tyranny, either for justice or for mercy. Let a monarch be as indolent, as selfish, as much disposed to arbitrary power as he will, still, in a free country, his own interests are so clearly connected with those of the public at large, and the evil consequences to his own authority are so obvious and imminent when a different course is pursued, that common policy, as well as common feeling, point to the equal distribution of justice, and to the establishment of the throne in righteousness. Thus, even sovereigns, remarkable for usurpation and tyranny, have been found rigorous in the administration of justice among their subjects, in cases where their own power and passions were not compromised.

It is very different when the powers of sovereignty are delegated to the head of an aristocratic faction, rivalled and pressed closely in the race of ambition by an adverse leader. His brief and precarious enjoyment of power must be employed in rewarding his partisans, in extending his influence, in oppressing and crushing his adversaries. Even Abon Hassan, the most disinterested of all viceroys, forgot not, during his caliphate of one day, to send a *douceur* of one thousand pieces of gold to his own household; and the Scottish vicegerents, raised to power by the strength of their faction, failed not to embrace the same means of rewarding them.

The administration of justice, in particular, was infected by the most gross partiality. A case of importance scarcely occurred, in which there was not some ground for bias or partiality on the part

of the judges, who were so little able to withstand the temptation, that the adage, "Shew me the man, and I will shew you the law," became as prevalent as it was scandalous. One corruption led the way to others still more gross and profligate. The judge who lent his sacred authority in one case to support a friend, and in another to crush an enemy, and whose decisions were founded on family connections, or political relations, could not be supposed inaccessible to direct personal motives; and the purse of the wealthy was too often believed to be thrown into the scale to weigh down the cause of the poor litigant. The subordinate officers of the law affected little scruple concerning bribery. Pieces of plate, and bags of money, were sent in presents to the king's counsel, to influence their conduct, and poured forth, says a contemporary writer, like billets of wood upon their floors, without even the decency of concealment.

In such times, it was not over uncharitable to suppose, that the statesman, practised in courts of law, and a powerful member of a triumphant cabal, might find and use means of advantage over his less skilful and less favoured adversary; and if it had been supposed that Sir William Ashton's conscience had been too delicate to profit by these advantages, it was believed that his ambition and desire of extending his wealth and consequence, found as strong a stimulus in the exhortations of his lady, as the daring aim of Macbeth in the days of yore.

Lady Ashton was of a family more distinguished than that of her lord, an advantage which she did not fail to use to the uttermost, in maintaining and extending her husband's influence over others, and, unless she was greatly belied, her own over him. She had been beautiful, and was stately and majestic in her appearance. Endowed by nature with strong powers and violent passions, experience had taught her to employ the one, and to conceal, if not to moderate, the other. She was a severe and strict observer of the external forms, at least, of devotion; her hospitality was splendid even to ostentation; her address and manners, agreeable to the pattern most valued in Scotland at the period, were grave, dignified, and severely regulated by the rules of etiquette. Her character had always been beyond the breath of slander. And yet, with all these qualities to excite respect, Lady Ashton was seldom mentioned in the terms of love or affection. Interest,—the interest of her family, if not her own,—seemed too obviously the motive of her actions; and where this is the case, the sharp-judging and malignant public are not easily imposed upon by outward show. It was seen and ascertained, that, in her most graceful courtesies and compliments, Lady Ashton no more lost sight of her object, than the falcon in his airy wheel turns his quick eyes from his destined quarry; and hence, something of doubt and suspicion qualified the feelings with which her equals received her attentions. With her inferiors these feelings were mingled with fear; an impression useful to her purposes, so far as it enforced ready compliance with her requests, and implicit obedience to her commands, but detrimental, because it cannot exist with affection or regard.

Even her husband, it is said, upon whose fortunes her talents and address had produced such emphatic influence, regarded her with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment; and report said, there were times when he considered his grandeur as dearly purchased at the expense of domestic thraldom. Of this, however, much might be suspected, but little could be accurately known; Lady Ashton regarded the honour of her husband as her own, and was well aware how much that would suffer in the public eye should he appear a vassal to his wife. In all her arguments, his opinion was quoted as infallible; his taste was appealed to, and his sentiments received, with the air of deference which a dutiful wife might seem to owe to a husband of Sir William Ashton's rank and character. But there was something under all this which rung false and hollow; and to those who watched this couple with close, and perhaps malicious scrutiny, it seemed evident, that, in the haughtiness of a firmer character, higher birth, and more decided views of aggrandizement, the lady looked with some contempt on the husband, and that he regarded her with jealous fear, rather than with love or admiration.

Still, however, the leading and favourite interests of Sir William Ashton and his lady were the same, and they failed not to work in concert, although without cordiality, and to testify, in all exterior circumstances, that respect for each other, which they were aware was necessary to secure that of the public.

Their union was crowned with several children, of whom three survived. One, the eldest son, was absent on his travels; the second, a girl of seventeen, and the third, a boy about three years younger, resided with their parents in Edinburgh, during the sessions of the Scottish Parliament and Privy-Council, at other times in the old Gothic castle of Ravenswood, to which the Lord Keeper had made large additions in the style of the seventeenth century.

Allan Lord Ravenswood, the late proprietor of that ancient mansion and the large estate annexed to it, continued for some time to wage ineffectual war with his successor concerning various points to which their former transactions had given rise, and which were successively determined in favour of the wealthy and powerful competitor, until death closed the litigation, by summoning Ravenswood to a higher bar. The thread of life, which had been long wasting, gave way during a fit of violent and impotent fury, with which he was assailed on receiving the news of the loss of a cause, founded, perhaps, rather in equity than in law, the last which he had maintained against his powerful antagonist. His son witnessed his dying agonies, and heard the curses which he breathed against his adversary, as if they had conveyed to him a legacy of vengeance. Other circumstances happened to exasperate a passion, which was, and had long been, a prevalent vice in the Scottish disposition.

It was a November morning, and the cliffs which overlooked the ocean were hung with thick and heavy mist, when the portals of the ancient and half-ruinous tower, in which Lord Ravenswood had spent the last and troubled years of his life, opened, that his mortal remains might pass forward to an abode yet more dreary and lonely. The pomp of attendance, to which the deceased had, in his latter years, been a stranger, was revived as

he was about to be consigned to the realms of forgetfulness.

Banner after banner, with the various devices and coats of this ancient family and its connections, followed each other in mournful procession from under the low-browed archway of the court-yard. The principal gentry of the country attended in the deepest mourning, and tempered the pace of their long train of horses to the solemn march befitting the occasion. Trumpets, with banners of crape attached to them, sent forth their long and melancholy notes to regulate the movements of the procession. An immense train of inferior mourners and menials closed the rear, which had not yet issued from the castle-gate, when the van had reached the chapel where the body was to be deposited.

Contrary to the custom, and even to the law of the time, the body was met by a priest of the Scottish Episcopal communion, arrayed in his surplice, and prepared to read over the coffin of the deceased the funeral service of the church. Such had been the desire of Lord Ravenswood in his last illness, and it was readily complied with by the tory gentlemen, or cavaliers, as they affected to style themselves, in which faction most of his kinsmen were enrolled. The presbyterian church-judicatory of the bounds, considering the ceremony as a bravading insult upon their authority, had applied to the Lord Keeper, as the nearest privy-councillor, for a warrant to prevent its being carried into effect; so that, when the clergyman had opened his prayer-book, an officer of the law, supported by some armed men, commanded him to be silent. An insult, which fired the whole assembly with indignation, was particularly and instantly resented by the only son of the deceased, Edgar, popularly called the Master of Ravenswood, a youth of about twenty years of age. He clapped his hand on his sword, and, bidding the official person to desist at his peril from farther interruption, commanded the clergyman to proceed. The man attempted to enforce his commission, but as an hundred swords at once glittered in the air, he contented himself with protesting against the violence which had been offered to him in the execution of his duty, and stood aloof, a sullen and moody spectator of the ceremonial, muttering as one who should say, "You 'll rue the day that clogs me with this answer."

The scene was worthy of an artist's pencil. Under the very arch of the house of death, the clergyman, affrighted at the scene, and trembling for his own safety, hastily and unwillingly rehearsed the solemn service of the church, and spoke dust to dust, and ashes to ashes, over ruined pride and decayed prosperity. Around stood the relations of the deceased, their countenances more in anger than in sorrow, and the drawn swords which they brandished forming a violent contrast with their deep mourning habits. In the countenance of the young man alone, resentment seemed for the moment overpowered by the deep agony with which he beheld his nearest, and almost his only friend, consigned to the tomb of his ancestry. A relative observed him turn deadly pale, when, all rites being now duly observed, it became the duty of the chief mourner to lower down into the charnel vault, where mouldering coffins shewed their tattered velvet and decayed plating, the head of the corpse which was to be their partner in corruption. He stept to the youth and offered his assistance, which, by a mute motion, Edgar Ravenswood rejected. Firmly, and without a tear, he performed that last duty. The stone was laid on the sepulchre, the door of the aisle was locked, and the youth took possession of its massive key.

As the crowd left the chapel, he paused on the steps which led to its Gothic chancel. "Gentlemen and friends," he said, "you have this day done no common duty to the body of your deceased kinsman. The rites of due observance, which, in other countries, are allowed as the due of the meanest Christian, would this day have been denied to the body of your relative — not certainly sprung of the meanest house in Scotland — had it not been assured to him by your courage. Others bury their dead in sorrow and tears, in silence and in reverence; our funeral rites are marred by the intrusion of bailiffs and ruffians, and our grief — the grief due to our departed friend — is chased from our cheeks by the glow of just indignation. But it is well that I know from what quiver this arrow has come forth. It was only he that dug the grave who could have the mean cruelty to disturb the obsequies; and Heaven do as much to me and more, if I requite not to this man and his house the ruin and disgrace he has brought on me and mine!"

A numerous part of the assembly applauded this speech, as the spirited expression of just resentment; but the more cool and judicious regretted that it had been uttered. The fortunes of the heir of Ravenswood were too low to brave the farther hostility which they imagined these open expressions of resentment must necessarily provoke. Their apprehensions, however, proved groundless, at least in the immediate consequences of this affair.

The mourners returned to the tower, there, according to a custom but recently abolished in Scotland, to carouse deep healths to the memory of the deceased, to make the house of sorrow ring with sounds of joviality and debauch, and to diminish, by the expense of a large and profuse entertainment, the limited revenues of the heir of him whose funeral they thus strangely honoured. It was the custom, however, and on the present occasion it was fully observed. The tables swam in wine, the populace feasted in the court-yard, the yeomen in the kitchen and buttery; and two years' rent of Ravenswood's remaining property hardly defrayed the charge of the funeral revel. The wine did its office on all but the Master of Ravenswood, a title which he still retained, though forfeiture had attached to that of his father. He, while passing around the cup which he himself did not taste, soon listened to a thousand exclamations against the Lord Keeper, and passionate protestations of attachment to himself, and to the honour of his house. He listened with dark and sullen brow to ebullitions which he considered justly as equally evanescent with the crimson bubbles on the brink of the goblet, or at least with the vapours which its contents excited in the brains of the revellers around him.

When the last flask was emptied, they took their leave, with deep protestations — to be forgotten on the morrow, if, indeed, those who made them should not think it necessary for their safety to make a more solemn retractation.

Accepting their adieus with an air of contempt which he could scarce conceal, Ravenswood at length beheld his ruinous habitation cleared of this confluence of riotous guests, and returned to the deserted hall, which now appeared doubly lonely from the cessation of that clamour to which it had so lately echoed. But its space was peopled by phantoms, which the imagination of the young heir conjured up before him — the tarnished honour and degraded fortunes of his house, the destruction of his own hopes, and the triumph of that family by whom they had been ruined. To a mind naturally of a gloomy cast, here was ample room for meditation, and the musings of young Ravenswood were deep and unwitnessed.

The peasant, who shews the ruins of the tower, which still crown the beetling cliff and behold the war of the waves, though no more tenanted save by the sea-mew and cormorant, even yet affirms, that on this fatal night the Master of Ravenswood, by the bitter exclamations of his despair, evoked some evil fiend, under whose malignant influence the future tissue of incidents was woven. Alas! what fiend can suggest more desperate counsels, than those adopted under the guidance of our own violent and unresisted passions?

CHAPTER III.

> Over Gods forebode, then said the King,
> That thou shouldst shoot at me.
> *William Bell, Clim o' the Cleugh, &c.*

On the morning after the funeral, the legal officer, whose authority had been found insufficient to effect an interruption of the funeral solemnities of the late Lord Ravenswood, hastened to state before the Keeper the resistance which he had met with in the execution of his office.

The statesman was seated in a spacious library, once a banqueting-room in the old Castle of Ravenswood, as was evident from the armorial insignia still displayed on the carved roof, which was vaulted with Spanish chestnut, and on the stained glass of the casement, through which gleamed a dim yet rich light, on the long rows of shelves, bending under the weight of legal commentators and monkish historians, whose ponderous volumes formed the chief and most valued contents of a Scottish historian of the period. On the massive oaken table and reading-desk, lay a confused mass of letters, petitions, and parchments; to toil amongst which was the pleasure at once and the plague of Sir William Ashton's life. His appearance was grave and even noble, well becoming one who held a high office in the state; and it was not, save after long and intimate conversation with him upon topics of pressing and personal interest, that a stranger could have discovered something vacillating and uncertain in his resolutions; an infirmity of purpose, arising from a cautious and timid disposition, which, as he was conscious of its internal influence on his mind, he was, from pride as well as policy, most anxious to conceal from others.

He listened with great apparent composure to an exaggerated account of the tumult which had taken place at the funeral, of the contempt thrown on his own authority, and that of the church and state; nor did he seem moved even by the faithful report of the insulting and threatening language which had been uttered by young Ravenswood and others, and obviously directed against himself. He heard, also, what the man had been able to collect, in a very distorted and aggravated shape, of the toasts which had been drunk, and the menaces uttered, at the subsequent entertainment. In fine, he made careful notes of all these particulars, and of the names of the persons by whom, in case of need, an accusation, founded upon these violent proceedings, could be witnessed and made good, and dismissed his informer, secure that he was now master of the remaining fortune, and even of the personal liberty, of young Ravenswood.

When the door had closed upon the officer of the law, the Lord Keeper remained for a moment in deep meditation; then, starting from his seat, paced the apartment as one about to take a sudden and energetic resolution. "Young Ravenswood," he muttered, "is now mine — he is my own — he has placed himself in my hand, and he shall bend or break. I have not forgot the determined and dogged obstinacy with which his father fought every point to the last, resisted every effort at compromise, embroiled me in lawsuits, and attempted to assail my character when he could not otherwise impugn my rights. This boy he has left behind him — this Edgar — this hot-headed, hair-brained fool, has wrecked his vessel before she has cleared the harbour. I must see that he gains no advantage of some turning tide which may again float him off. These memoranda, properly stated to the Privy Council, cannot but be construed into an aggravated riot, in which the dignity both of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities stand committed. A heavy fine might be imposed; an order for committing him to Edinburgh or Blackness Castle seems not improper; even a charge of treason might be laid on many of these words and expressions, though God forbid I should prosecute the matter to that extent. No, I will not; — I will not touch his life, even if it should be in my power; — and yet, if he lives till a change of times, what follows? — Restitution — perhaps revenge. I know Athole promised his interest to old Ravenswood, and here is his son already bandying and making a faction by his own contemptible influence. What a ready tool he would be for the use of those who are watching the downfall of our administration!"

While these thoughts were agitating the mind of the wily statesman, and while he was persuading himself that his own interest and safety, as well as those of his friends and party, depended on using the present advantage to the uttermost against young Ravenswood, the Lord Keeper sat down to his desk, and proceeded to draw up, for the information of the Privy Council, an account of the disorderly proceedings which, in contempt of his warrant, had taken place at the funeral of Lord Ravenswood. The names of most of the parties concerned, as well as the fact itself, would, he was well aware, sound odiously in the ears of his colleagues in administration, and most likely instigate them to make an example of young Ravenswood, at least, *in terrorem*.

It was a point of delicacy, however, to select such expressions as might infer the young man's culpability, without seeming directly to urge it,

which on the part of Sir William Ashton, his father's ancient antagonist, could not but appear odious and invidious. While he was in the act of composition, labouring to find words which might indicate Edgar Ravenswood to be the cause of the uproar, without specifically making such a charge, Sir William, in a pause of his task, chanced, in looking upward, to see the crest of the family, (for whose heir he was whetting the arrows, and disposing the toils of the law,) carved upon one of the corbeilles from which the vaulted roof of the apartment sprung. It was a black bull's head, with the legend, "I bide my time;" and the occasion upon which it was adopted mingled itself singularly and impressively with the subject of his present reflections.

It was said by a constant tradition, that a Malisius de Ravenswood had, in the thirteenth century, been deprived of his castle and lands by a powerful usurper, who had for a while enjoyed his spoils in quiet. At length, on the eve of a costly banquet, Ravenswood, who had watched his opportunity, introduced himself into the castle with a small band of faithful retainers. The serving of the expected feast was impatiently looked for by the guests, and clamorously demanded by the temporary master of the castle. Ravenswood, who had assumed the disguise of a sewer upon the occasion, answered, in a stern voice, "I bide my time;" and at the same moment a bull's head, the ancient symbol of death, was placed upon the table. The explosion of the conspiracy took place upon the signal, and the usurper and his followers were put to death. Perhaps there was something in this still known and often repeated story, which came immediately home to the breast and conscience of the Lord Keeper; for, putting from him the paper on which he had begun his report, and carefully locking the memoranda which he had prepared, into a cabinet which stood beside him, he proceeded to walk abroad, as if for the purpose of collecting his ideas, and reflecting farther on the consequences of the step which he was about to take, ere yet they became inevitable.

In passing through a large Gothic anteroom, Sir William Ashton heard the sound of his daughter's lute. Music, when the performers are concealed, affects us with a pleasure mingled with surprise, and reminds us of the natural concert of birds among the leafy bowers. The statesman, though little accustomed to give way to emotions of this natural and simple class, was still a man and a father. He stopped, therefore, and listened, while the silver tones of Lucy Ashton's voice mingled with the accompaniment in an ancient air, to which some one had adapted the following words:—

"Look not thou on beauty's charming,—
Sit thou still when kings are arming,—
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,—
Speak not when the people listens,—
Stop thine ear against the singer,—
From the red gold keep thy finger,—
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,—
Easy live and quiet die."

The sounds ceased, and the Keeper entered his daughter's apartment.

The words she had chosen seemed particularly adapted to her character; for Lucy Ashton's exquisitely beautiful, yet somewhat girlish features, were formed to express peace of mind, serenity, and indifference to the tinsel of worldly pleasure. Her locks, which were of shadowy gold, divided on a brow of exquisite whiteness, like a gleam of broken and pallid sunshine upon a hill of snow. The expression of the countenance was in the last degree gentle, soft, timid, and feminine, and seemed rather to shrink from the most casual look of a stranger, than to court his admiration. Something there was of a Madonna cast, perhaps the result of delicate health, and of residence in a family, where the dispositions of the inmates were fiercer, more active, and energetic, than her own.

Yet her passiveness of disposition was by no means owing to an indifferent or unfeeling mind. Left to the impulse of her own taste and feeling, Lucy Ashton was peculiarly accessible to those of a romantic cast. Her secret delight was in the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection, chequered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors. This was her favoured fairy realm, and here she erected her aerial palaces. But it was only in secret that she laboured at this delusive, though delightful architecture. In her retired chamber, or in the woodland bower which she had chosen for her own, and called after her name, she was in fancy distributing the prizes at the tournament, or raining down influence from her eyes on the valiant combatants; or she was wandering in the wilderness with Una, under escort of the generous lion; or she was identifying herself with the simple, yet noble-minded Miranda, in the isle of wonder and enchantment.

But in her exterior relations to things of this world, Lucy willingly received the ruling impulse from those around her. The alternative was, in general, too indifferent to her to render resistance desirable, and she willingly found a motive for decision in the opinion of her friends, which perhaps she might have sought for in vain in her own choice. Every reader must have observed in some family of his acquaintance, some individual of a temper soft and yielding, who, mixed with stronger and more ardent minds, is borne along by the will of others, with as little power of opposition as the flower which is flung into a running stream. It usually happens that such a compliant and easy disposition, which resigns itself without murmur to the guidance of others, becomes the darling of those to whose inclinations its own seem to be offered, in ungrudging and ready sacrifice.

This was eminently the case with Lucy Ashton. Her politic, wary, and worldly father, felt for her an affection, the strength of which sometimes surprised him into an unusual emotion. Her elder brother, who trode the path of ambition with a haughtier step than his father, had also more of human affection. A soldier, and in a dissolute age, he preferred his sister Lucy even to pleasure, and to military preferment and distinction. Her younger brother, at an age when trifles chiefly occupied his mind, made her the confident of all his pleasures and anxieties, his success in field-sports, and his quarrels with his tutor and instructors. To these details, however trivial, Lucy lent patient and not indifferent attention. They moved and interested Henry, and that was enough to secure her ear.

Her mother alone did not feel that distinguished and predominating affection, with which the rest of the family cherished Lucy. She regarded what she

termed her daughter's want of spirit, as a decided mark, that the more plebeian blood of her father predominated in Lucy's veins, and used to call her in derision her Lammermoor Shepherdess. To dislike so gentle and inoffensive a being was impossible; but Lady Ashton preferred her eldest son, on whom had descended a large portion of her own ambitious and undaunted disposition, to a daughter whose softness of temper seemed allied to feebleness of mind. Her eldest son was the more partially beloved by his mother, because, contrary to the usual custom of Scottish families of distinction, he had been named after the head of the house.

"My Sholto," she said, "will support the untarnished honour of his maternal house, and elevate and support that of his father. Poor Lucy is unfit for courts or crowded halls. Some country laird must be her husband, rich enough to supply her with every comfort, without an effort on her own part, so that she may have nothing to shed a tear for but the tender apprehension lest he may break his neck in a fox-chase. It was not so, however, that our house was raised, nor is it so that it can be fortified and augmented. The Lord Keeper's dignity is yet new; it must be borne as if we were used to its weight, worthy of it, and prompt to assert and maintain it. Before ancient authorities, men bend, from customary and hereditary deference; in our presence, they will stand erect, unless they are compelled to prostrate themselves. A daughter fit for the sheep-fold or the cloister, is ill qualified to exact respect where it is yielded with reluctance; and since Heaven refused us a third boy, Lucy should have held a character fit to supply his place. The hour will be a happy one which disposes her hand in marriage to some one whose energy is greater than her own, or whose ambition is of as low an order."

So meditated a mother, to whom the qualities of her children's hearts, as well as the prospect of their domestic happiness, seemed light in comparison to their rank and temporal greatness. But, like many a parent of hot and impatient character, she was mistaken in estimating the feelings of her daughter, who, under a semblance of extreme indifference, nourished the germ of those passions which sometimes spring up in one night, like the gourd of the prophet, and astonish the observer by their unexpected ardour and intensity. In fact, Lucy's sentiments seemed chill, because nothing had occurred to interest or awaken them. Her life had hitherto flowed on in a uniform and gentle tenor, and happy for her had not its present smoothness of current resembled that of the stream as it glides downwards to the waterfall!

"So, Lucy," said her father, entering as her song was ended, "does your musical philosopher teach you to contemn the world before you know it? — that is surely something premature. Or did you but speak according to the fashion of fair maidens, who are always to hold the pleasures of life in contempt till they are pressed upon them by the address of some gentle knight?"

Lucy blushed, disclaimed any inference respecting her own choice being drawn from her selection of a song, and readily laid aside her instrument at her father's request that she would attend him in his walk.

A large and well-wooded park, or rather chase, stretched along the hill behind the castle, which occupying, as we have noticed, a pass ascending from the plain, seemed built in its very gorge to defend the forest ground which arose behind it in shaggy majesty. Into this romantic region the father and daughter proceeded, arm in arm, by a noble avenue overarched by embowering elms, beneath which groups of the fallow-deer were seen to stray in distant perspective. As they paced slowly on, admiring the different points of view, for which Sir William Ashton, notwithstanding the nature of his usual avocations, had considerable taste and feeling, they were overtaken by the forester, or park-keeper, who, intent on silvan sport, was proceeding with his cross-bow over his arm, and a hound led in leash by his boy, into the interior of the wood.

"Going to shoot us a piece of venison, Norman?" said his master, as he returned the woodman's salutation.

"Saul, your honour, and that I am. Will it please you to see the sport?"

"O no," said his lordship, after looking at his daughter, whose colour fled at the idea of seeing the deer shot, although had her father expressed his wish that they should accompany Norman, it was probable she would not even have hinted her reluctance.

The forester shrugged his shoulders. "It was a disheartening thing," he said, "when none of the gentles came down to see the sport. He hoped Captain Sholto would be soon hame, or he might shut up his shop entirely; for Mr Harry was kept sae close wi' his Latin nonsense, that, though his will was very gude to be in the wood from morning till night, there would be a hopeful lad lost, and no making a man of him. It was not so, he had heard, in Lord Ravenswood's time — when a buck was to be killed, man and mother's son ran to see; and when the deer fell, the knife was always presented to the knight, and he never gave less than a dollar for the compliment. And there was Edgar Ravenswood — Master of Ravenswood that is now — when he goes up to the wood — there hasna been a better hunter since Tristrem's time — when Sir Edgar hauds out,[1] down goes the deer, faith. But we hae lost a' sense of wood-craft on this side of the hill."

There was much in this harangue highly displeasing to the Lord Keeper's feelings; he could not help observing that his menial despised him almost avowedly for not possessing that taste for sport, which in those times was deemed the natural and indispensable attribute of a real gentleman. But the master of the game is, in all country houses, a man of great importance, and entitled to use considerable freedom of speech. Sir William, therefore, only smiled and replied, he had something else to think upon to-day than killing deer; meantime, taking out his purse, he gave the ranger a dollar for his encouragement. The fellow received it as the waiter of a fashionable hotel receives double his proper fee from the hands of a country getleman, — that is, with a smile, in which pleasure at the gift is mingled with contempt for the ignorance of the donor. "Your honour is the bad paymaster," he said, "who pays before it is done. What would you do were I to miss the buck after you have paid me my wood-fee?"

[1] *Hauds out.* Holds out, *i. e.* presents his piece.

"I suppose," said the Keeper, smiling, "you would hardly guess what I mean were I to tell you of a *condictio indebiti*?"

"Not I, on my saul—I guess it is some law phrase—but sue a beggar, and—your honour knows what follows.—Well, but I will be just with you, and if bow and brach fail not, you shall have a piece of game two fingers fat on the brisket."

As he was about to go off, his master again called him, and asked, as if by accident, whether the Master of Ravenswood was actually so brave a man and so good a shooter as the world spoke him?"

"Brave!—brave enough, I warrant you," answered Norman; "I was in the wood at Tyninghame, when there was a sort of gallants hunting with my lord; on my saul, there was a buck turned to bay made us all stand back; a stout old Trojan of the first head, ten-tyned branches, and a brow as broad as e'er a bullock's. Egad, he dashed at the old lord, and there would have been inlake among the peerage, if the Master had not whipt roundly in, and hamstrung him with his cutlass. He was but sixteen then, bless his heart!"

"And is he as ready with the gun as with the couteau?" said Sir William.

"He 'll strike this silver dollar out from between my finger and thumb at fourscore yards, and I 'll hold it out for a gold merk; what more would ye have of eye, hand, lead, and gunpowder?"

"O no more to be wished, certainly," said the Lord Keeper; "but we keep you from your sport, Norman. Good-morrow, good Norman."

And humming his rustic roundelay, the yeoman went on his road, the sound of his rough voice gradually dying away as the distance betwixt them increased:—

> The monk must arise when the matins ring,
> The abbot may sleep to their chime;
> But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,
> 'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.
>
> There 's bucks and raes on Bilhope braes,
> There 's a herd on Shortwood Shaw;
> But a lily-white doe in the garden goes,
> She 's fairly worth them a'.

"Has this fellow," said the Lord Keeper, when the yeoman's song had died on the wind, "ever served the Ravenswood people, that he seems so much interested in them? I suppose you know, Lucy, for you make it a point of conscience to record the special history of every boor about the castle."

"I am not quite so faithful a chronicler, my dear father; but I believe that Norman once served here while a boy, and before he went to Ledington, whence you hired him. But if you want to know any thing of the former family, Old Alice is the best authority."

"And what should I have to do with them, pray, Lucy," said her father, "or with their history or accomplishments?"

"Nay, I do not know, sir; only that you were asking questions of Norman about young Ravenswood."

"Pshaw, child!"—replied her father, yet immediately added, "And who is old Alice? I think you know all the old women in the country."

"To be sure I do, or how could I help the old creatures when they are in hard times? And as to old Alice, she is the very empress of old women, and queen of gossips, so far as legendary lore is concerned. She is blind, poor old soul, but when she speaks to you, you would think she has some way of looking into your very heart. I am sure I often cover my face, or turn it away, for it seems as if she saw one change colour, though she has been blind these twenty years. She is worth visiting, were it but to say you have seen a blind and paralytic old woman have so much acuteness of perception, and dignity of manners. I assure you, she might be a countess from her language and behaviour.—Come, you must go to see Alice; we are not a quarter of a mile from her cottage."

"All this, my dear," said the Lord Keeper, "is no answer to my question, who this woman is, and what is her connection with the former proprietor's family?"

"O, it was something of a nourice-ship, I believe; and she remained here, because her two grandsons were engaged in your service. But it was against her will, I fancy; for the poor old creature is always regretting the change of times and of property."

"I am much obliged to her," answered the Lord Keeper. "She and her folk eat my bread, and drink my cup, and are lamenting all the while that they are not still under a family which never could do good, either to themselves or any one else!"

"Indeed," replied Lucy, "I am certain you do old Alice injustice. She has nothing mercenary about her, and would not accept a penny in charity, if it were to save her from being starved. She is only talkative, like all old folk, when you put them upon stories of their youth; and she speaks about the Ravenswood people, because she lived under them so many years. But I am sure she is grateful to you, sir, for your protection, and that she would rather speak to you, than to any other person in the whole world beside. Do, sir, come and see old Alice."

And with the freedom of an indulged daughter she dragged the Lord Keeper in the direction she desired.

CHAPTER IV.

> Through tops of the high trees she did descry
> A little smoke, whose vapour, thin, and light,
> Reeking aloft, uprolled to the sky,
> Which cheerful sign did send unto her sight,
> That in the same did wonne some living wight.
>
> SPENSER.

Lucy acted as her father's guide, for he was too much engrossed with his political labours, or with society, to be perfectly acquainted with his own extensive domains, and, moreover, was generally an inhabitant of the city of Edinburgh; and she, on the other hand, had, with her mother, resided the whole summer in Ravenswood, and, partly from taste, partly from want of any other amusement, had, by her frequent rambles, learned to know each lane, alley, dingle, or bushy dell,

> "And every bosky bourne from side to side."

We have said that the Lord Keeper was not indifferent to the beauties of nature; and we add, in justice to him, that he felt them doubly, when pointed out by the beautiful, simple, and interesting

girl, who, hanging on his arm with filial kindness, now called him to admire the size of some ancient oak, and now the unexpected turn, where the path developing its maze from glen or dingle, suddenly reached an eminence commanding an extensive view of the plains beneath them, and then gradually glided away from the prospect to lose itself among rocks and thickets, and guide to scenes of deeper seclusion.

It was when pausing on one of those points of extensive and commanding view, that Lucy told her father they were close by the cottage of her blind protegée; and on turning from the little hill, a path which led around it, worn by the daily steps of the infirm inmate, brought them in sight of the hut, which, embosomed in a deep and obscure dell, seemed to have been so situated purposely to bear a correspondence with the darkened state of its inhabitant.

The cottage was situated immediately under a tall rock, which in some measure beetled over it, as if threatening to drop some detached fragment from its brow on the frail tenement beneath. The hut itself was constructed of turf and stones, and rudely roofed over with thatch, much of which was in a dilapidated condition. The thin blue smoke rose from it in a light column, and curled upward along the white face of the incumbent rock, giving the scene a tint of exquisite softness. In a small and rude garden, surrounded by straggling elder-bushes, which formed a sort of imperfect hedge, sat near to the bee-hives, by the produce of which she lived, that "woman old," whom Lucy had brought her father hither to visit.

Whatever there had been which was disastrous in her fortune — whatever there was miserable in her dwelling, it was easy to judge, by the first glance, that neither years, poverty, misfortune, nor infirmity, had broken the spirit of this remarkable woman.

She occupied a turf-seat, placed under a weeping birch of unusual magnitude and age, as Judah is represented sitting under her palm-tree, with an air at once of majesty and of dejection. Her figure was tall, commanding, and but little bent by the infirmities of old age. Her dress, though that of a peasant, was uncommonly clean, forming in that particular a strong contrast to most of her rank, and was disposed with an attention to neatness, and even to taste, equally unusual. But it was her expression of countenance which chiefly struck the spectator, and induced most persons to address her with a degree of deference and civility very inconsistent with the miserable state of her dwelling, and which, nevertheless, she received with that easy composure which shewed she felt it to be her due. She had once been beautiful, but her beauty had been of a bold and masculine cast, such as does not survive the bloom of youth; yet her features continued to express strong sense, deep reflection, and a character of sober pride, which, as we have already said of her dress, appeared to argue a conscious superiority to those of her own rank. It scarce seemed possible that a face, deprived of the advantage of sight, could have expressed character so strongly; but her eyes, which were almost totally closed, did not, by the display of their sightless orbs, mar the countenance to which they could add nothing. She seemed in a ruminating posture, soothed, perhaps, by the murmurs of the busy tribe around her, to abstraction, though not to slumber.

Lucy undid the latch of the little garden gate, and solicited the old woman's attention. "My father, Alice, is come to see you."

"He is welcome, Miss Ashton, and so are you," said the old woman, turning and inclining her head towards her visiters.

"This is a fine morning for your bee-hives, mother," said the Lord Keeper, who, struck with the outward appearance of Alice, was somewhat curious to know if her conversation would correspond with it.

"I believe so, my lord," she replied; "I feel the air breathe milder than of late."

"You do not," resumed the statesman, "take charge of these bees yourself, mother? — How do you manage them?"

"By delegates, as kings do their subjects," resumed Alice; "and I am fortunate in a prime minister — Here, Babie."

She whistled on a small silver call which hung around her neck, and which at that time was sometimes used to summon domestics, and Babie, a girl of fifteen, made her appearance from the hut, not altogether so cleanly arrayed as she would probably have been had Alice had the use of her eyes, but with a greater air of neatness than was upon the whole to have been expected.

"Babie," said her mistress, "offer some bread and honey to the Lord Keeper and Miss Ashton — they will excuse your awkwardness, if you use cleanliness and despatch."

Babie performed her mistress's command with the grace which was naturally to have been expected, moving to and fro with a lobster-like gesture, her feet and legs tending one way, while her head, turned in a different direction, was fixed in wonder upon the laird, who was more frequently heard of than seen by his tenants and dependents. The bread and honey, however, deposited on a plantain leaf, was offered and accepted in all due courtesy. The Lord Keeper, still retaining the place which he had occupied on the decayed trunk of a fallen tree, looked as if he wished to prolong the interview, but was at a loss how to introduce a suitable subject.

"You have been long a resident on this property?" he said, after a pause.

"It is now nearly sixty years since I first knew Ravenswood," answered the old dame, whose conversation, though perfectly civil and respectful, seemed cautiously limited to the unavoidable and necessary task of replying to Sir William.

"You are not, I should judge by your accent, of this country originally?" said the Lord Keeper, in continuation.

"No; I am by birth an Englishwoman."

"Yet you seem attached to this country as if it were your own."

"It is here," replied the blind woman, "that I have drunk the cup of joy and of sorrow which Heaven destined for me. I was here the wife of an upright and affectionate husband for more than twenty years — I was here the mother of six promising children — it was here that God deprived me of all these blessings — it was here they died, and yonder, by yon ruined chapel, they lie all buried — I had no country but theirs while they lived — I have none but theirs now they are no more."

"But your house," said the Lord Keeper, looking at it, "is miserably ruinous?"

"Do, my dear father," said Lucy, eagerly, yet bashfully, catching at the hint, "give orders to make it better,—that is, if you think it proper."

"It will last my time, my dear Miss Lucy," said the blind women; "I would not have my lord give himself the lest trouble about it."

"But," said Lucy, "you once had a much better house, and were rich, and now in your old age to live in this hovel!"

"It is as good as I deserve, Miss Lucy; if my heart has not broke with what I have suffered, and seen others suffer, it must have been strong enough, and the rest of this old frame has no right to call itself weaker."

"You have probably witnesssed many changes," said the Lord Keeper; "but your experience must have taught you to expect them."

"It has taught me to endure them, my lord," was the reply.

"Yet you knew that they must needs arrive in the course of years?" said the statesman.

"Ay; as I know that the stump, on or beside which you sit, once a tall and lofty tree, must needs one day fall by decay, or by the axe; yet I hoped my eyes might not witness the downfall of the tree which overshadowed my dwelling."

"Do not suppose," said the Lord Keeper, "that you will lose any interest with me, for looking back with regret to the days when another family possessed my estates. You had reason, doubtless, to love them, and I respect your gratitude. I will order some repairs in your cottage, and I hope we shall live to be friends when we know each other better."

"Those of my age," returned the dame, "make no new friends. I thank you for your bounty—it is well intended, undoubtedly; but I have all I want, and I cannot accept more at your lordship's hands."

"Well, then," continued the Lord Keeper, "at least allow me to say, that I look upon you as a woman of sense and education beyond your appearance, and that I hope you will continue to reside on this property of mine rent-free for your life."

"I hope I shall," said the old dame, composedly; "I believe that was made an article in the sale of Ravenswood to your lordship, though such a trifling circumstance may have escaped your recollection."

"I remember—I recollect," said his lordship, somewhat confused. "I perceive you are too much attached to your old friends to accept any benefit from their successor."

"Far from it, my lord; I am grateful for the benefits which I decline, and I wish I could pay you for offering them, better than what I am now about to say." The Lord Keeper looked at her in some surprise, but said not a word. "My lord," she continued, in an impressive and solemn tone, "take care what you do; you are on the brink of a precipice."

"Indeed?" said the Lord Keeper, his mind reverting to the political circumstances of the country. "Has any thing come to your knowledge—any plot or conspiracy?"

"No, my lord; those who traffic in such commodities do not call into their councils the old, blind, and infirm. My warning is of another kind. You have driven matters hard with the house of Ravenswood. Believe a true tale—they are a fierce house, and there is danger in dealing with men when they become desperate."

"Tush," answered the Keeper; "what has been between us has been the work of the law, not my doing; and to the law they must look, if they would impugn my proceedings."

"Ay, but they may think otherwise, and take the law into their own hand, when they fail of other means of redress."

"What mean you?" said the Lord Keeper. "Young Ravenswood would not have recourse to personal violence?"

"God forbid I should say so! I know nothing of the youth but what is honourable and open—honourable and open, said I?—I should have added, free, generous, noble. But he is still a Ravenswood, and may bide his time. Remember the fate of Sir George Lockhart."[1]

The Lord Keeper started as she called to his recollection a tragedy so deep and so recent. The old woman proceeded: "Chiesley, who did the deed, was a relative of Lord Ravenswood. In the hall of Ravenswood, in my presence, and in that of others, he avowed publicly his determination to do the cruelty which he afterwards committed. I could not keep silence, though to speak it ill became my station. 'You are devising a dreadful crime,' I said, 'for which you must reckon before the judgment-seat.' Never shall I forget his look, as he replied, 'I must reckon then for many things, and will reckon for this also.' Therefore I may well say, beware of pressing a desperate man with the hand of authority. There is blood of Chiesley in the veins of Ravenswood, and one drop of it were enough to fire him in the circumstances in which he is placed—I say, beware of him."

The old dame had, either intentionally or by accident, harped aright the fear of the Lord Keeper. The desperate and dark resource of private assassination, so familiar to a Scottish baron in former times, had even in the present age been too frequently resorted to under the pressure of unusual temptation, or where the mind of the actor was prepared for such a crime. Sir William Ashton was aware of this; as also that young Ravenswood had received injuries sufficient to prompt him to that sort of revenge, which becomes a frequent though fearful consequence of the partial administration of justice. He endeavoured to disguise from Alice the nature of the apprehensions which he entertained; but so ineffectually, that a person even of less penetration than nature had endowed her with must necessarily have been aware that the subject lay near his bosom. His voice was changed in its accent as he replied to her, that the Master of Ravenswood was a man of honour; and were it otherwise, that the fate of Chiesley of Dalry was a sufficient warning to any one who should dare to assume the office of avenger of his own imaginary wrongs. And having hastily uttered these expressions, he rose and left the place without waiting for a reply.

[1] See Note A. *Sir George Lockhart.*

CHAPTER V.

——— Is she a Capulet?
O dear account! my life is my foe's debt.
SHAKESPEARE.

The Lord Keeper walked for nearly a quarter of a mile in profound silence. His daughter, naturally timid, and bred up in those ideas of filial awe and implicit obedience which were inculcated upon the youth of that period, did not venture to interrupt his meditations.

"Why do you look so pale, Lucy?" said her father turning suddenly round and breaking silence.

According to the ideas of the time, which did not permit a young woman to offer her sentiments on any subject of importance unless especially required to do so, Lucy was bound to appear ignorant of the meaning of all that had passed betwixt Alice and her father, and imputed the emotion he had observed to the fear of the wild cattle which grazed in that part of the extensive chase through which they were now walking.

Of these animals, the descendants of the savage herds which anciently roamed free in the Caledonian forests, it was formerly a point of state to preserve a few in the parks of the Scottish nobility. Specimens continued within the memory of man to be kept at least at three houses of distinction, Hamilton, namely, Drumlanrick, and Cumbernauld. They had degenerated from the ancient race in size and strength, if we are to judge from the accounts of old chronicles, and from the formidable remains frequently discovered in bogs and morasses when drained and laid open. The bull had lost the shaggy honours of his mane, and the race was small and light made, in colour a dingy white, or rather a pale yellow, with black horn and hoofs. They retained, however, in some measure, the ferocity of their ancestry, could not be domesticated on account of their antipathy to the human race, and were often dangerous if approached unguardedly, or wantonly disturbed. It was this last reason which has occasioned their being extirpated at the places we have mentioned, where probably they would otherwise have been retained as appropriate inhabitants of a Scottish woodland, and fit tenants for a baronial forest. A few, if I mistake not, are still preserved at Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville.

It was to her finding herself in the vicinity of a group of three or four of these animals, that Lucy thought proper to impute those signs of fear, which had arisen in her countenance for a different reason. For she had been familiarized with the appearance of the wild cattle, during her walks in the chase; and it was not then, as it may be now, a necessary part of a young lady's demeanour, to indulge in causeless tremors of the nerves. On the present occasion, however, she speedily found cause for real terror.

Lucy had scarcely replied to her father in the words we have mentioned, and he was just about to rebuke her supposed timidity, when a bull, stimulated either by the scarlet colour of Miss Ashton's mantle, or by one of those fits of capricious ferocity to which their dispositions are liable, detached himself suddenly from the group which was feeding at the upper extremity of a grassy glade, that seemed to lose itself among the crossing and entangled boughs. The animal approached the intruders on his pasture ground, at first slowly, pawing the ground with his hoof, bellowing from time to time, and tearing up the sand with his horns, as if to lash himself up to rage and violence.

The Lord Keeper, who observed the animal's demeanour, was aware that he was about to become mischievous, and, drawing his daughter's arm under his own, began to walk fast along the avenue, in hopes to get out of his sight and his reach. This was the most injudicious course he could have adopted, for, encouraged by the appearance of flight, the bull began to pursue them at full speed. Assailed by a danger so imminent, firmer courage than that of the Lord Keeper might have given way. But paternal tenderness, "love strong as death," sustained him. He continued to support and drag onward his daughter, until, her fears altogether depriving her of the power of flight, she sunk down by his side; and when he could no longer assist her to escape, he turned round and placed himself betwixt her and the raging animal, which advancing in full career, its brutal fury enhanced by the rapidity of the pursuit, was now within a few yards of them. The Lord Keeper had no weapons; his age and gravity dispensed even with the usual appendage of a walking sword,—could such appendage have availed him any thing.

It seemed inevitable that the father or daughter, or both, should have fallen victims to the impending danger, when a shot from the neighbouring thicket arrested the progress of the animal. He was so truly struck between the junction of the spine with the skull, that the wound, which in any other part of his body might scarce have impeded his career, proved instantly fatal. Stumbling forward with a hideous bellow, the progressive force of his previous motion, rather than any operation of his limbs, carried him up to within three yards of the astonished Lord Keeper, where he rolled on the ground, his limbs darkened with the black death-sweat, and quivering with the last convulsions of muscular motion.

Lucy lay senseless on the ground, insensible of the wonderful deliverance which she had experienced. Her father was almost equally stupified, so rapid and unexpected had been the transition from the horrid death which seemed inevitable, to perfect security. He gazed on the animal, terrible even in death, with a species of mute and confused astonishment, which did not permit him distinctly to understand what had taken place; and so inaccurate was his consciousness of what had passed, that he might have supposed the bull had been arrested in its career by a thunderbolt, had he not observed among the branches of the thicket the figure of a man, with a short gun or musquetoon in his hand.

This instantly recalled him to a sense of their situation—a glance at his daughter reminded him of the necessity of procuring her assistance. He called to the man, whom he concluded to be one of his foresters, to give immediate attention to Miss Ashton, while he himself hastened to call assistance. The huntsman approached them accordingly, and the Lord Keeper saw he was a stranger, but was too much agitated to make any farther remarks. In a few hurried words, he directed the shooter, as stronger and more active than himself, to carry

the young lady to a neighbouring fountain, while he went back to Alice's hut to procure more aid.

The man to whose timely interference they had been so much indebted, did not seem inclined to leave his good work half finished. He raised Lucy from the ground in his arms, and conveying her through the glades of the forest by paths with which he seemed well acquainted, stopped not until he laid her in safety by the side of a plentiful and pellucid fountain, which had been once covered in, screened and decorated with architectural ornaments of a Gothic character. But now the vault which had covered it being broken down and riven, and the Gothic font ruined and demolished, the stream burst forth from the recess of the earth in open day, and winded its way among the broken sculpture and moss-grown stones which lay in confusion around its source.

Tradition, always busy, at least in Scotland, to grace with a legendary tale a spot in itself interesting, had ascribed a cause of peculiar veneration to this fountain. A beautiful young lady met one of the Lords of Ravenswood while hunting near this spot, and like a second Egeria, had captivated the affections of the feudal Numa. They met frequently afterwards, and always at sunset, the charms of the nymph's mind completing the conquest which her beauty had begun, and the mystery of the intrigue adding zest to both. She always appeared and disappeared close by the fountain, with which, therefore, her lover judged she had some inexplicable connection. She placed certain restrictions on their intercourse, which also savoured of mystery. They met only once a-week—Friday was the appointed day—and she explained to the Lord of Ravenswood, that they were under the necessity of separating so soon as the bell of a chapel, belonging to a hermitage in the adjoining wood, now long ruinous, should toll the hour of vespers. In the course of his confession, the Baron of Ravenswood intrusted the hermit with the secret of this singular amour, and Father Zachary drew the necessary and obvious consequence, that his patron was enveloped in the toils of Satan, and in danger of dostruction both to body and soul. He urged these perils to the Baron with all the force of monkish rhetoric, and described, in the most frightful colours, the real character and person of the apparently lovely Naiad, whom he hesitated not to denounce as a limb of the kingdom of darkness. The lover listened with obstinate incredulity; and it was not until worn out by the obstinacy of the anchoret, that he consented to put the state and condition of his mistress to a certain trial, and for that purpose acquiesced in Zachary's proposal, that on their next interview the vespers bell should be rung half an hour later than usual. The hermit maintained, and bucklered his opinion by quotations from *Malleus Malificarum, Sprengerus, Remigius*, and other learned demonologists, that the Evil One, thus seduced to remain behind the appointed hour, would assume her true shape, and, having appeared to her terrified lover as a fiend of hell, would vanish from him in a flash of sulphurous lightning. Raymond of Ravenswood acquiesced in the experiment, not incurious concerning the issue, though confident it would disappoint the expectations of the hermit.

At the appointed hour the lovers met, and their interview was protracted beyond that at which they usually parted, by the delay of the priest to ring his usual curfew. No change took place upon the nymph's outward form; but as soon as the lengthening shadows made her aware that the usual hour of the vespers chime was passed, she tore herself from her lover's arms with a shriek of despair, bid him adieu for ever, and plunging into the fountain, disappeared from his eyes. The bubbles occasioned by her descent were crimsoned with blood as they arose, leading the distracted Baron to infer, that his ill-judged curiosity had occasioned the death of this interesting and mysterious being. The remorse which he felt, as well as the recollection of her charms, proved the penance of his future life, which he lost in the battle of Flodden not many months after. But, in memory of his Naiad, he had previously ornamented the fountain in which she appeared to reside, and secured its waters from profanation or pollution, by the small vaulted building of which the fragments still remained scattered around it. From this period the house of Ravenswood was supposed to have dated its decay.

Such was the generally received legend, which some, who would seem wiser than the vulgar explained, as obscurely intimating the fate of a beautiful maid of plebeian rank, the mistress of this Raymond, whom he slew in a fit of jealousy, and whose blood was mingled with the waters of the locked fountain, as it was commonly called. Others imagined that the tale had a more remote origin in the ancient heathen mythology. All however agreed, that the spot was fatal to the Ravenswood family; and that to drink of the waters of the well, or even approach its brink, was as ominous to a descendant of that house, as for a Grahame to wear green, a Bruce to kill a spider, or a St Clair to cross the Ord on a Monday.

It was on this ominous spot that Lucy Ashton first drew breath after her long and almost deadly swoon. Beautiful and pale as the fabulous Naiad in the last agony of separation from her lover, she was seated so as to rest with her back against a part of the ruined wall, while her mantle, dripping with the water which her protector had used profusely to recal her senses, clung to her slender and beautifully proportioned form.

The first moment of recollection brought to her mind the danger which had overpowered her senses—the next called to remembrance that of her father. She looked around—he was nowhere to be seen—"My father—my father!" was all that she could ejaculate.

"Sir William is safe," answered the voice of a stranger—"perfectly safe, and will be with you instantly."

"Are you sure of that?" exclaimed Lucy—"the bull was close by us—do not stop me—I must go to seek my father?"

And she arose with that purpose; but her strength was so much exhausted, that, far from possessing the power to execute her purpose, she must have fallen against the stone on which she had leant, probably not without sustaining serious injury.

The stranger was so near to her, that, without actually suffering her to fall, he could not avoid catching her in his arms, which, however, he did with a momentary reluctance, very unusual when youth interposes to prevent beauty from danger.

It seemed as if her weight, slight as it was, proved too heavy for her young and athletic assistant, for, without feeling the temptation of detaining her in his arms even for a single instant, he again placed her on the stone from which she had risen, and retreating a few steps, repeated hastily, "Sir William Ashton is perfectly safe, and will be here instantly. Do not make yourself anxious on his account—Fate has singularly preserved him. You, madam, are exhausted, and must not think of rising until you have some assistance more suitable than mine."

Lucy, whose senses were by this time more effectually collected, was naturally led to look at the stranger with attention. There was nothing in his appearance which should have rendered him unwilling to offer his arm to a young lady who required support, or which could have induced her to refuse his assistance; and she could not help thinking, even in that moment, that he seemed cold and reluctant to offer it. A shooting-dress of dark cloth intimated the rank of the wearer, though concealed in part by a large and loose cloak of a dark brown colour. A Montero cap and a black feather drooped over the wearer's brow, and partly concealed his features, which, so far as seen, were dark, regular, and full of majestic, though somewhat sullen, expression. Some secret sorrow, or the brooding spirit of some moody passion, had quenched the light and ingenuous vivacity of youth in a countenance singularly fitted to display both, and it was not easy to gaze on the stranger without a secret impression either of pity or awe, or at least of doubt and curiosity allied to both.

The impression which we have necessarily been long in describing, Lucy felt in the glance of a moment, and had no sooner encountered the keen black eyes of the stranger, than her own were bent on the ground with a mixture of bashful embarrassment and fear. Yet there was a necessity to speak, or at least she thought so, and in a fluttered accent she began to mention her wonderful escape, in which she was sure that the stranger must, under Heaven, have been her father's protector, and her own.

He seemed to shrink from her expressions of gratitude, while he replied abruptly, "I leave you, madam,"—the deep melody of his voice rendered powerful, but not harsh, by something like a severity of tone—"I leave you to the protection of those to whom it is possible you may have this day been a guardian angel."

Lucy was surprised at the ambiguity of his language, and, with a feeling of artless and unaffected gratitude, began to deprecate the idea of having intended to give her deliverer any offence, as if such a thing had been possible. "I have been unfortunate," she said, "in endeavouring to express my thanks—I am sure it must be so, though I cannot recollect what I said—but would you but stay till my father—till the Lord Keeper comes—would you only permit him to pay you his thanks, and to inquire your name?"

"My name is unnecessary," answered the stranger; "your father—I would rather say Sir William Ashton—will learn it soon enough, for all the pleasure it is likely to afford him."

"You mistake him," said Lucy earnestly; "he will be grateful for my sake and for his own. You do not know my father, or you are deceiving me with a story of his safety, when he has already fallen a victim to the fury of that animal."

When she had caught this idea, she started from the ground, and endeavoured to press towards the avenue in which the accident had taken place, while the stranger, though he seemed to hesitate between the desire to assist and the wish to leave her, was obliged, in common humanity, to oppose her both by entreaty and action.

"On the word of a gentleman, madam, I tell you the truth; your father is in perfect safety; you will expose yourself to injury if you venture back where the herd of wild cattle grazed.—If you will go"—for, having once adopted the idea that her father was still in danger, she pressed forward in spite of him—"If you *will* go, accept my arm, though I am not perhaps the person who can with most propriety offer you support."

But, without heeding this intimation, Lucy took him at his word. "O if you be a man," she said,—"if you be a gentleman, assist me to find my father! You shall not leave me — you must go with me — he is dying perhaps while we are talking here!"

Then, without listening to excuse or apology, and holding fast by the stranger's arm, though unconscious of anything save the support which it gave, and without which she could not have moved, mixed with a vague feeling of preventing his escape from her, she was urging, and almost dragging him forward, when Sir William Ashton came up, followed by the female attendant of blind Alice, and by two wood-cutters, whom he had summoned from their occupation to his assistance. His joy at seeing his daughter safe, overcame the surprise with which he would at another time have beheld her hanging as familiarly on the arm of a stranger, as she might have done upon his own.

"Lucy, my dear Lucy, are you safe?—are you well?" were the only words that broke from him as he embraced her in ecstasy.

"I am well, sir, thank God! and still more that I see you so;—but this gentleman," she said, quitting his arm, and shrinking from him, "what must he think of me?" and her eloquent blood, flushing over neck and brow, spoke how much she was ashamed of the freedom with which she had craved, and even compelled his assistance.

"This gentleman," said Sir William Ashton, "will, I trust, not regret the trouble we have given him, when I assure him of the gratitude of the Lord Keeper for the greatest service which one man ever rendered to another—for the life of my child—for my own life, which he has saved by his bravery and presence of mind. He will, I am sure, permit us to request——"

"Request nothing of ME, my lord," said the stranger, in a stern and peremptory tone; "I am the Master of Ravenswood."

There was a dead pause of surprise, not unmixed with less pleasant feelings. The Master wrapt himself in his cloak, made a haughty inclination towards Lucy, muttering a few words of courtesy, as indistinctly heard as they seemed to be reluctantly uttered, and, turning from them, was immediately lost in the thicket.

"The Master of Ravenswood!" said the Lord Keeper, when he had recovered his momentary astonishment—"Hasten after him—stop him—beg him to speak to me for a single moment."

The two foresters accordingly set off in pursuit of the stranger. They speedily reappeared, and, in an embarrassed and awkward manner, said the gentleman would not return. The Lord Keeper took one of the fellows aside, and questioned him more closely what the Master of Ravenswood had said.

"He just said he wadna come back," said the man, with the caution of a prudent Scotsman, who cared not to be the bearer of an unpleasant errand.

"He said something more, sir," said the Lord Keeper, "and I insist on knowing what it was."

"Why, then, my lord," said the man, looking down, "he said — But it wad be nae pleasure to your lordship to hear it, for I daresay the Master meant nae ill."

"That 's none of your concern, sir; I desire to hear the very words."

"Weel, then," replied the man, "he said, Tell Sir William Ashton, that the next time he and I forgather, he will not be half sae blithe of our meeting as of our parting."

"Very well, sir," said the Lord Keeper, "I believe he alludes to a wager we have on our hawks — it is a matter of no consequence."

He turned to his daughter, who was by this time so much recovered as to be able to walk home. But the effect which the various recollections, connected with a scene so terrific, made upon a mind which was susceptible in an extreme degree, was more permanent than the injury which her nerves had sustained. Visions of terror, both in sleep and in waking reveries, recalled to her the form of the furious animal, and the dreadful bellow with which he accompanied his career; and it was always the image of the Master of Ravenswood, with his native nobleness of countenance and form, that seemed to interpose betwixt her and assured death. It is, perhaps, at all times dangerous for a young person to suffer recollection to dwell repeatedly, and with too much complacency, on the same individual; but in Lucy's situation it was almost unavoidable. She had never happened to see a young man of mien and features so romantic and so striking as young Ravenswood; but had she seen an hundred his equals or his superiors in those particulars, no one else could have been linked to her heart by the strong associations of remembered danger and escape, of gratitude, wonder, and curiosity. I say curiosity, for it is likely that the singularly restrained and unaccommodating manners of the Master of Ravenswood, so much at variance with the natural expression of his features and grace of his deportment, as they excited wonder by the contrast, had their effect in riveting her attention to the recollection. She knew little of Ravenswood, or the disputes which had existed betwixt her father and his, and perhaps could in her gentleness of mind hardly have comprehended the angry and bitter passions which they had engendered. But she knew that he was come of noble stem; was poor, though descended from the noble and the wealthy; and she felt that she could sympathize with the feelings of a proud mind, which urged him to recoil from the proffered gratitude of the new proprietors of his father's house and domains. Would he have equally shunned their acknowledgments and avoided their intimacy, had her father's request been urged more mildly, less abruptly, and softened with the grace which women so well know how to throw into their manner, when they mean to mediate betwixt the headlong passions of the ruder sex? This was a perilous question to ask her own mind — perilous both in the idea and in its consequences.

Lucy Ashton, in short, was involved in those mazes of the imagination which are most dangerous to the young and the sensitive. Time, it is true, absence, change of scene and new faces, might probably have destroyed the illusion in her instance as it has done in many others; but her residence remained solitary, and her mind without those means of dissipating her pleasing visions. This solitude was chiefly owing to the absence of Lady Ashton, who was at this time in Edinburgh, watching the progress of some state intrigue; the Lord Keeper only received society out of policy or ostentation, and was by nature rather reserved and unsociable; and thus no cavalier appeared to rival or to obscure the ideal picture of chivalrous excellence which Lucy had pictured to herself in the Master of Ravenswood.

While Lucy indulged in these dreams, she made frequent visits to old blind Alice, hoping it would be easy to lead her to talk on the subject, which at present she had so imprudently admitted to occupy so large a portion of her thoughts. But Alice did not in this particular gratify her wishes and expectations. She spoke readily, and with pathetic feeling, concerning the family in general, but seemed to observe an especial and cautious silence on the subject of the present representative. The little she said of him was not altogether so favourable as Lucy had anticipated. She hinted that he was of a stern and unforgiving character, more ready to resent than to pardon injuries; and Lucy combined with great alarm the hints which she now dropped of these dangerous qualities, with Alice's advice to her father, so emphatically given, "to beware of Ravenswood."

But that very Ravenswood, of whom such unjust suspicions had been entertained, had, almost immediately after they had been uttered, confuted them, by saving at once her father's life and her own. Had he nourished such black revenge as Alice's dark hints seemed to indicate, no deed of active guilt was necessary to the full gratification of that evil passion. He needed but to have withheld for an instant his indispensable and effective assistance, and the object of his resentment must have perished, without any direct aggression on his part, by a death equally fearful and certain. She conceived, therefore, that some secret prejudice, or the suspicions incident to age and misfortune, had led Alice to form conclusions injurious to the character, and irreconcilable both with the generous conduct and noble features of the Master of Ravenswood. And in this belief Lucy reposed her hope, and went on weaving her enchanted web of fairy tissue, as beautiful and transient as the film of the gossamer, when it is pearled with the morning dew and glimmering to the sun.

Her father, in the meanwhile, as well as the Master of Ravenswood, were making reflections, as frequent though more solid than those of Lucy, upon the singular event which had taken place. The Lord Keeper's first task, when he returned home, was to ascertain by medical advice that his daughter had sustained no injury from the dangerous and alarming situation in which she had been

placed. Satisfied on this topic, he proceeded to revise the memoranda which he had taken down from the mouth of the person employed to interrupt the funeral service of the late Lord Ravenswood. Bred to casuistry, and well accustomed to practise the ambidexter ingenuity of the bar, it cost him little trouble to soften the features of the tumult which he had been at first so anxious to exaggerate. He preached to his colleagues of the Privy Council the necessity of using conciliatory measures with young men, whose blood and temper were hot, and their experience of life limited. He did not hesitate to attribute some censure to the conduct of the officer, as having been unnecessarily irritating.

These were the contents of his public despatches. The letters which he wrote to those private friends into whose management the matter was likely to fall, were of a yet more favourable tenor. He represented that lenity in this case would be equally politic and popular, whereas, considering the high respect with which the rites of interment are regarded in Scotland, any severity exercised against the Master of Ravenswood for protecting those of his father from interruption, would be on all sides most unfavourably construed. And, finally, assuming the language of a generous and high-spirited man, he made it his particular request, that this affair should be passed over without severe notice. He alluded with delicacy to the predicament in which he himself stood with young Ravenswood, as having succeeded in the long train of litigation by which the fortunes of that noble house had been so much reduced, and confessed it would be most peculiarly acceptable to his own feelings, could he find means in some sort to counterbalance the disadvantages which he had occasioned the family, though only in the prosecution of his just and lawful rights. He therefore made it his particular and personal request that the matter should have no farther consequences, and insinuated a desire that he himself should have the merit of having put a stop to it by his favourable report and intercession. It was particularly remarkable, that, contrary to his uniform practice, he made no special communication to Lady Ashton upon the subject of the tumult; and although he mentioned the alarm which Lucy had received from one of the wild cattle, yet he gave no detailed account of an incident so interesting and terrible.

There was much surprise among Sir William Ashton's political friends and colleagues on receiving letters of a tenor so unexpected. On comparing notes together, one smiled, one put up his eyebrows, a third nodded acquiescence in the general wonder, and a fourth asked, if they were sure these were *all* the letters the Lord Keeper had written on the subject. "It runs strangely in my mind, my lords, that none of these advices contain the root of the matter."

But no secret letters of a contrary nature had been received, although the question seemed to imply the possibility of their existence.

"Well," said an old grey-headed statesman, who had contrived, by shifting and trimming, to maintain his post at the steerage through all the changes of course which the vessel had held for thirty years, "I thought Sir William would hae verified the auld Scottish saying, 'As soon comes the lamb's skin to market as the auld tup's.'"

"We must please him after his own fashion," said another, "though it be an unlooked-for one."

"A wilful man maun hae his way," answered the old counsellor.

"The Keeper will rue this before year and day are out," said a third; "the Master of Ravenswood is the lad to wind him a pirn."[1]

"Why, what would you do, my lords, with the poor young fellow?" said a noble Marquis present; "the Lord Keeper has got all his estates — he has not a cross to bless himself with."

On which the ancient Lord Turntippet replied,

> "'If he hasna gear to fine,
> He has shins to pine'—

And that was our way before the Revolution — *Luitur cum persona, qui luere non potest cum crumena*[2] — Hegh, my lords, that's gude law Latin."

"I can see no motive," replied the Marquis, "that any noble lord can have for urging this matter farther; let the Lord Keeper have the power to deal in it as he pleases."

"Agree, agree — remit to the Lord Keeper, with any other person for fashion's sake — Lord Hirplehooly, who is bed-ridden — one to be a quorum — Make your entry in the minutes, Mr Clerk — And now, my lords, there is that young scattergood, the Laird of Bucklaw's fine to be disponed upon — I suppose it goes to my Lord Treasurer?"

"Shame be in my meal-poke, then," exclaimed Lord Turntippet, "and your hand aye in the nook of it! I had set that down for a by bit between meals for mysell."

"To use one of your favourite saws, my lord," replied the Marquis, "you are like the miller's dog, that licks his lips before the bag is untied — the man is not fined yet."

"But that costs but twa skarts of a pen," said Lord Turntippet; "and surely there is nae noble lord that will presume to say, that I, wha hae complied wi' a' compliances, tane all manner of tests, abjured all that was to be abjured, and sworn a' that was to be sworn, for these thirty years bypast, sticking fast by my duty to the state through good report and bad report, shouldna hae something now and then to synd my mouth wi' after sic drouthy wark? Eh?"

"It would be very unreasonable indeed, my lord," replied the Marquis, "had we either thought that your lordship's drought was quenchable, or observed any thing stick in your throat that required washing down."

And so we close the scene on the Privy Council of that period.

CHAPTER VI.

> For this are all these warriors come,
> To hear an idle tale;
> And o'er our death-accustom'd arms
> Shall silly tears prevail?
>
> HENRY MACKENZIE.

On the evening of the day when the Lord Keeper and his daughter were saved from such imminent

[1] *Wind him a pirn*, proverbial for preparing a troublesome business for some person.

[2] *i. e.* Let him pay with his person, who cannot pay with his purse.

peril, two strangers were seated in the most private apartment of a small obscure inn, or rather alehouse, called the Tod's Den, about three or four miles from the Castle of Ravenswood, and as far from the ruinous tower of Wolf's Crag, betwixt which two places it was situated.

One of these strangers was about forty years of age, tall, and thin in the flanks, with an aquiline nose, dark penetrating eyes, and a shrewd but sinister cast of countenance. The other was about fifteen years younger, short, stout, ruddy-faced, and red-haired, with an open, resolute, and cheerful eye, to which careless and fearless freedom, and inward daring, gave fire and expression, notwithstanding its light grey colour. A stoup of wine, (for in those days it was served out from the cask in pewter flagons,) was placed on the table, and each had his quaigh or bicker[1] before him. But there was little appearance of conviviality. With folded arms, and looks of anxious expectation, they eyed each other in silence, each wrapt in his own thoughts, and holding no communication with his neighbour.

At length the younger broke silence by exclaiming, "What the foul fiend can detain the Master so long? he must have miscarried in his enterprise.—Why did you dissuade me from going with him?"

"One man is enough to right his own wrong," said the taller and older personage; "we venture our lives for him in coming thus far on such an errand."

"You are but a craven after all, Craigengelt," answered the younger, "and that's what many folk have thought you before now."

"But what none has dared to tell me," said Craigengelt, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword; "and, but that I hold a hasty man no better than a fool, I would"—he paused for his companion's answer.

"*Would* you?" said the other coolly; "and why do you not then?"

Craigengelt drew his cutlass an inch or two, and then returned it with violence into the scabbard—"Because there is a deeper stake to be played for, than the lives of twenty harebrained gowks like you."

"You are right there," said his companion, "for if it were not that these forfeitures, and that last fine that the old driveller Turntippet is gaping for, and which, I daresay, is laid on by this time, have fairly driven me out of house and home, I were a coxcomb and a cuckoo to boot, to trust your fair promises of getting me a commission in the Irish brigade,—what have I to do with the Irish brigade? I am a plain Scotsman, as my father was before me; and my grand-aunt, Lady Girnington, cannot live for ever."

"Ay, Bucklaw," observed Craigengelt, "but she may live for many a long day; and for your father, he had land and living, kept himself close from wadsetters and money-lenders, paid each man his due, and lived on his own."

"And whose fault is it that I have not done so too?" said Bucklaw—"whose but the devil's and yours, and such like as you, that have led me to the far end of a fair estate? and now I shall be obliged, I suppose, to shelter and shift about like yourself—live one week upon a line of secret intelligence from Saint Germains—another upon report of a rising in the Highlands—get my breakfast and morning-draught of sack from old Jacobite ladies, and give them locks of my old wig for the Chevalier's hair—second my friend in his quarrel till he comes to the field, and then flinch from him lest so important a political agent should perish from the way. All this I must do for bread, besides calling myself a Captain!"

"You think you are making a fine speech now," said Craigengelt, "and shewing much wit at my expense. Is starving or hanging better than the life I am obliged to lead, because the present fortunes of the king cannot sufficiently support his envoys?"

"Starving is honester, Craigengelt, and hanging is like to be the end on't—But what you mean to make of this poor fellow Ravenswood, I know not—he has no money left, any more than I—his lands are all pawned and pledged, and the interest eats up the rents, and is not satisfied, and what do you hope to make by meddling in his affairs?"

"Content yourself, Bucklaw; I know my business," replied Craigengelt. "Besides that his name, and his father's services in 1689, will make such an acquisition sound well both at Versailles and Saint Germains—you will also please be informed, that the Master of Ravenswood is a very different kind of young fellow from you. He has parts and address, as well as courage and talents, and will present himself abroad like a young man of head as well as heart, who knows something more than the speed of a horse or the flight of a hawk. I have lost credit of late, by bringing over no one that had sense to know more than how to unharbour a stag, or take and reclaim an eyess. The Master has education, sense, and penetration."

"And yet is not wise enough to escape the tricks of a kidnapper, Craigengelt?" replied the younger man. "But don't be angry; you know you will not fight, and so it is as well to leave your hilt in peace and quiet, and tell me in sober guise how you drew the Master into your confidence?"

"By flattering his love of vengeance, Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt. "He has always distrusted me, but I watched my time, and struck while his temper was red-hot with the sense of insult and of wrong. He goes now to expostulate, as he says, and perhaps thinks, with Sir William Ashton. I say, that if they meet, and the lawyer puts him to his defence, the Master will kill him; for he had that sparkle in his eye which never deceives you when you would read a man's purpose. At any rate, he will give him such a bullying as will be construed into an assault on a privy-councillor; so there will be a total breach betwixt him and government; Scotland will be too hot for him, France will gain him, and we will all set sail together in the French brig L'Espoir, which is hovering for us off Eyemouth."

"Content am I," said Bucklaw; "Scotland has little left that I care about; and if carrying the Master with us will get us a better reception in France, why, so be it, a God's name. I doubt our own merits will procure us slender preferment; and I trust he will send a ball through the

[1] Drinking cups of different sizes, made out of staves hooped together. The *quaigh* was used chiefly for drinking wine or brandy; it might hold about a gill, and was often composed of rare wood, and curiously ornamented with silver.

Keeper's head before he joins us. One or two of these scoundrel statesmen should be shot once a-year, just to keep the others on their good behaviour."

"That is very true," replied Craigengelt; "and it reminds me that I must go and see that our horses have been fed, and are in readiness; for, should such deed be done, it will be no time for grass to grow beneath their heels." He proceeded as far as the door, then turned back with a look of earnestness, and said to Bucklaw, "Whatever should come of this business, I am sure you will do me the justice to remember, that I said nothing to the Master which could imply my accession to any act of violence which he may take into his head to commit."

"No, no, not a single word like accession," replied Bucklaw; "you know too well the risk belonging to these two terrible words, art and part." Then, as if to himself, he recited the following lines:

> "The dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs,
> And pointed full upon the stroke of murder."

"What is that you are talking to yourself?" said Craigengelt, turning back with some anxiety.

"Nothing—only two lines I have heard upon the stage," replied his companion.

"Bucklaw," said Craigengelt, "I sometimes think you should have been a stage-player yourself; all is fancy and frolic with you."

"I have often thought so myself," said Bucklaw. "I believe it would be safer than acting with you in the Fatal Conspiracy. But away, play your own part, and look after the horses like a groom as you are. A play-actor—a stage-player!" he repeated to himself; "that would have deserved a stab, but that Craigengelt's a coward—And yet I should like the profession well enough—Stay—let me see—ay—I would come out in Alexander—

> 'Thus from the grave I rise to save my love,
> Draw all your swords, and quick as lightning move;
> When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay,
> 'Tis love commands, and glory leads the way.'"

As with a voice of thunder, and his hand upon his sword, Bucklaw repeated the ranting couplets of poor Lee, Craigengelt re-entered with a face of alarm.

"We are undone, Bucklaw! the Master's led horse has cast himself over his halter in the stable, and is dead lame—his hackney will be set up with the day's work, and now he has no fresh horse; he will never get off."

"Egad, there will be no moving with the speed of lightning this bout," said Bucklaw, drily. "But stay, you can give him yours."

"What! and be taken myself? I thank you for the proposal," said Craigengelt.

"Why," replied Bucklaw, "if the Lord Keeper should have met with a mischance, which for my part I cannot suppose, for the Master is not the lad to shoot an old and unarmed man—but *if* there should have been a fray at the Castle, you are neither art nor part in it, you know, so have nothing to fear."

"True, true," answered the other, with embarrassment; "but consider my commission from Saint Germains."

"Which many men think is a commission of your own making, noble captain. Well, if you will not give him your horse, why, d—n it, he must have mine."

"Yours?" said Craigengelt.

"Ay, mine," repeated Bucklaw; "it shall never be said that I agreed to back a gentleman in a little affair of honour, and neither helped him on with it nor off from it."

"You will give him your horse? and have you considered the loss?"

"Loss! why, Grey Gilbert cost me twenty Jacobuses, that's true; but then his hackney is worth something, and his Black Moor is worth twice as much were he sound, and I know how to handle him. Take a fat sucking mastiff whelp, flay and bowel him, stuff the body full of black and grey snails, roast a reasonable time, and baste with oil of spikenard, saffron, cinnamon and honey, anoint with the dripping, working it in——"

"Yes, Bucklaw; but in the meanwhile, before the sprain is cured, nay, before the whelp is roasted, you will be caught and hung. Depend on it, the chase will be hard after Ravenswood. I wish we had made our place of rendezvous nearer to the coast."

"On my faith, then," said Bucklaw, "I had best go off just now, and leave my horse for him—Stay, stay, he comes, I hear a horse's feet."

"Are you sure there is only one!" said Craigengelt; "I fear there is a chase; I think I hear three or four galloping together—I am sure I hear more horses than one."

"Pooh, pooh, it is the wench of the house clattering to the well in her pattens. By my faith, Captain, you should give up both your captainship and your secret service, for you are as easily scared as a wild-goose. But here comes the Master alone, and looking as gloomy as a night in November."

The Master of Ravenswood entered the room accordingly, his cloak muffled around him, his arms folded, his looks stern, and at the same time dejected. He flung his cloak from him as he entered, threw himself upon a chair, and appeared sunk in a profound reverie.

"What has happened? What have you done?" was hastily demanded by Craigengelt and Bucklaw in the same moment.

"Nothing," was the short and sullen answer.

"Nothing? and left us, determined to call the old villain to account for all the injuries that you, we, and the country, have received at his hand? Have you seen him?"

"I have," replied the Master of Ravenswood.

"Seen him? and come away without settling scores which have been so long due?" said Bucklaw; "I would not have expected that at the hand of the Master of Ravenswood."

"No matter what you expected," replied Ravenswood; "it is not to you, sir, that I shall be disposed to render any reason for my conduct."

"Patience, Bucklaw," said Craigengelt, interrupting his companion, who seemed about to make an angry reply. "The Master has been interrupted in his purpose by some accident; but he must excuse the anxious curiosity of friends, who are devoted to his cause like you and me."

"Friends, Captain Craigengelt!" retorted Ravenswood, haughtily; "I am ignorant what familiarity has passed betwixt us to entitle you to use

that expression. I think our friendship amounts to this, that we agreed to leave Scotland together so soon as I should have visited the alienated mansion of my fathers, and had an interview with its present possessor — I will not call him proprietor."

"Very true, Master," answered Bucklaw; "and as we thought you had a mind to do something to put your neck in jeopardy, Craigie and I very courteously agreed to tarry for you, although ours might run some risk in consequence. As to Craigie, indeed, it does not very much signify, he had gallows written on his brow in the hour of his birth; but I should not like to discredit my parentage by coming to such an end in another man's cause."

"Gentlemen," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I am sorry if I have occasioned you any inconvenience, but I must claim the right of judging what is best for my own affairs, without rendering explanations to any one. I have altered my mind, and do not design to leave the country this season."

"Not to leave the country, Master!" exclaimed Craigengelt. "Not to go over, after all the trouble and expense I have incurred — after all the risk of discovery, and the expense of demurrage!"

"Sir," replied the Master of Ravenswood, "when I designed to leave this country in this haste, I made use of your obliging offer to procure me means of conveyance; but I do not recollect that I pledged myself to go off, if I found occasion to alter my mind. For your trouble on my account, I am sorry, and I thank you; your expense," he added, putting his hand into his pocket, "admits a more solid compensation — freight and demurrage are matters with which I am unacquainted, Captain Craigengelt, but take my purse and pay yourself according to your own conscience." And accordingly he tendered a purse with some gold in it to the soi-disant captain.

But here Bucklaw interposed in his turn. "Your fingers, Craigie, seem to itch for that same piece of green net-work," said he; "but I make my vow to God, that if they offer to close upon it, I will chop them off with my whinger. Since the Master has changed his mind, I suppose we need stay here no longer; but in the first place I beg leave to tell him ——"

"Tell him any thing you will," said Craigengelt, "if you will first allow me to state the inconveniences to which he will expose himself by quitting our society, to remind him of the obstacles to his remaining here, and of the difficulties attending his proper introduction at Versailles and Saint Germains, without the countenance of those who have established useful connections."

"Besides forfeiting the friendship," said Bucklaw, "of at least one man of spirit and honour."

"Gentlemen," said Ravenswood, "permit me once more to assure you, that you have been pleased to attach to our temporary connection more importance than I ever meant that it should have. When I repair to foreign courts, I shall not need the introduction of an intriguing adventurer, nor is it necessary for me to set value on the friendship of a hot-headed bully." With these words, and without waiting for an answer, he left the apartment, remounted his horse, and was heard to ride off.

"Mortblieu!" said Captain Craigengelt, "my recruit is lost!"

"Ay, Captain," said Bucklaw, "the salmon is off with hook and all. But I will after him, for I have had more of his insolence than I can well digest."

Craigengelt offered to accompany him; but Bucklaw replied, "No, no, Captain, keep you the cheek of the chimney-nook till I come back; it 's good sleeping in a haill skin.

> 'Little kens the auld wife that sits by the fire,
> How cauld the wind blaws in hurle-burle swire.'"

And singing as he went, he left the apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

> Now, Billy Bewick, keep good heart,
> And of thy talking let me be;
> But if thou art a man, as I am sure thou art,
> Come over the dike and fight with me.
> *Old Ballad.*

The Master of Ravenswood had mounted the ambling hackney which he before rode, on finding the accident which had happened to his led horse, and, for the animal's ease, was proceeding at a slow pace from the Tod's Den towards his old tower of Wolf's Crag, when he heard the galloping of a horse behind him, and, looking back, perceived that he was pursued by young Bucklaw, who had been delayed a few minutes in the pursuit by the irresistible temptation of giving the hostler at the Tod's Den some recipe for treating the lame horse. This brief delay he had made up by hard galloping, and now overtook the Master where the road traversed a waste moor. "Halt, sir," cried Bucklaw; "I am no political agent — no Captain Craigengelt, whose life is too important to be hazarded in defence of his honour. I am Frank Hayston of Bucklaw, and no man injures me by word, deed, sign, or look, but he must render me an account of it."

"This is all very well, Mr Hayston of Bucklaw," replied the Master of Ravenswood, in a tone the most calm and indifferent; "but I have no quarrel with you, and desire to have none. Our roads homeward, as well as our roads through life, lie in different directions; there is no occasion for us crossing each other."

"Is there not?" said Bucklaw, impetuously. "By Heaven! but I say that there is, though — you called us intriguing adventurers."

"Be correct in your recollection, Mr Hayston; it was to your companion only I applied that epithet, and you know him to be no better."

"And what then? He was my companion for the time, and no man shall insult my companion, right or wrong, while he is in my company."

"Then, Mr Hayston," replied Ravenswood, with the same composure, "you should choose your society better, or you are like to have much work in your capacity of their champion. Go home, sir, sleep, and have more reason in your wrath to-morrow."

"Not so, Master, you have mistaken your man; high airs and wise saws shall not carry it off thus. Besides, you termed me bully, and you shall retract the word before we part."

"Faith, scarcely," said Ravenswood, "unless

you shew me better reason for thinking myself mistaken than you are now producing."

"Then, Master," said Bucklaw, "though I should be sorry to offer it to a man of your quality, if you will not justify your incivility, or retract it, or name a place of meeting, you must here undergo the hard word and the hard blow."

"Neither will be necessary," said Ravenswood; "I am satisfied with what I have done to avoid an affair with you. If you are serious, this place will serve as well as another."

"Dismount, then, and draw," said Bucklaw, setting him an example. "I always thought and said you were a pretty man; I should be sorry to report you otherwise."

"You shall have no reason, sir," said Ravenswood, alighting, and putting himself into a posture of defence.

Their swords crossed, and the combat commenced with great spirit on the part of Bucklaw, who was well accustomed to affairs of the kind, and distinguished by address and dexterity at his weapon. In the present case, however, he did not use his skill to advantage; for, having lost temper at the cool and contemptuous manner in which the Master of Ravenswood had long refused, and at length granted him satisfaction, and urged by his impatience, he adopted the part of an assailant with inconsiderate eagerness. The Master, with equal skill, and much greater composure, remained chiefly on the defensive, and even declined to avail himself of one or two advantages afforded him by the eagerness of his adversary. At length, in a desperate lunge, which he followed with an attempt to close, Bucklaw's foot slipped, and he fell on the short grassy turf on which they were fighting. "Take your life, sir," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and mend it, if you can."

"It would be but a cobbled piece of work, I fear," said Bucklaw, rising slowly, and gathering up his sword, much less disconcerted with the issue of the combat than could have been expected from the impetuosity of his temper. "I thank you for my life, Master," he pursued. "There is my hand, I bear no ill-will to you, either for my bad luck or your better swordmanship."

The Master looked steadily at him for an instant, then extended his hand to him. — "Bucklaw," he said, "you are a generous fellow, and I have done you wrong. I heartily ask your pardon for the expression which offended you; it was hastily and incautiously uttered, and I am convinced it is totally misapplied."

"Are you indeed, Master?" said Bucklaw, his face resuming at once its natural expression of light-hearted carelessness and audacity; "that is more than I expected of you; for, Master, men say you are not ready to retract your opinions and your language."

"Not when I have well considered them," said the Master.

"Then you are a little wiser than I am, for I always give my friend satisfaction first and explanation afterwards. If one of us falls, all accounts are settled; if not, men are never so ready for peace as after war. — But what does that bawling brat of a boy want?" said Bucklaw. "I wish to Heaven he had come a few minutes sooner! and yet it must have been ended some time, and perhaps this way is as well as any other."

As he spoke, the boy he mentioned came up, cudgelling an ass, on which he was mounted, to the top of its speed, and sending, like one of Ossian's heroes, his voice before him, — "Gentlemen, — gentlemen, save yourselves! for the gudewife bade us tell ye there were folk in her house had taen Captain Craigengelt, and were seeking for Bucklaw, and that ye behoved to ride for it."

"By my faith, and that's very true, my man," said Bucklaw; "and there's a silver sixpence for your news, and I would give any man twice as much would tell me which way I should ride."

"That will I, Bucklaw," said Ravenswood; "ride home to Wolf's Crag with me. There are places in the old tower where you might lie hid were a thousand men to seek you.

"But that will bring you into trouble yourself, Master; and unless you be in the Jacobite scrape already, it is quite needless for me to drag you in."

"Not a whit; I have nothing to fear."

"Then I will ride with you blithely, for, to say the truth, I do not know the rendezvous that Craigie was to guide us to this night; and I am sure that, if he is taken, he will tell all the truth of me, and twenty lies of you, in order to save himself from the withie."

They mounted, and rode off in company accordingly, striking off the ordinary road, and holding their way by wild moorish unfrequented paths, with which the gentlemen were well acquainted from the exercise of the chase, but through which others would have had much difficulty in tracing their course. They rode for some time in silence, making such haste as the condition of Ravenswood's horse permitted, until night having gradually closed around them, they discontinued their speed, both from the difficulty of discovering their path, and from the hope that they were beyond the reach of pursuit or observation.

"And now that we have drawn bridle abit," said Bucklaw, "I would fain ask you a question, Master."

"Ask, and welcome," said Ravenswood, "but forgive my not answering it, unless I think proper."

"Well, it is simply this," answered his late antagonist, — "What, in the name of old Sathan, could make you, who stand so highly on your reputation, think for a moment of drawing up with such a rogue as Craigengelt, and such a scapegrace as folk call Bucklaw?"

"Simply, because I was desperate, and sought desperate associates."

"And what made you break off from us at the nearest?" again demanded Bucklaw.

"Because I had changed my mind," said the Master, "and renounced my enterprise, at least for the present. And now that I have answered your questions fairly and frankly, tell me what makes you associate with Craigengelt, so much beneath you both in birth and in spirit?"

"In plain terms," answered Bucklaw, "because I am a fool, who have gambled away my land in these times. My grand-aunt, Lady Girnington, has taen a new tack of life, I think, and I could only hope to get something by a change of government. Craigie was a sort of gambling acquaintance; he saw my condition; and, as the devil is always at one's elbow, told me fifty lies about his credentials from Versailles, and his interest at Saint Germains,

promised me a captain's commission at Paris, and I have been ass enough to put my thumb under his belt. I daresay, by this time, he has told a dozen pretty stories of me to the government. And this is what I have got by wine, women, and dice, cocks, dogs, and horses."

"Yes, Bucklaw," said the Master, "you have indeed nourished in your bosom the snakes that are now stinging you."

"That's home as well as true, Master," replied his companion; "but, by your leave, you have nursed in your bosom one great goodly snake that has swallowed all the rest, and is as sure to devour you as my half dozen are to make a meal on all that's left of Bucklaw, which is but what lies between bonnet and boot-heel."

"I must not," answered the Master of Ravenswood, "challenge the freedom of speech in which I have set example. What, to speak without a metaphor, do you call this monstrous passion, which you charge me with fostering?"

"Revenge, my good sir, revenge; which, if it be as gentlemanlike a sin as wine and wassail, with their *et cæteras*, is equally unchristian, and not so bloodless. It is better breaking a park-pale, to watch a doe or damsel, than to shoot an old man."

"I deny the purpose," said the Master of Ravenswood. "On my soul, I had no such intention; I meant but to confront the oppressor ere I left my native land, and upbraid him with his tyranny and its consequences. I would have stated my wrongs so that they would have shaken his soul within him."

"Yes," answered Bucklaw, "and he would have collared you, and cried help, and then you would have shaken the soul *out* of him, I suppose. Your very look and manner would have frightened the old man to death."

"Consider the provocation," answered Ravenswood—"consider the ruin and death procured and caused by his hard-hearted cruelty—an ancient house destroyed, an affectionate father murdered! Why, in our old Scottish days, he that sat quiet under such wrongs, would have been held neither fit to back a friend nor face a foe."

"Well, Master, I am glad to see that the devil deals as cunningly with other folk as he deals with me; for whenever I am about to commit any folly, he persuades me it is the most necessary, gallant, gentlemanlike thing on earth, and I am up to saddlegirths in the bog before I see that the ground is soft. And you, Master, might have turned out a murd—— a homicide, just out of pure respect for your father's memory."

"There is more sense in your language, Bucklaw," replied the Master, "than might have been expected from your conduct. It is too true, our vices steal upon us in forms outwardly as fair as those of the demons whom the superstitious represent as intriguing with the human race, and are not discovered in their native hideousness until we have clasped them in our arms."

"But we may throw them from us, though," said Bucklaw, "and that is what I shall think of doing one of those days,—that is, when old Lady Girnington dies."

"Did you ever hear the expression of the English divine?" said Ravenswood—"'Hell is paved with good intentions'—as much as to say, they are more often formed than executed."

"Well," replied Bucklaw, "but I will begin this blessed night, and have determined not to drink above one quart of wine, unless your claret be of extraordinary quality."

"You will find little to tempt you at Wolf's Crag," said the Master. "I know not that I can promise you more than the shelter of my roof; all, and more than all, our stock of wine and provisions was exhausted at the late occasion."

"Long may it be ere provision is needed for the like purpose," answered Bucklaw; "but you should not drink up the last flask at a dirge; there is ill luck in that."

"There is ill luck, I think, in whatever belongs to me," said Ravenswood. "But yonder is Wolf's Crag, and whatever it still contains is at your service."

The roar of the sea had long announced their approach to the cliffs, on the summit of which, like the nest of some sea-eagle, the founder of the fortalice had perched his eyry. The pale moon, which had hitherto been contending with flitting clouds, now shone out, and gave them a view of the solitary and naked tower, situated on a projecting cliff that beetled on the German Ocean. On three sides the rock was precipitous; on the fourth, which was that towards the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge, but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow court-yard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables, partly ruinous, and closed on the landward front by a low embattled wall, while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a greyish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight, like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant. A wilder or more disconsolate dwelling, it was perhaps difficult to conceive. The sombrous and heavy sound of the billows, successively dashing against the rocky beach at a profound distance beneath, was to the ear what the landscape was to the eye—a symbol of unvaried and monotonous melancholy, not unmingled with horror.

Although the night was not far advanced, there was no sign of living inhabitant about this forlorn abode, excepting that one, and only one, of the narrow and stanchelled windows which appeared at irregular heights and distances in the walls of the building, shewed a small glimmer of light.

"There," said Ravenswood, "sits the only male domestic that remains to the house of Ravenswood; and it is well that he does remain there, since otherwise, we had little hope to find either light or fire. But follow me cautiously; the road is narrow, and admits only one horse in front."

In effect, the path led along a kind of isthmus, at the peninsular extremity of which the tower was situated, with that exclusive attention to strength and security, in preference to every circumstance of convenience, which dictated to the Scottish barons the choice of their situations, as well as their style of building.

By adopting the cautious mode of approach recommended by the proprietor of this wild hold, they entered the court-yard in safety. But it was long ere the efforts of Ravenswood, though loudly exerted by knocking at the low-browed entrance, and repeated shouts to Caleb to open the gate and admit them, received any answer.

"The old man must be departed," he began to say, "or fallen into some fit; for the noise I have made would have waked the seven sleepers."

At length a timid and hesitating voice replied,—"Master — Master of Ravenswood, is it you?"

"Yes, it is I, Caleb; open the door quickly."

"But is it you in very blood and body? For I would sooner face fifty deevils as my master's ghaist, or even his wraith,— wherefore, aroint ye, if ye were ten times my master, unless ye come in bodily shape, lith and limb."

"It is I, you old fool," answered Ravenswood, "in bodily shape, and alive, save that I am half dead with cold."

The light at the upper window disappeared, and glancing from loop-hole to loop-hole in slow succession, gave intimation that the bearer was in the act of descending, with great deliberation, a winding staircase occupying one of the turrets which graced the angles of the old tower. The tardiness of his descent extracted some exclamations of impatience from Ravenswood, and several oaths from his less patient and more mercurial companion. Caleb again paused ere he unbolted the door, and once more asked, if they were men of mould that demanded entrance at this time of night?

"Were I near you, you old fool," said Bucklaw, "I would give you sufficient proofs of *my* bodily condition."

"Open the gate, Caleb," said his master, in a more soothing tone, partly from his regard to the ancient and faithful seneschal, partly perhaps because he thought that angry words would be thrown away, so long as Caleb had a stout iron-clenched oaken door betwixt his person and the speakers.

At length Caleb, with a trembling hand, undid the bars, opened the heavy door, and stood before them, exhibiting his thin grey hairs, bald forehead, and sharp high features, illuminated by a quivering lamp which he held in one hand, while he shaded and protected its flame with the other. The timorous courteous glance which he threw around him — the effect of the partial light upon his white hair and illumined features, might have made a good painting; but our travellers were too impatient for security against the rising storm, to permit them to indulge themselves in studying the picturesque. "Is it you, my dear master? is it you yourself, indeed?" exclaimed the old domestic. "I am wae ye suld hae stude waiting at your ain gate; but wha wad hae thought o' seeing ye sae sune, and a strange gentleman with a— (Here he exclaimed apart, as it were, and to some inmate of the tower, in a voice not meant to be heard by those in the court— Mysie — Mysie, woman! stir for dear life, and get the fire mended; take the auld three-legged stool, or ony thing that 's readiest that will make a lowe.) — I doubt we are but puirly provided, no expecting ye this some months, when doubtless ye wad hae been received conform till your rank, as gude right is; but natheless ——"

"Natheless, Caleb," said the Master, "we must have our horses put up, and ourselves too, the best way we can. I hope you are not sorry to see me sooner than you expected?"

"Sorry, my lord!—I am sure ye sall aye be my lord wi' honest folk, as your noble ancestors hae been these three hundred years, and never asked a whig's leave. Sorry to see the Lord of Ravenswood at ane o' his ain castles!—(Then again apart to his unseen associate behind the screen — Mysie, kill the brood-hen without thinking twice on it; let them care that come ahint.) — Nc to say it's our best dwelling," he added, turning to Bucklaw; "but just a strength for the Lord of Ravenswood to flee until,—that is, not to *flee*, but to retreat until in troublous times, like the present, when it was ill convenient for him to live farther in the country in ony of his better and mair principal manors; but, for its antiquity, maist folk think that the outside of Wolf's Crag is worthy of a large perusal."

"And you are determined we shall have time to make it," said Ravenswood, somewhat amused with the shifts the old man used to detain them without doors, until his confederate Mysie had made her preparations within.

"O, never mind the outside of the house, my good friend," said Bucklaw; "let 's see the inside, and let our horses see the stable, that 's all."

"O yes, sir—ay, sir,— unquestionably, sir — my lord and ony of his honourable companions ——"

"But our horses, my old friend — our horses; they will be dead-foundered by standing here in the cold after riding hard, and mine is too good to be spoiled; therefore, once more, our horses," exclaimed Bucklaw.

"True — ay — your horses — yes — I will call the grooms;" and sturdily did Caleb roar till the old tower rang again,—"John — William — Saunders! — The lads are gane out, or sleeping," he observed, after pausing for an answer, which he knew that he had no human chance of receiving. "A' gaes wrang when the Master 's out by; but I 'll take care o' your cattle mysell."

"I think you had better," said Ravenswood, "otherwise I see little chance of their being attended to at all."

"Whisht, my lord,— whisht, for God's sake," said Caleb, in an imploring tone, and apart to his master; "if ye dinna regard your ain credit, think on mine; we 'll hae hard eneugh wark to mak a decent night o 't, wi' a' the lees I can tell."

"Well, well, never mind," said his master; "go to the stable. There is hay and corn, I trust?"

"Ou ay, plenty of hay and corn;" this was uttered boldly and aloud, and, in a lower tone, "there was some half-fous o' aits, and some taits o' meadow-hay, left after the burial."

"Very well," said Ravenswood, taking the lamp from his domestic's unwilling hand, "I will shew the stranger up stairs myself."

"I canna think o' that, my lord;—if ye wad but have five minutes, or ten minutes, or, at maist, a quarter of an hour's patience, and look at the fine moonlight prospect of the Bass and North-Berwick Law till I sort the horses, I would marshal ye up, as reason is ye suld be marshalled, your lordship and your honourable visiter. And I hae lockit up the siller candlesticks, and the lamp is not fit ——"

"It will do very well in the meantime," said Ravenswood, "and you will have no difficulty for want of light in the stable, for, if I recollect, half the roof is off."

"Very true, my lord," replied the trusty adherent, and with ready wit instantly added, "and the lazy sclater loons have never come to put it on a' this while, your lordship."

"If I were disposed to jest at the calamities of my house," said Ravenswood, as he led the way up stairs, "poor old Caleb would furnish me with ample means. His passion consists in representing things about our miserable *menage*, not as they are, but as, in his opinion, they ought to be; and, to say the truth, I have been often diverted with the poor wretch's expedients to supply what he thought was essential for the credit of the family, and his still more generous apologies for the want of those articles for which his ingenuity could discover no substitute. But though the tower is none of the largest, I shall have some trouble without him to find the apartment in which there is a fire."

As he spoke thus, he opened the door of the hall. "Here, at least," he said, "there is neither hearth nor harbour."

It was indeed a scene of desolation. A large vaulted room, the beams of which, combined like those of Westminster-Hall, were rudely carved at the extremities, remained nearly in the situation in which it had been left after the entertainment at Allan Lord Ravenswood's funeral. Overturned pitchers, and black jacks, and pewter stoups, and flagons, still encumbered the large oaken table; glasses, those more perishable implements of conviviality, many of which had been voluntarily sacrificed by the guests in their enthusiastic pledges to favourite toasts, strewed the stone floor with their fragments. As for the articles of plate lent for the purpose by friends and kinsfolk, those had been carefully withdrawn so soon as the ostentatious display of festivity, equally unnecessary and strangely timed, had been made and ended. Nothing, in short, remained that indicated wealth; all the signs were those of recent wastefulness, and present desolation. The black cloth hangings, which on the late mournful occasion, replaced the tattered moth-eaten tapestries, had been partly pulled down, and, dangling from the wall in irregular festoons, disclosed the rough stone-work of the building, unsmoothed either by plaster or the chisel. The seats thrown down, or left in disorder, intimated the careless confusion which had concluded the mournful revel. "This room," said Ravenswood, holding up the lamp—"this room, Mr Hayston, was riotous when it should have been sad; it is a just retribution that it should now be sad when it ought to be cheerful."

They left this disconsolate apartment, and went up stairs, where, after opening one or two doors in vain, Ravenswood led the way into a little matted anteroom, in which, to their great joy, they found a tolerable good fire, which Mysie, by some such expedient as Caleb had suggested, had supplied with a reasonable quantity of fuel. Glad at the heart to see more of comfort than the castle had yet seemed to offer, Bucklaw rubbed his hands heartily over the fire, and now listened with more complacency to the apologies which the Master of Ravenswood offered. "Comfort," he said, "I cannot provide for you, for I have it not for myself; it is long since these walls have known it, if, indeed, they were ever acquainted with it. Shelter and safety, I think, I can promise you."

"Excellent matters, Master," replied Bucklaw, "and with a mouthful of food and wine, positively all I can require to-night."

"I fear," said the Master, "your supper will be a poor one: I hear the matter in discussion betwixt Caleb and Mysie. Poor Balderston is something deaf, amongst his other accomplishments, so that much of what he means should be spoken aside is overheard by the whole audience, and especially by those from whom he is most anxious to conceal his private manœuvres—Hark!"

They listened, and heard the old domestic's voice in conversation with Mysie to the following effect. "Just mak the best o't, mak the best o't, woman; it's easy to put a fair face on ony thing."

"But the auld brood-hen!—she'll be as teugh as bow-strings and bend leather!"

"Say ye made a mistake—say ye made a mistake, Mysie," replied the faithful seneschal, in a soothing and undertoned voice; "tak it a' on yourself; never let the credit o' the house suffer."

"But the brood-hen," remonstrated Mysie,—"ou, she's sitting some gate aneath the dais in the hall, and I am feared to gae in in the dark for the bogle; and if I didna see the bogle, I could as ill see the hen, for it's pit mirk, and there's no another light in the house, save that very blessed lamp whilk the Master has in his ain hand. And if I had the hen, she's to pu', and to draw, and to dress; how can I do that, and them sitting by the only fire we have?"

"Weel, weel, Mysie," said the butler, "bide ye there a wee, and I'll try to get the lamp wiled away frae them."

Accordingly, Caleb Balderston entered the apartment, little aware that so much of his by-play had been audible there. "Well, Caleb, my old friend, is there any chance of supper?" said the Master of Ravenswood.

"*Chance* of supper, your lordship?" said Caleb, with an emphasis of strong scorn at the implied doubt,—"How should there be ony question of that, and us in your lordship's house?—Chance of supper, indeed!—But ye'll no be for butcher meat? There's walth o' fat poultry, ready either for spit or brander—The fat capon, Mysie!" he added, calling out as boldly as if such a thing had been in existence.

"Quite unnecessary," said Bucklaw, who deemed himself bound in courtesy to relieve some part of the anxious butler's perplexity, "if you have any thing cold, or a morsel of bread."

"The best of bannocks!" exclaimed Caleb, much relieved; "and for cauld meat, a' that we hae is cauld eneugh,—howbeit maist of the cauld meat and pastry was gien to the puir folk after the ceremony of interment, as gude reason was; nevertheless ——"

"Come, Caleb," said the Master of Ravenswood, "I must cut this matter short. This is the young laird of Bucklaw; he is under hiding, and therefore, you know——"

"He'll be nae nicer than your lordship's honour, I'se warrant," answered Caleb, cheerfully, with a nod of intelligence; "I am sorry that the gentleman is under distress, but I am blithe that he canna say muckle again our house-keeping, for I believe his ain pinches may match ours;—no that we are pinched, thank God," he added, retracting the admission which he had made in his first burst of joy, "but nae doubt we are waur aff than we hae been, or suld be. And for eating,—what signifies telling a lee? there's just the hinder end of the mutton-ham that has been but three times on the table, and

the nearer the bane the sweeter, as your honours weel ken; and — there's the heel of the ewe milk kebbuck, wi' a bit of nice butter, and — and — that's a' that's to trust to." And with great alacrity he produced his slender stock of provisions, and placed them with much formality upon a small round table betwixt the two gentlemen, who were not deterred either by the homely quality or limited quantity of the repast from doing it full justice. Caleb in the meanwhile waited on them with grave officiousness, as if anxious to make up, by his own respectful assiduity, for the want of all other attendance.

But, alas! how little on such occasions can form, however anxiously and scrupulously observed, supply the lack of substantial fare? Bucklaw, who had eagerly eaten a considerable portion of the thrice-sacked mutton-ham, now began to demand ale.

"I wadna just presume to recommend our ale," said Caleb; "the maut was ill made, and there was awfu' thunner last week; but siccan water as the Tower well has ye'll seldom see, Bucklaw, and that I 'se engage for."

"But if your ale is bad, you can let us have some wine," said Bucklaw, making a grimace at the mention of the pure element which Caleb so earnestly recommended.

"Wine!" answered Caleb, undauntedly, "eneugh of wine; it was but twa days syne — wae's me for the cause — there was as much wine drunk in this house as would have floated a pinnace. There never was lack of wine at Wolf's Crag."

"Do fetch us some then," said his master, "instead of talking about it." And Caleb boldly departed.

Every expended butt in the old cellar did he set a-tilt, and shake with the desperate expectation of collecting enough of the grounds of claret to fill the large pewter measure which he carried in his hand. Alas! each had been too devoutly drained; and, with all the squeezing and manœuvring which his craft as a butler suggested, he could only collect about half a quart that seemed presentable. Still, however, Caleb was too good a general to renounce the field without a stratagem to cover his retreat. He undauntedly threw down an empty flagon, as if he had stumbled at the entrance of the apartment; called upon Mysie to wipe up the wine that had never been spilt, and placing the other vessel on the table, hoped there was still enough left for their honours. There was indeed; for even Bucklaw, a sworn friend to the grape, found no encouragement to renew his first attack on the vintage of Wolf's Crag, but contented himself, however reluctantly, with a draught of fair water. Arrangements were now made for his repose; and as the secret chamber was assigned for this purpose, it furnished Caleb with a first-rate and most plausible apology for all deficiencies of furniture, bedding, &c.

"For wha," said he, "would have thought of the secret chaumer being needed? it has not been used since the time of the Gowrie Conspiracy, and I durst never let a woman ken of the entrance to it, or your honour will allow that it wad not hae been a secret chaumer lang."

CHAPTER VIII.

The hearth in hall was black and dead,
No board was dight in bower within,
Nor merry bowl nor welcome bed;
"Here 's sorry cheer," quoth the Heir of Linne.
Old Ballad.

The feelings of the prodigal Heir of Linne, as expressed in that excellent old song, when, after dissipating his whole fortune, he found himself the deserted inhabitant of "the lonely lodge," might perhaps have some resemblance to those of the Master of Ravenswood in his deserted mansion of Wolf's Crag. The Master, however, had this advantage over the spendthrift in the legend, that if he was in similar distress, he could not impute it to his own imprudence. His misery had been bequeathed to him by his father, and, joined to his high blood, and to a title which the courteous might give, or the churlish withhold at their pleasure, it was the whole inheritance he had derived from his ancestry.

Perhaps this melancholy, yet consolatory reflection, crossed the mind of the unfortunate young nobleman with a breathing of comfort. Favourable to calm reflection, as well as to the Muses, the morning, while it dispelled the shades of night, had a composing and sedative effect upon the stormy passions by which the Master of Ravenswood had been agitated on the preceding day. He now felt himself able to analyse the different feelings by which he was agitated, and much resolved to combat and to subdue them. The morning, which had arisen calm and bright, gave a pleasant effect even to the waste moorland view which was seen from the castle on looking to the landward; and the glorious ocean, crisped with a thousand rippling waves of silver, extended on the other side, in awful yet complacent majesty, to the verge of the horizon. With such scenes of calm sublimity the human heart sympathizes even in its most disturbed moods, and deeds of honour and virtue are inspired by their majestic influence.

To seek out Bucklaw in the retreat which he had afforded him was the first occupation of the Master, after he had performed, with a scrutiny unusually severe, the important task of self-examination. "How now, Bucklaw?" was his morning's salutation — "how like you the couch in which the exiled Earl of Angus once slept in security, when he was pursued by the full energy of a king's resentment?"

"Umph!" returned the sleeper awakened; "I have little to complain of where so great a man was quartered before me, only the mattress was of the hardest, the vault somewhat damp, the rats rather more mutinous than I would have expected from the state of Caleb's larder; and if there had been shutters to that grated window, or a curtain to the bed, I should think it, upon the whole, an improvement in your accommodations."

"It is, to be sure, forlorn enough," said the Master, looking around the small vault; "but if you will rise and leave it, Caleb will endeavour to find you a better breakfast than your supper of last night."

"Pray, let it be no better," said Bucklaw, getting up, and endeavouring to dress himself as well as the obscurity of the place would permit, — "let it, I say, be no better, if you mean me to persevere in

my proposed reformation. The very recollection of Caleb's beverage has done more to suppress my longing to open the day with a morning-draught than twenty sermons would have done. And you, Master, have you been able to give battle valiantly to your bosom-snake? You see I am in the way of smothering my vipers one by one."

"I have commenced the battle, at least, Bucklaw, and I have had a fair vision of an angel who descended to my assistance," replied the Master.

"Wo's me!" said his guest, "no vision can I expect, unless my aunt, Lady Girnington, should betake herself to the tomb; and then it would be the substance of her heritage rather than the appearance of her phantom that I should consider as the support of my good resolutions. But this same breakfast, Master,—does the deer that is to make the pasty run yet on foot, as the ballad has it?"

"I will inquire into that matter," said his entertainer; and leaving the apartment, he went in search of Caleb, whom, after some difficulty, he found in an obscure sort of dungeon, which had been in former times the buttery of the castle. Here the old man was employed busily in the doubtful task of burnishing a pewter flagon until it should take the hue and semblance of silver-plate. "I think it may do—I think it might pass, if they winna bring it ower muckle in the light o' the window!" were the ejaculations which he muttered from time to time, as if to encourage himself in his undertaking, when he was interrupted by the voice of his master. "Take this," said the Master of Ravenswood, "and get what is necessary for the family." And with these words he gave to the old butler the purse which had on the preceding evening so narrowly escaped the fangs of Craigengelt. The old man shook his silvery and thin locks, and looked with an expression of the most heartfelt anguish at his master as he weighed in his hand the slender treasure, and said in a sorrowful voice, "And is this a' that's left?"

"All that is left at present," said the Master, affecting more cheerfulness than perhaps he really felt, "is just the green purse and the wee pickle gowd, as the old song says; but we shall do better one day, Caleb."

"Before that day comes," said Caleb, "I doubt there will be an end of an auld sang, and an auld serving-man to boot. But it disna become me to speak that gate to your honour, and you looking sae pale. Tak back the purse, and keep it to be making a show before company; for if your honour would just tak a bidding, and be whiles taking it out afore folk and putting it up again, there's naebody would refuse us trust, for a' that's come and gane yet."

"But, Caleb," said the Master, "I still intend to leave this country very soon, and I desire to do so with the reputation of an honest man, leaving no debt behind me, at least of my own contracting."

"And gude right ye suld gang away as a true man, and so ye shall; for auld Caleb can tak the wyte of whatever is taen on for the house, and then it will be a' just ae man's burden; and I will live just as weel in the tolbooth as out of it, and the credit of the family will be a' safe and sound."

The Master endeavoured, in vain, to make Caleb comprehend, that the butler's incurring the responsibility of debts in his own person, would rather add to than remove the objections which he had to their being contracted. He spoke to a premier, too busy in devising ways and means to puzzle himself with refuting the arguments offered against their justice or expediency.

"There's Eppie Sma'trash will trust us for ale," said Caleb to himself; "she has lived a' her life under the family—and maybe wi' a soup brandy—I canna say for wine—she is but a lone woman, and gets her claret by a runlet at a time—but I'll work a wee drap out o' her by fair means or foul. For doos, there's the doocot—there will be poultry amang the tenants, though Luckie Chirnside says she has paid the kain twice ower. We'll mak shift an it like your honour—we'll mak shift—keep your heart abune, for the house sall haud its credit as lang as auld Caleb is to the fore."

The entertainment which the old man's exertions of various kinds enabled him to present to the young gentlemen for three or four days, was certainly of no splendid description, but it may readily be believed it was set before no critical guests; and even the distresses, excuses, evasions, and shifts of Caleb, afforded amusement to the young men, and added a sort of interest to the scrambling and irregular style of their table. They had indeed occasion to seize on every circumstance that might serve to diversify or enliven time, which otherwise passed away so heavily.

Bucklaw, shut out from his usual field-sports and joyous carouses by the necessity of remaining concealed within the walls of the castle, became a joyless and uninteresting companion. When the Master of Ravenswood would no longer fence or play at shovel-board—when he himself had polished to the extremity the coat of his palfrey with brush, currycomb, and hair-cloth—when he had seen him eat his provender, and gently lie down in his stall, he could hardly help envying the animal's apparent acquiescence in a life so monotonous. "The stupid brute," he said, "thinks neither of the race-ground or the hunting-field, or his green paddock at Bucklaw, but enjoys himself as comfortably when haltered to the rack in this ruinous vault, as if he had been foaled in it; and I, who have the freedom of a prisoner at large, to range through the dungeons of this wretched old tower, can hardly, betwixt whistling and sleeping, contrive to pass away the hour till dinner-time."

And with this disconsolate reflection, he wended his way to the bartizan or battlements of the tower, to watch what objects might appear on the distant moor, or to pelt, with pebbles and pieces of lime, the sea-mews and cormorants which established themselves incautiously within the reach of an idle young man.

Ravenswood, with a mind incalculably deeper and more powerful than that of his companion, had his own anxious subjects of reflection, which wrought for him the same unhappiness that sheer ennui and want of occupation inflicted on his companion. The first sight of Lucy Ashton had been less impressive than her image proved to be upon reflection. As the depth and violence of that revengeful passion, by which he had been actuated in seeking an interview with the father, began to abate by degrees, he looked back on his conduct towards the daughter as harsh and unworthy towards a female of rank and beauty. Her looks of grateful acknowledgment, her words of affec-

tionate courtesy, had been repelled with something which approached to disdain ; and if the Master of Ravenswood had sustained wrongs at the hand of Sir William Ashton, his conscience told him they had been unhandsomely resented towards his daughter. When his thoughts took this turn of self-reproach, the recollection of Lucy Ashton's beautiful features, rendered yet more interesting by the circumstances in which their meeting had taken place, made an impression upon his mind at once soothing and painful. The sweetness of her voice, the delicacy of her expressions, the vivid glow of her filial affection, imbittered his regret at having repulsed her gratitude with rudeness, while, at the same time, they placed before his imagination a picture of the most seducing sweetness.

Even young Ravenswood's strength of moral feeling and rectitude of purpose at once increased the danger of cherishing these recollections, and the propensity to entertain them. Firmly resolved as he was to subdue, if possible, the predominating vice in his character, he admitted with willingness —nay, he summoned up in his imagination, the ideas by which it could be most powerfully counteracted ; and, while he did so, a sense of his own harsh conduct towards the daughter of his enemy naturally induced him, as if by way of recompense, to invest her with more of grace and beauty than perhaps she could actually claim.

Had any one at this period told the Master of Ravenswood that he had so lately vowed vengeance against the whole lineage of him whom he considered, not unjustly, as author of his father's ruin and death, he might at first have repelled the charge as a foul calumny ; yet, upon serious self-examination, he would have been compelled to admit, that it had, at one period, some foundation in truth, though, according to the present tone of his sentiments, it was difficult to believe that this had really been the case.

There already existed in his bosom two contradictory passions,—a desire to revenge the death of his father, strangely qualified by admiration of his enemy's daughter. Against the former feeling he had struggled, until it seemed to him upon the wane ; against the latter he used no means of resistance, for he did not suspect its existence. That this was actually the case, was chiefly evinced by his resuming his resolution to leave Scotland. Yet, though such was his purpose, he remained day after day at Wolf's Crag, without taking measures for carrying it into execution. It is true, that he had written to one or two kinsmen, who resided in a distant quarter of Scotland, and particularly to the Marquis of A——, intimating his purpose ; and when pressed upon the subject by Bucklaw, he was wont to allege the necessity of waiting for their reply, especially that of the Marquis, before taking so decisive a measure.

The Marquis was rich and powerful ; and although he was suspected to entertain sentiments unfavourable to the government established at the Revolution, he had nevertheless address enough to head a party in the Scottish Privy Council, connected with the high church faction in England, and powerful enough to menace those to whom the Lord Keeper adhered, with a probable subversion of their power. The consulting with a personage of such importance was a plausible excuse, which Ravenswood used to Bucklaw, and probably to himself, for continuing his residence at Wolf's Crag ; and it was rendered yet more so by a general report which began to be current, of a probable change of ministers and measures in the Scottish administration. These rumours, strongly asserted by some, and as resolutely denied by others, as their wishes or interest dictated, found their way even to the ruinous Tower of Wolf's Crag, chiefly through the medium of Caleb the butler, who, among his other excellencies, was an ardent politician, and seldom made an excursion from the old fortress to the neighbouring village of Wolf's-hope, without bringing back what tidings were current in the vicinity.

But if Bucklaw could not offer any satisfactory objections to the delay of the Master in leaving Scotland, he did not the less suffer with impatience the state of inaction to which it confined him ; and it was only the ascendency which his new companion had acquired over him, that induced him to submit to a course of life so alien to his habits and inclinations.

"You were wont to be thought a stirring active young fellow, Master," was his frequent remonstrance ; "yet here you seem determined to live on and on like a rat in a hole, with this trifling difference, that the wiser vermin chooses a hermitage where he can find food at least ; but as for us, Caleb's excuses become longer as his diet turns more spare, and I fear we shall realize the stories they tell of the sloth, —we have almost eat up the last green leaf on the plant, and have nothing left for it but to drop from the tree and break our necks."

"Do not fear," said Ravenswood ; "there is a fate watches for us, and we too have a stake in the revolution that is now impending, and which already has alarmed many a bosom."

"What fate—what revolution?" inquired his companion. "We have had one revolution too much already, I think."

Ravenswood interrupted him by putting into his hands a letter.

"O," answered Bucklaw, "my dream's out—I thought I heard Caleb this morning pressing some unfortunate fellow to a drink of cold water, and assuring him it was better for his stomach in the morning than ale or brandy."

"It was my Lord of A——'s courier," said Ravenswood, "who was doomed to experience his ostentatious hospitality, which I believe ended in sour beer and herrings—Read, and you will see the news he has brought us."

"I will as fast as I can," said Bucklaw ; "but I am no great clerk, nor does his lordship seem to be the first of scribes."

The reader will peruse, in a few seconds, by the aid of our friend Ballantyne's types, what took Bucklaw a good half hour in perusal, though assisted by the Master of Ravenswood. The tenor was as follows :—

"*Right Honourable our Cousin,*

"Our hearty commendations premised, these come to assure you of the interest which we take in your welfare, and in your purposes towards its augmentation. If we have been less active in shewing forth our effective good-will towards you than, as a loving kinsman and blood-relative, we would willingly have desired, we request that you will impute it to lack of opportunity to shew our

good-liking, not to any coldness of our will. Touching your resolution to travel in foreign parts, as at this time we hold the same little advisable, in respect that your ill-willers may, according to the custom of such persons, impute motives for your journey, whereof, although we know and believe you to be as clear as ourselves, yet natheless their words may find credence in places where the belief in them may much prejudice you, and which we should see with more unwillingness and displeasure than with means of remedy.

"Having thus, as becometh our kindred, given you our poor mind on the subject of your journeying forth of Scotland, we would willingly add reasons of weight, which might materially advantage you and your father's house, thereby to determine you to abide at Wolf's Crag, until this harvest season shall be passed over. But what sayeth the proverb, *verbum sapienti*, — a word is more to him that hath wisdom than a sermon to a fool. And albeit we have written this poor scroll with our own hand, and are well assured of the fidelity of our messenger, as him that is many ways bounden to us, yet so it is, that sliddery ways crave wary walking, and that we may not peril upon paper matters which we would gladly impart to you by word of mouth. Wherefore, it was our purpose to have prayed you heartily to come to this barren Highland country to kill a stag, and to treat of the matters which we are now more painfully inditing to you anent. But commodity does not serve at present for such our meeting, which, therefore, shall be deferred intil sic time as we may in all mirth rehearse those things whereof we now keep silence. Meantime, we pray you to think that we are, and will still be, your good kinsman and well-wisher, waiting but for times of whilk we do, as it were, entertain a twilight prospect, and appear and hope to be also your effectual well-doer. And in which hope we heartily write ourself,

"Right Honourable,
"Your loving cousin,
"A ———.

"Given from our poor
house of B ——, &c."

Superscribed — "For the right honourable, and our honoured kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood. — These, with haste, haste, post haste — ride and run until these be delivered."

"What think you of this epistle, Bucklaw?" said the Master, when his companion had hammered out all the sense, and almost all the words of which it consisted.

"Truly, that the Marquis's meaning is as great a riddle as his manuscript. He is really in much need of Wit's Interpreter, or the Complete Letter Writer, and were I you, I would send him a copy by the bearer. He writes you very kindly to remain wasting your time and your money in this vile, stupid, oppressed country, without so much as offering you the countenance and shelter of his house. In my opinion, he has some scheme in view in which he supposes you can be useful, and he wishes to keep you at hand, to make use of you when it ripens, reserving the power of turning you adrift, should his plot fail in the concoction."

"His plot? — then you suppose it is a treasonable business," answered Ravenswood.

"What else can it be?" replied Bucklaw; "the Marquis has been long suspected to have an eye to Saint Germains."

"He should not engage me rashly in such an adventure," said Ravenswood; "when I recollect the times of the first and second Charles, and of the last James, truly I see little reason, that, as a man or a patriot, I should draw my sword for their descendants."

"Humph!" replied Bucklaw; "so you have set yourself down to mourn over the crop-eared dogs, whom honest Claver'se treated as they deserved?"

"They first gave the dogs an ill-name, and then hanged them," replied Ravenswood. "I hope to see the day when justice shall be open to Whig and Tory, and when these nick-names shall only be used among coffee-house politicians, as slut and jade are among apple-women, as cant terms of idle spite and rancour."

"That will not be in our days, Master — the iron has entered too deeply into our sides and our souls."

"It will be, however, one day," replied the Master; "men will not always start at these nick-names as at a trumpet-sound. As social life is better protected, its comforts will become too dear to be hazarded without some better reason than speculative politics."

"It is fine talking," answered Bucklaw; "but my heart is with the old song, —

> 'To see good corn upon the rigs,
> And a gallows built to hang the Whigs,
> And the right restored where the right should be,
> O, that is the thing that would wanton me.'"

"You may sing as loudly as you will, *cantabit vacuus*," — answered the Master; "but I believe the Marquis is too wise, at least too wary, to join you in such a burden. I suspect he alludes to a revolution in the Scottish Privy Council, rather than in the British kingdoms."

"O, confusion to your state tricks!" exclaimed Bucklaw, "your cold calculating manœuvres, which old gentlemen in wrought nightcaps and furred gowns execute like so many games at chess, and displace a treasurer or lord commissioner as they would take a rook or a pawn. Tennis for my sport, and battle for my earnest! My racket and my sword for my plaything and bread-winner! And you, Master, so deep and considerate as you would seem, you have that within you makes the blood boil faster than suits your present humour of moralizing on political truths. You are one of those wise men who see every thing with great composure till their blood is up, and then — wo to any one who should put them in mind of their own prudential maxims!"

"Perhaps," said Ravenswood, "you read me more rightly than I can myself. But to think justly will certainly go some length in helping me to act so. But, hark! I hear Caleb tolling the dinner-bell."

"Which he always does with the more sonorous grace, in proportion to the meagreness of the cheer which he has provided," said Bucklaw; "as if that infernal clang and jangle, which will one day bring the belfry down the cliff, could convert a starved hen into a fat capon, and a blade-bone of mutton into a haunch of venison."

"I wish we may be so well off as your worst

conjectures surmise, Bucklaw, from the extreme solemnity and ceremony with which Caleb seems to place on the table that solitary covered dish."

"Uncover, Caleb! uncover, for Heaven's sake!" said Bucklaw; "let us have what you can give us without preface — Why, it stands well enough, man," he continued, addressing impatiently the ancient butler, who, without reply, kept shifting the dish, until he had at length placed it with mathematical precision in the very midst of the table.

"What have we got here, Caleb?" inquired the Master in his turn.

"Ahem! sir, ye suld have known before; but his honour the Laird of Bucklaw is so impatient," answered Caleb, still holding the dish with one hand, and the cover with the other, with evident reluctance to disclose the contents.

"But what is it, a God's name — not a pair of clean spurs, I hope, in the Border fashion of old times!"

"Ahem! ahem!" reiterated Caleb, "your honour is pleased to be facetious — natheless, I might presume to say it was a convenient fashion, and used, as I have heard, in an honourable and thriving family. But touching your present dinner, I judged that this being Saint Magdalene's Eve, who was a worthy queen of Scotland in her day, your honours might judge it decorous, if not altogether to fast, yet only to sustain nature with some slight refection, as ane saulted herring or the like." And, uncovering the dish, he displayed four of the savoury fishes which he mentioned, adding, in a subdued tone, "that they were no just common herring neither, being every ane melters, and sauted with uncommon care by the housekeeper (poor Mysie) for his honour's especial use."

"Out upon all apologies!" said the Master, "let us eat the herrings, since there is nothing better to be had — but I begin to think with you, Bucklaw, that we are consuming the last green leaf, and that, in spite of the Marquis's political machinations, we must positively shift camp for want of forage, without waiting the issue of them."

CHAPTER IX.

> Ay, and when huntsmen wind the merry horn,
> And from its covert starts the fearful prey,
> Who, warm'd with youth's blood in his swelling veins,
> Would, like a lifeless clod, outstretched lie,
> Shut out from all the fair creation offers?
>
> *Ethwald, Scene I. Act I.*

Light meals procure light slumbers; and therefore it is not surprising, that, considering the fare which Caleb's conscience, or his necessity, assuming, as will sometimes happen, that disguise, had assigned to the guests of Wolf's Crag, their slumbers should have been short.

In the morning Bucklaw rushed into his host's apartment with a loud halloo, which might have awaked the dead.

"Up! up! in the name of Heaven — the hunters are out, the only piece of sport I have seen this month; and you lie here, Master, on a bed that has little to recommend it, except that it may be something softer than the stone floor of your ancestor's vault."

"I wish," said Ravenswood, raising his head peevishly, "you had forborne so early a jest, Mr Hayston — it is really no pleasure to lose the very short repose which I had just begun to enjoy, after a night spent in thoughts upon fortune far harder than my couch, Bucklaw."

"Pshaw, pshaw!" replied his guest; "get up — get up — the hounds are abroad — I have saddled the horses myself, for old Caleb was calling for grooms and lackeys, and would never have proceeded without two hours' apology, for the absence of men who were a hundred miles off. — Get up, Master — I say the hounds are out — get up, I say — the hunt is up." And off ran Bucklaw.

"And I say," said the Master, rising slowly, "that nothing can concern me less. Whose hounds come so near to us?"

"The Honourable Lord Bittlebrains'," answered Caleb, who had followed the impatient Laird of Bucklaw into his master's bedroom, "and truly I ken nae title they have to be yowling and howling within the freedoms and immunities of your lordship's right of free forestry."

"Nor I, Caleb," replied Ravenswood, "excepting that they have bought both the lands and the right of forestry, and may think themselves entitled to exercise the rights they have paid their money for."

"It may be sae, my lord," replied Caleb; "but it 's no gentleman's deed of them to come here and exercise such like right, and your lordship living at your ain castle of Wolf's Crag. Lord Bittlebrains would do weel to remember what his folk have been."

"And we what we now are," said the Master, with suppressed bitterness of feeling. "But reach me my cloak, Caleb, and I will indulge Bucklaw with a sight of this chase. It is selfish to sacrifice my guest's pleasure to my own."

"Sacrifice!" echoed Caleb, in a tone which seemed to imply the total absurdity of his master making the least concession in deference to any one — "Sacrifice, indeed! — but I crave your honour's pardon — and whilk doublet is it your pleasure to wear?"

"Any one you will, Caleb — my wardrobe, I suppose, is not very extensive."

"Not extensive!" echoed his assistant; "when there is the grey and silver that your lordship bestowed on Hew Hildebrand, your outrider — and the French velvet that went with my lord your father — (be gracious to him!) — my lord your father's auld wardrobe to the puir friends of the family, — and the drap-de-berry ——"

"Which I gave to you, Caleb, and which, I suppose, is the only dress we have any chance to come at, except that I wore yesterday — pray, hand me that, and say no more about it."

"If your honour has a fancy," replied Caleb, "and doubtless it's a sad-coloured suit, and you are in mourning — nevertheless, I have never tried on the drap-de-berry — ill wad it become me — and your honour having no change of claiths at this present — and it 's weel brushed, and as there are leddies down yonder —"

"Ladies!" said Ravenswood; "and what ladies, pray?"

"What do I ken, your lordship? — looking down at them from the Warden's Tower, I could but see them glent by wi' their bridles ringing, and

their feathers fluttering, like the court of Elfland."

"Well, well, Caleb," replied the Master, "help me on with my cloak, and hand me my sword-belt. —What clatter is that in the court-yard."

"Just Bucklaw bringing out the horses," said Caleb, after a glance through the window, "as if there werena men eneugh in the castle, or as if I couldna serve the turn of ony o' them that are out o' the gate."

"Alas! Caleb, we should want little, if your ability were equal to your will," replied his master.

"And I hope your lordship disna want that muckle," said Caleb; "for, considering a' things, I trust we support the credit of the family as weel as things will permit of, — only Bucklaw is aye sae frank and sae forward. — And there he has brought out your lordship's palfrey, without the saddle being decored wi' the broidered sumpter-cloth! and I could have brushed it in a minute."

"It is all very well," said his master, escaping from him, and descending the narrow and steep winding staircase, which led to the court-yard.

"It *may* be a' very weel," said Caleb, somewhat peevishly; "but if your lordship wad tarry a bit, I will tell you what will *not* be very weel."

"And what is that?" said Ravenswood, impatiently, but stopping at the same time.

"Why, just that ye suld speer ony gentleman hame to dinner; for I canna mak anither fast on a feast day, as when I cam ower Bucklaw wi' Queen Margaret — and, to speak truth, if your lordship wad but please to cast yoursell in the way of dining wi' Lord Bittlebrains, I 'se warrand I wad cast about brawly for the morn; or if, stead o' that, ye wad but dine wi' them at the change-house, ye might mak your shift for the lawing; ye might say ye had forgot your purse — or that the carline awed ye rent, and that ye wad allow it in the settlement."

"Or any other lie that came uppermost, I suppose?" said his master. "Good by, Caleb; I commend your care for the honour of the family." And, throwing himself on his horse, he followed Bucklaw, who, at the manifest risk of his neck, had begun to gallop down the steep path which led from the tower, as soon as he saw Ravenswood have his foot in the stirrup.

Caleb Balderston looked anxiously after them, and shook his thin grey locks—"And I trust that they will come to no evil — but they have reached the plain, and folk cannot say but that the horse are hearty and in spirits."

Animated by the natural impetuosity and fire of his temper, young Bucklaw rushed on with the careless speed of a whirlwind. Ravenswood was scarce more moderate in his pace, for his was a mind unwillingly roused from contemplative inactivity, but which, when once put into motion, acquired a spirit of forcible and violent progression. Neither was his eagerness proportioned in all cases to the motive of impulse, but might be compared to the speed of a stone, which rushes with like fury down the hill, whether it was first put in motion by the arm of a giant or the hand of a boy. He felt, therefore, in no ordinary degree, the headlong impulse of the chase, a pastime so natural to youth of all ranks, that it seems rather to be an inherent passion in our animal nature, which levels all differences of rank and education, than an acquired habit of rapid exercise.

The repeated bursts of the French horn, which was then always used for the encouragement and direction of the hounds — the deep, though distant baying of the pack — the half-heard cries of the huntsmen — the half-seen forms which were discovered, now emerging from glens which crossed the moor, now sweeping over its surface, now picking their way where it was impeded by morasses; and, above all, the feeling of his own rapid motion, animated the Master of Ravenswood, at least for the moment, above the recollections of a more painful nature by which he was surrounded. The first thing which recalled him to those unpleasing circumstances, was feeling that his horse, notwithstanding all the advantages which he received from his rider's knowledge of the country, was unable to keep up with the chase. As he drew his bridle up with the bitter feeling, that his poverty excluded him from the favourite recreation of his forefathers, and indeed, their sole employment when not engaged in military pursuits, he was accosted by a well-mounted stranger, who, unobserved, had kept near him during the earlier part of his career.

"Your horse is blown," said the man, with a complaisance seldom used in a hunting-field. "Might I crave your honour to make use of mine?"

"Sir," said Ravenswood, more surprised than pleased at such a proposal, "I really do not know how I have merited such a favour at a stranger's hands."

"Never ask a question about it, Master," said Bucklaw, who, with great unwillingness, had hitherto reined in his own gallant steed, not to outride his host and entertainer. "Take the goods the gods provide you, as the great John Dryden says — or stay — here, my friend, lend me that horse; I see you have been puzzled to rein him up this half hour. I 'll take the devil out of him for you. Now, Master, do you ride mine, which will carry you like an eagle."

And throwing the rein of his own horse to the Master of Ravenswood, he sprung upon that which the stranger resigned to him, and continued his career at full speed.

"Was ever so thoughtless a being!" said the Master; "and you, my friend, how could you trust him with your horse?"

"The horse," said the man, "belongs to a person who will make your honour, or any of your honourable friends, most welcome to him, flesh and fell."

"And the owner's name is —— ?" asked Ravenswood.

"Your honour must excuse me, you will learn that from himself. — If you please to take your friend's horse, and leave me your galloway, I will meet you after the fall of the stag, for I hear they are blowing him at bay."

"I believe, my friend, it will be the best way to recover your good horse for you," answered Ravenswood; and mounting the nag of his friend Bucklaw, he made all the haste in his power to the spot where the blast of the horn announced that the stag's career was nearly terminated.

These jovial sounds were intermixed with the huntsmen's shouts of "Hyke a Talbot! Hyke a Teviot! now, boys, now!" and similar cheering halloos of the olden hunting-field, to which the

impatient yelling of the hounds, now close on the object of their pursuit, gave a lively and unremitting chorus. The straggling riders began now to rally towards the scene of action, collecting from different points as to a common centre.

Bucklaw kept the start which he had gotten, and arrived first at the spot, where the stag, incapable of sustaining a more prolonged flight, had turned upon the hounds, and, in the hunter's phrase, was at bay. With his stately head bent down, his sides white with foam, his eyes strained betwixt rage and terror, the hunted animal had now in his turn become an object of intimidation to his pursuers. The hunters came up one by one, and watched an opportunity to assail him with some advantage, which, in such circumstances, can only be done with caution. The dogs stood aloof and bayed loudly, intimating at once eagerness and fear, and each of the sportsmen seemed to expect that his comrade would take upon him the perilous task of assaulting and disabling the animal. The ground, which was a hollow in the common or moor, afforded little advantage for approaching the stag unobserved; and general was the shout of triumph when Bucklaw, with the dexterity proper to an accomplished cavalier of the day, sprang from his horse, and dashing suddenly and swiftly at the stag, brought him to the ground by a cut on the hind leg with his short hunting-sword. The pack, rushing in upon their disabled enemy, soon ended his painful struggles, and solemnized his fall with their clamour — the hunters, with their horns and voices, whooping and blowing a *mort*, or death-note, which resounded far over the billows of the adjacent ocean.

The hunstman then withdrew the hounds from the throttled stag, and on his knee presented his knife to a fair female form, on a white palfrey, whose terror or perhaps her compassion, had till then kept her at some distance. She wore a black silk riding-mask, which was then a common fashion, as well for preserving the complexion from sun and rain, as from an idea of decorum, which did not permit a lady to appear barefaced while engaged in a boisterous sport, and attended by a promiscuous company. The richness of her dress, however, as well as the mettle and form of her palfrey, together with the silvan compliment paid to her by the huntsman, pointed her out to Bucklaw as the principal person in the field. It was not without a feeling of pity, approaching even to contempt, that this enthusiastic hunter observed her refuse the huntsman's knife, presented to her for the purpose of making the first incision in the stag's breast, and thereby discovering the quality of the venison. He felt more than half inclined to pay his compliments to her; but it had been Bucklaw's misfortune, that his habits of life had not rendered him familiarly acquainted with the higher and better classes of female society, so that, with all his natural audacity, he felt sheepish and bashful when it became necessary to address a lady of distinction.

Taking unto himself heart of grace, (to use his own phrase,) he did at length summon up resolution enough to give the fair huntress good time of the day, and trust that her sport had answered her expectation. Her answer was very courteously and modestly expressed, and testified some gratitude to the gallant cavalier, whose exploit had terminated the chase so adroitly, when the hounds and huntsmen seemed somewhat at a stand.

"Uds daggers and scabbard, madam," said Bucklaw, whom this observation brought at once upon his own ground, "there is no difficulty or merit in that matter at all, so that a fellow is not too much afraid of having a pair of antlers in his guts. I have hunted at force five hundred times, madam; and I never yet saw the stag at bay, by land or water, but I durst have gone roundly in on him. It is all use and wont, madam; and I'll tell you, madam, for all that, it must be done with good heed and caution; and you will do well, madam, to have your hunting-sword both right sharp and double-edged, that you may strike either forehanded or back-handed, as you see reason, for a hurt with a buck's horn is a perilous and somewhat venomous matter."

"I am afraid, sir," said the young lady, and her smile was scarce concealed by her vizard, "I shall have little use for such careful preparation."

"But the gentleman says very right for all that, my lady," said an old huntsman, who had listened to Bucklaw's harangue with no small edification; "and I have heard my father say, who was a forester at the Cabrach, that a wild boar's gaunch is more easily healed than a hurt from the deer's horn, for so says the old woodman's rhyme,—

'If thou be hurt with horn of hart, it brings thee to thy bier;
But tusk of boar shall leeches heal — thereof have lesser fear.'"

"An I might advise," continued Bucklaw, who was now in his element, and desirous of assuming the whole management, "as the hounds are surbated and weary, the head of the stag should be cabbaged in order to reward them; and if I may presume to speak, the huntsman, who is to break up the stag, ought to drink to your good ladyship's health a good lusty bicker of ale, or a tass of brandy; for if he breaks him up without drinking, the venison will not keep well."

This very agreeable prescription received, as will be readily believed, all acceptation from the hunstman, who, in requital, offered to Bucklaw the compliment of his knife, which the young lady had declined. This polite proffer was seconded by his mistress.

"I believe, sir," she said, withdrawing herself from the circle, "that my father, for whose amusement Lord Bittlebrains' hounds have been out to-day, will readily surrender all care of these matters to a gentleman of your experience."

Then, bending gracefully from her horse, she wished him good morning, and, attended by one or two domestics, who seemed immediately attached to her service, retired from the scene of action, to which Bucklaw, too much delighted with an opportunity of displaying his wood-craft to care about man or woman either, paid little attention; but was soon stript to his doublet, with tucked-up sleeves, and naked arms up to the elbows in blood and grease, slashing, cutting, hacking, and hewing with the precision of Sir Tristrem himself, and wrangling and disputing with all around him concerning nombles, briskets, flankards, and ravenbones, then usual terms of the art of hunting, or of butchery, whichever the reader chooses to call it, which are now probably antiquated.

When Ravenswood, who followed a short space behind his friend, saw that the stag had fallen, his

temporary ardour for the chase gave way to that feeling of reluctance which he endured, at encountering in his fallen fortunes the gaze whether of equals or inferiors. He reined up his horse on the top of a gentle eminence, from which he observed the busy and gay scene beneath him, and heard the whoops of the huntsmen gaily mingled with the cry of the dogs, and the neighing and trampling of the horses. But these jovial sounds fell sadly on the ear of the ruined nobleman. The chase, with all its train of excitations, has ever since feudal times been accounted the almost exclusive privilege of the aristocracy, and was anciently their chief employment in times of peace. The sense that he was excluded by his situation from enjoying the silvan sport, which his rank assigned to him as a special prerogative, and the feeling that new men were now exercising it over the downs, which had been jealously reserved by his ancestors for their own amusement, while he, the heir of the domain, was fain to hold himself at a distance from their party, awakened reflections calculated to depress deeply a mind like Ravenswood's, which was naturally contemplative and melancholy. His pride, however, soon shook off this feeling of dejection, and it gave way to impatience upon finding that his volatile friend Bucklaw seemed in no hurry to return with his borrowed steed, which Ravenswood, before leaving the field, wished to see restored to the obliging owner. As he was about to move towards the group of assembled huntsmen, he was joined by a horseman, who like himself had kept aloof during the fall of the deer.

This personage seemed stricken in years. He wore a scarlet cloak, buttoning high upon his face, and his hat was unlooped and slouched, probably by way of defence against the weather. His horse, a strong and steady palfrey, was calculated for a rider who proposed to witness the sport of the day, rather than to share it. An attendent waited at some distance, and the whole equipment was that of an elderly gentleman of rank and fashion. He accosted Ravenswood very politely, but not without some embarrassment.

"You seem a gallant young gentleman sir," he said, "and yet appear as indifferent to this brave sport as if you had my load of years on your shoulders."

"I have followed the sport with more spirit on other occasions," replied the Master; "at present, late events in my family must be my apology—and besides," he added, "I was but indifferently mounted at the beginning of the sport."

"I think," said the stranger, "one of my attendants had the sense to accommodate your friend with a horse."

"I was much indebted to his politeness and yours," replied Ravenswood. "My friend is Mr Hayston of Bucklaw, whom I daresay you will be sure to find in the thick of the keenest sportsmen. He will return your servant's horse, and take my pony in exchange—and will add," he concluded, turning his horse's head from the stranger, "his best acknowledgments to mine for the accommodation."

The Master of Ravenswood having thus expressed himself, began to move homeward, with the manner of one who has taken leave of his company. But the stranger was not so to be shaken off. He turned his horse at the same time, and rode in the same direction so near to the Master, that, without outriding him, which the formal civility of the time, and the respect due to the stranger's age and recent civility would have rendered improper, he could not easily escape from his company.

The stranger did not long remain silent. "This, then," he said, "is the ancient Castle of Wolf's Crag, often mentioned in the Scottish records," looking to the old tower, then darkening under the influence of a stormy cloud, that formed its background; for at the distance of a short mile, the chase having been circuitous, had brought the hunters nearly back to the point which they had attained, when Ravenswood and Bucklaw had set forward to join them.

Ravenswood answered this observation with a cold and distant assent.

"It was, as I have heard," continued the stranger, unabashed by his coldness, "one of the most early possessions of the honourable family of Ravenswood."

"Their earliest possession," answered the Master, "and probably their latest."

'I—I—I should hope not, sir," answered the stranger, clearing his voice with more than one cough, and making an effort to overcome a certain degree of hesitation,—"Scotland knows what she owes to this ancient family, and remembers their frequent and honourable achievements. I have little doubt, that, were it properly represented to her majesty, that so ancient and noble a family were subjected to dilapidation—I mean to decay—means might be found, *ad re-ædificandum antiquam domum*——"

"I will save you the trouble, sir, of discussing this point farther," interrupted the Master, haughtily. "I am the heir of that unfortunate house—I am the Master of Ravenswood. And you, sir, who seem to be a gentleman of fashion and education, must be sensible, that the next mortification after being unhappy, is the being loaded with undesired commiseration."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the elder horseman—"I did not know—I am sensible I ought not to have mentioned—nothing could be farther from my thoughts than to suppose——"

"There are no apologies necessary, sir," answered Ravenswood, "for here, I suppose, our roads separate, and I assure you that we part in perfect equanimity on my side."

As speaking these words, he directed his horse's head towards a narrow causeway, the ancient approach to Wolf's Crag, of which it might be truly said, in the words of the Bard of Hope, that

> "Frequented by few was the grass-cover'd road,
> Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,
> To his hills that encircle the sea."

But, ere he could disengage himself from his companion, the young lady we have already mentioned came up to join the stranger, followed by her servants.

"Daughter," said the stranger to the masked damsel, "this is the Master of Ravenswood."

It would have been natural that the gentleman should have replied to this introduction; but there was something in the graceful form and retiring modesty of the female to whom he was thus presented, which not only prevented him from inquiring to whom, and by whom, the annunciation had been made, but which even for the time

struck him absolutely mute. At this moment the cloud which had long lowered above the height on which Wolf's Crag is situated, and which now, as it advanced, spread itself in darker and denser folds both over land and sea, hiding the distant objects, and obscuring those which were nearer, turning the sea to a leaden complexion, and the heath to a darker brown, began now, by one or two distant peals, to announce the thunders with which it was fraught; while two flashes of lightning, following each other very closely, shewed in the distance the grey turrets of Wolf's Crag, and, more nearly, the rolling billows of the ocean, crested suddenly with red and dazzling light.

The horse of the fair huntress shewed symptoms of impatience and restiveness, and it became impossible for Ravenswood, as a man or a gentleman, to leave her abruptly to the care of an aged father or her menial attendants. He was, or believed himself, obliged in courtesy to take hold of her bridle, and assist her in managing the unruly animal. While he was thus engaged, the old gentleman observed that the storm seemed to increase — that they were far from Lord Bittlebrains', whose guests they were for the present — and that he would be obliged to the Master of Ravenswood to point him the way to the nearest place of refuge from the storm. At the same time he cast a wistful and embarrassed look towards the Tower of Wolf's Crag, which seemed to render it almost impossible for the owner to avoid offering an old man and a lady, in such an emergency, the temporary use of his house. Indeed, the condition of the young huntress made this courtesy indispensable; for, in the course of the services which he rendered, he could not but perceive that she trembled much, and was extremely agitated, from her apprehensions, doubtless, of the coming storm.

I know not if the Master of Ravenswood shared her terrors, but he was not entirely free from something like a similar disorder of nerves, as he observed, "The Tower of Wolf's Crag has nothing to offer beyond the shelter of its roof, but if that can be acceptable at such a moment — " he paused, as if the rest of the invitation stuck in his throat. But the old gentleman, his self-constituted companion, did not allow him to recede from the invitation, which he had rather suffered to be implied than directly expressed.

"The storm," said the stranger, "must be an apology for waving ceremony — his daughter's health was weak — she had suffered much from a recent alarm — he trusted their intrusion on the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality would not be altogether unpardonable in the circumstances of the case — his child's safety must be dearer to him than ceremony."

There was no room to retreat. The Master of Ravenswood led the way, continuing to keep hold of the lady's bridle to prevent her horse from starting at some unexpected explosion of thunder. He was not so bewildered in his own hurried reflections, but that he remarked, that the deadly paleness which had occupied her neck and temples, and such of her features as the riding-mask left exposed, gave place to a deep and rosy suffusion; and he felt with embarrassment that a flush was by tacit sympathy excited in his own cheeks. The stranger, with watchfulness which he disguised under apprehensions for the safety of his daughter, continued to observe the expression of the Master's countenance as they ascended the hill to Wolf's Crag. When they stood in front of that ancient fortress, Ravenswood's emotions were of a very complicated description; and as he led the way into the rude court-yard, and halloo'd to Caleb to give attendance, there was a tone of sternness, almost of fierceness, which seemed somewhat alien from the courtesies of one who is receiving honoured guests.

Caleb came; and not the paleness of the fair stranger at the first approach of the thunder, nor the paleness of any other person, in any other circumstances whatever, equalled that which overcame the thin cheeks of the disconsolate seneschal, when he beheld this accession of guests to the castle, and reflected that the dinner hour was fast approaching. "Is he daft?" he muttered to himself, — "is he clean daft a' thegither, to bring lords and leddies, and a host of folk behint them, and twal-o-clock chappit?" Then approaching the Master, he craved pardon for having permitted the rest of his people to go out to see the hunt, observing, that "they wad never think of his lordship coming back till mirk night, and that he dreaded they might play the truant."

"Silence, Balderston!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "your folly is unseasonable. — Sir and madam," he said, turning to his guests, "this old man, and a yet older and more imbecile female domestic, form my whole retinue. Our means of refreshing you are more scanty than even so miserable a retinue, and a dwelling so dilapidated, might seem to promise you; but, such as they may chance to be, you may command them."

The elder stranger, struck with the ruined and even savage appearance of the Tower, rendered still more disconsolate by the lowering and gloomy sky, and perhaps not altogether unmoved by the grave and determined voice in which their host addressed them, looked round him anxiously, as if he half repented the readiness with which he had accepted the offered hospitality. But there was now no opportunity of receding from the situation in which he had placed himself.

As for Caleb, he was so utterly stunned by his master's public and unqualified acknowledgment of the nakedness of the land, that for two minutes he could only mutter within his hebdomadal beard, which had not felt the razor for six days, "He 's daft — clean daft — red wud, and awa wi 't! But deil hae Caleb Balderston," said he, collecting his powers of invention and resource, "if the family shall lose credit, if he were as mad as the seven wise masters!" He then boldly advanced, and in spite of his master's frowns and impatience, gravely asked, "if he should not serve up some slight refection for the young leddy, and a glass of tokay, or old sack — or ——"

"Truce to this ill-timed foolery," said the Master, sternly, — "put the horses into the stable, and interrupt us no more with your absurdities."

"Your honour's pleasure is to be obeyed aboon a' things," said Caleb; "nevertheless, as for the sack and tokay, which it is not your noble guests' pleasure to accept ——"

But here the voice of Bucklaw, heard even above the clattering of hoofs and braying of horns with which it mingled, announced that he was scaling the pathway to the Tower at the head of the greater part of the gallant hunting train.

"The deil be in me," said Caleb, taking heart in spite of this new invasion of Philistines, "if they shall beat me yet! The hellicat ne'er-do-weel!—to bring such a crew here, that will expect to find brandy as plenty as ditch-water, and he kenning sae absolutely the case in whilk we stand for the present! But I trow, could I get rid of thae gaping gowks of flunkies that hae won into the court-yard at the back of their betters, as mony a man gets preferment, I could make a' right yet."

The measures which he took to execute this dauntless resolution, the reader shall learn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard him call;
Gramercy they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they had been drinking all!
COLERIDGE'S "*Rime of the Ancient Mariner.*"

HAYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chase had taken their route towards Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion; a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderston, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

"Praise be blest!" said Caleb to himself, "ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi' yestreen's wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither."

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who eat and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shewn his two principal guests into the Tower, and then commenced his operations.

"I think," he said to the stranger menials, "that as they are bringing the stag's head to the castle in all honour, we, who are in-dwellers, should receive them at the gate."

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in compliance with this insidious hint, than, one folding-door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the other with a clang, which resounded from donjon vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the castle was never on any account opened during meal-times—that his honour, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner—that there was excellent brandy at the hostler-wife's at Wolf's-hope down below—and he held out some obscure hint that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderston hesitated to carry finesse so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lackeys, who endeavoured to demonstrate that their right of re-admission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humour to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged, but convenient pertinacity, which is armed against all conviction, and deaf to all reasoning.

Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

"If the king on the throne were at the gate," he declared, "his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant."

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself. But to this, also, Caleb turned a deaf ear.

"He 's as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow the lad Bucklaw," he said; "but the deil of ony master's face he shall see till he has sleepit and waken'd on 't. He 'll ken himsell better the morn's morning. It sets the like o' him to be bringing a crew of drunken hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought." And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

But another person, of whose presence Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress. This was the principal domestic of the stranger—a man of trust and consequence—the same who, in the hunting-field, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions towards the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, "that it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittlebrains' retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent change-house, and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing."

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the

inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep path-way, the niggard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than silvan licence, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him a man of worth and judgment in more favourable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood — he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the Tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the jovialty of his usual life — he felt, with great indignation, his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the change-house of the village of Wolf's-hope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigengelt, who immediately came up to him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with cordiality, and no sooner had Craigengelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

"Long life to you, Bucklaw!" he exclaimed; "there's life for honest folk in this bad world yet!"

The Jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

"Ay, and for others besides, it seems," answered Bucklaw; "otherways, how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?"

"Who — I? — I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained — all settled with the honest old drivellers yonder of Auld Reekie — Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely."

"Pshaw!" answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, "none of your cogging gibberish — tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?"

"Free and safe as a whig bailie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting Presbyterian minister in his own pulpit — and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer."

"Then I suppose you call yourself my friend, Captain Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw.

"Friend?" replied Craigengelt, "[my cock of the pit? why, I am the very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say — hand and glove — bark and tree — thine to life and death!"

"I'll try that in a moment," answered Bucklaw. "Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it. Lend me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows' throats in the first place, and then ——"

"Two pieces? twenty are at thy service, my lad — and twenty to back them."

"Ay — say you so?" said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. "Craigengelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce know how to believe that — or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either."

"*L'un n'empeche pas l'autre*," said Craigengelt, "touch and try — the gold is good as ever was weighed."

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw's hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, "that he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money;" and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, "Come along, my lads — all is at my cost."

"Long life to Bucklaw!" shouted the men of the chase.

"And confusion to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry as a drum-head," added another, by way of corollary.

"The house of Ravenswood was ance a gude and an honourable house in this land," said an old man, "but it's lost its credit this day, and the Master has shewn himself no better than a greedy cullion."

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they revelled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was as happy in leading the revels, as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes, in fooling him up to the top of his bent; and having some low humour, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.

A very different scene was in the meantime passing in the Tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the court-yard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle.

The indefatigable Balderston, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had, by degrees, cleared this desolate apartment of the confused relics of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labour, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained, could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still farther to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manner, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if

about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

"You have nothing to fear, sir," said Ravenswood, gravely; "this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks," he added, "it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honoured my ruined dwelling?"

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to present, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavoured to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanour, it was obvious, that in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance — the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape — and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron, or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to struggle under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He laboured to restrain his desire to speak, while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt it necessary to say. At length Ravenswood's impatience broke the bounds he had imposed upon it.

"I perceive," he said, "that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf's Crag."

"I had hoped it was unnecessary," said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist; "and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances — unhappy circumstances, let me call them — rendered self-introduction peculiarly awkward."

"And am I not then," said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, "to consider the honour of this visit as purely accidental?"

"Let us distinguish a little," said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; "this is an honour which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man, to whom she owes her life and I mine."

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain towards Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combated, the deep passions which arose within him, at beholding his father's foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His looks glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution, of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding-dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

"Lucy, my love," he said, raising her and leading her towards Ravenswood, "lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced."

"If he will condescend to accept it," was all that Lucy uttered; but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other — Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy — a blush, which attached more consequence by far than was usual to such ceremony, still mantled on Lucy Ashton's beautiful cheek, when the apartment was suddenly illuminated by a flash of lightning, which seemed absolutely to swallow the darkness of the hall. Every object might have been for an instant seen distinctly. The slight and half-sinking form of Lucy Ashton, the well-proportioned and stately figure of Ravenswood, his dark features, and the fiery, yet irresolute expression of his eyes, — the old arms and scutcheons which hung on the walls of the apartment, were for an instant distinctly visible to the Keeper by a strong red brilliant glare of light. Its disappearance was almost instantly followed by a burst of thunder, for the storm-cloud was very near the castle; and the peal was so sudden and dreadful, that the old tower rocked to its foundation, and every inmate concluded it was falling upon them. The soot, which had not been disturbed for centuries, showered down the huge tunnelled chimneys — lime and dust flew in clouds from the wall; and, whether the lightning had actually struck the castle, or whether, through the violent concussion of the air, several heavy stones were hurled from the mouldering battlements into the roaring sea beneath, it might seem as if the ancient founder of the castle were bestriding the thunder-storm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.

The consternation was general, and it required the efforts of both the Lord Keeper and Ravenswood to keep Lucy from fainting. Thus was the Master a second time engaged in the most delicate and dangerous of all tasks, that of affording support to a beautiful and helpless being, who, as seen before in a similar situation, had already become a favourite of his imagination, both when awake and when slumbering. If the Genius of the House really condemned a union betwixt the Master and his fair guest, the means by which he expressed his sentiments were as unhappily chosen as if he had been a mere mortal. The train of little attentions, absolutely necessary to soothe the young lady's mind, and aid her in composing her spirits, neces-

sarily threw the Master of Ravenswood into such an intercourse with her father, as was calculated, for the moment at least, to break down the barrier of feudal enmity which divided them. To express himself churlishly, or even coldly, towards an old man, whose daughter (and *such* a daughter) lay before them, overpowered with natural terror — and all this under his own roof — the thing was impossible; and by the time that Lucy, extending a hand to each, was able to thank them for their kindness, the Master felt that his sentiments of hostility towards the Lord Keeper were by no means those most predominant in his bosom.

The weather, her state of health, the absence of her attendants, all prevented the possibility of Lucy Ashton renewing her journey to Bittlebrains-House, which was full five miles distant; and the Master of Ravenswood could not but, in common courtesy, offer the shelter of his roof for the rest of the day and for the night. But a flush of less soft expression, a look much more habitual to his features, resumed predominance when he mentioned how meanly he was provided for the entertainment of his guests.

"Do not mention deficiencies," said the Lord Keeper, eager to interrupt him and prevent his resuming an alarming topic; "you are preparing to set out for the Continent, and your house is probably for the present unfurnished. All this we understand; but if you mention inconvenience, you will oblige us to seek accommodations in the hamlet."

As the Master of Ravenswood was about to reply, the door of the hall opened, and Caleb Balderston rushed in.

CHAPTER XI.

> Let them have meat enough, woman — half a hen;
> There be old rotten pilchards — put them off too;
> 'Tis but a little new anointing of them,
> And a strong onion, that confounds the savour.
>
> *Love's Pilgrimage.*

The thunderbolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of Majors-Domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, "Heavens be praised! — this comes to hand like the bowl of a pint-stoup." He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and muttering, "How the deil cam he in? — but deil may care — Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney-neuk for? Come here — or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can — it 's a' ye 're gude for — I say, ye auld deevil, skirl — skirl — louder — louder, woman — gar the gentles hear ye in the ha' — I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay — down wi' that crockery —"

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthenware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie's hysterical terrors of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. "He has dung down a' the bits o' pigs, too — the only thing we had left to had a soup milk — and he has spilt the hatted kitt that was for the Master's dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man's gaen clean and clear wud wi' the thunner!"

"Haud your tongue, ye b——!" said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, "a 's provided now — dinner and a' thing — the thunner's done a' in a clap of a hand!"

"Puir man, he 's muckle astray," said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm; "I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again."

"Here, ye auld doited deevil," said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which had seemed insurmountable; "keep the strange man out of the kitchen — swear the thunner came down the chimney, and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed — beef — bacon — kid — lark — leveret — wild fowl — venison, and what not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expenses. I 'll awa up to the ha' — make a' the confusion ye can — but be sure ye keep out the strange servant."

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm, and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

"Wull a wins! — such a misfortune to befa' the House of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it!"

"What is the matter, Caleb?" said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn; "has any part of the castle fallen?"

"Castle fa'an? — na' but the sute's fa'an, and the thunner's come right down the kitchen-lumm, and the things are a' lying here awa, there awa, like the Laird o' Hotchpotch's lands — and wi' brave guests of honour and quality to entertain" — a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter — "and naething left in the house fit to present for dinner — or for supper either, for aught that I can see!"

"I verily believe you, Caleb," said Ravenswood, drily.

Balderston here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half-imploring countenance, and edged towards him as he repeated, "It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something added to your honour's ordinary course of fare — *petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre — three courses and the fruit."

"Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool!" said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first, observing that the Lord Keeper's servant entered the apartment, and spoke apart with his master, he took the same opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear — "Haud your tongue, for Heaven's sake, sir — if

it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lees for the honour of the family, it's nae business o' yours—and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'se be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, deil but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke!"

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on, who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers,—"No muckle provision—might hae served four persons of honour,—first course, capons in white broth—roast kid—bacon with reverence,—second course, roasted leveret—butter crabs—a veal florentine,—third course, black-cock—it's black eneugh now wi' the sute—plumdamas—a tart—a flam—and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits—and that's a'," he said seeing the impatience of his master; "that's just a' was o't—forby the apples and pears."

Miss Ashton had by degrees gathered her spirits, so far as to pay some attention to what was going on; and observing the restrained impatience of Ravenswood, contrasted with the peculiar determination of manner with which Caleb detailed his imaginary banquet, the whole struck her as so ridiculous, that, despite every effort to the contrary, she burst into a fit of incontrollable laughter, in which she was joined by her father, though with more moderation, and finally by the Master of Ravenswood himself, though conscious that the jest was at his own expense. Their mirth—for a scene which we read with little emotion often appears extremely ludicrous to the spectators—made the old vault ring again. They ceased—they renewed—they ceased—they renewed again their shouts of laughter! Caleb, in the meantime, stood his ground with a grave, angry, and scornful dignity, which greatly enhanced the ridicule of the scene, and the mirth of the spectators.

At length, when the voices, and nearly the strength of the laughers, were exhausted, he exclaimed, with very little ceremony, "The deil's in the gentles! they breakfast sae lordly, that the loss of the best dinner ever cook pat fingers to, makes them as merry as if it were the best jeest in a' George Buchanan. If there was as little in your honours' wames, as there is in Caleb Balderston's, less caickling wad serve ye on sic a gravaminous subject."

Caleb's blunt expression of resentment again awakened the mirth of the company, which, by the way, he regarded not only as an aggression upon the dignity of the family, but a special contempt of the eloquence with which he himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses;—"a description of a dinner," as he said afterwards to Mysie, "that wad hae made a fu' man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it!"

"But," said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, "are all these delicacies so totally destroyed, that no scrap can be collected?"

"Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yoursell, and look into our kitchen—the cookmaid in the trembling exies—the gude vivers lying a' about—beef—capons, and white broth—florentine and flams—bacon, wi' reverence, and a' the sweet confections and whim-whams? ye'll see them a', my leddy—that is," said he, correcting himself, "ye'll no see ony of them now, for the cook has soopit them up, as was weel her part; but ye'll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour-milk as ony thing else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is.—This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haill dishes, china and silver thegither?"

The Lord Keeper's domestic, though a statesman's attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

"I think, Mr Butler," said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood,—"I think, that were you to retire with my servant Lockhard—he has travelled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency."

"His honour kens,"—said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort, than brooked the aid of a brother in commission,—"his honour kens weel I need nae counsellor, when the honour of the house is concerned."

"I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb," said his master; "but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we can no more dine, than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly, Mr Lockhard's talent may consist in finding some substitute for that, which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been."

"Your honour is pleased to be facetious," said Caleb, "but I am sure, that for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf's-hope, I could dine forty men,—no that the folk there deserve your honour's custom. They hae been ill advised in the matter of the duty-eggs and butter, I winna deny that."

"Do go consult together," said the Master, "go down to the village, and do the best you can. We must not let our guests remain without refreshment, to save the honour of a ruined family. And here, Caleb—take my purse; I believe that will prove your best ally."

"Purse? purse, indeed?" quoth Caleb, indignantly flinging out of the room,—"what suld I do wi' your honour's purse, on your ain grund? I trust we are no to pay for our ain?"

The servants left the hall; and the door was no sooner shut, than the Lord Keeper began to apologize for the rudeness of his mirth; and Lucy to hope she had given no pain or offence to the kind-hearted faithful old man.

"Caleb and I must both learn, madam, to undergo with good humour, or at least with patience, the ridicule which everywhere attaches itself to poverty."

"You do yourself injustice, Master of Ravenswood, on my word of honour," answered his elder guest. "I believe I know more of your affairs than you do yourself, and I hope to shew you, that I am interested in them; and that—in short, that your prospects are better than you apprehend. In the meantime, I can conceive nothing so respectable, as the spirit which rises above misfortune, and prefers honourable privations to debt or dependence."

Whether from fear of offending the delicacy, or

awakening the pride of the Master, the Lord Keeper made these allusions with an appearance of fearful and hesitating reserve, and seemed to be afraid that he was intruding too far, in venturing to touch, however lightly, upon such a topic, even when the Master had led to it. In short, he appeared at once pushed on by his desire of appearing friendly, and held back by the fear of intrusion. It was no wonder that the Master of Ravenswood, little acquainted as he then was with life, should have given this consummate courtier credit for more sincerity than was probably to be found in a score of his cast. He answered, however, with reserve, that he was indebted to all who might think well of him; and, apologizing to his guests, he left the hall, in order to make such arrangements for their entertainment as circumstances admitted.

Upon consulting with old Mysie, the accommodations for the night were easily completed, as indeed they admitted of little choice. The Master surrendered his apartment for the use of Miss Ashton, and Mysie, (once a person of consequence,) dressed in a black satin gown which had belonged of yore to the Master's grandmother, and had figured in the court-balls of Henrietta Maria, went to attend her as lady's maid. He next inquired after Bucklaw, and understanding he was at the change-house with the huntsmen and some companions, he desired Caleb to call there, and acquaint him how he was circumstanced at Wolf's Crag—to intimate to him that it would be most convenient if he could find a bed in the hamlet, as the elder guest must necessarily be quartered in the secret chamber, the only spare bedroom which could be made fit to receive him. The Master saw no hardship in passing the night by the hall-fire, wrapt in his campaign-cloak; and to Scottish domestics of the day, even of the highest rank, nay, to young men of family or fashion, on any pinch, clean straw, or a dry hay-loft, was always held good night-quarters.

For the rest, Lockhard had his master's orders to bring some venison from the inn, and Caleb was to trust to his wits for the honour of his family. The Master, indeed, a second time held out his purse; but, as it was in sight of the strange servant, the butler thought himself obliged to decline what his fingers itched to clutch. "Couldna he hae slippit it gently into my hand?" said Caleb—"but his honour will never learn how to bear himsell in siccan cases."

Mysie, in the meantime, according to a uniform custom in remote places in Scotland, offered the strangers the produce of her little dairy, "while better meat was getting ready." And according to another custom, not yet wholly in desuetude, as the storm was now drifting off to leeward, the Master carried the Keeper to the top of his highest tower to admire a wide and waste extent of view, and to "weary for his dinner."

CHAPTER XII.

"Now dame," quoth he, "Je vous dis sans doute,
Had I nought of a capon but the liver,
And of your white bread nought but a shiver,
And after that a roasted pigge's head,
(But I ne wold for me no beast were dead,)
Then had I with you homely sufferaunce."

CHAUCER, *Sumner's Tale.*

It was not without some secret misgivings that Caleb set out upon his exploratory expedition. In fact, it was attended with a treble difficulty. He dared not tell his master the offence which he had that morning given to Bucklaw (just for the honour of the family)—he dared not acknowledge he had been too hasty in refusing the purse—and, thirdly, he was somewhat apprehensive of unpleasant consequences upon his meeting Hayston under the impression of an affront, and probably by this time under the influence also of no small quantity of brandy.

Caleb, to do him justice, was as bold as any lion where the honour of the family of Ravenswood was concerned; but his was that considerate valour which does not delight in unnecessary risks. This, however, was a secondary consideration; the main point was to veil the indigence of the house-keeping at the castle, and to make good his vaunt of the cheer which his resources could procure, without Lockhard's assistance, and without supplies from his master. This was as prime a point of honour with him, as with the generous elephant with whom we have already compared him, who, being overtasked, broke his skull through the desperate exertions which he made to discharge his duty, when he perceived they were bringing up another to his assistance.

The village which they now approached had frequently afforded the distressed butler resources upon similar emergencies: but his relations with it had been of late much altered.

It was a little hamlet which straggled along the side of a creek formed by the discharge of a small brook into the sea, and was hidden from the castle, to which it had been in former times an appendage, by the intervention of the shoulder of a hill forming a projecting headland. It was called Wolf's-hope, (*i. e.* Wolf's Haven,) and the few inhabitants gained a precarious subsistence by manning two or three fishing-boats in the herring season, and smuggling gin and brandy during the winter months. They paid a kind of hereditary respect to the Lords of Ravenswood; but, in the difficulties of the family, most of the inhabitants of Wolf's-hope had contrived to get feu-rights[1] to their little possessions, their huts, kail-yards, and rights of commonty, so that they were emancipated from the chains of feudal dependence, and free from the various exactions with which, under every possible pretext, or without any pretext at all, the Scottish landlords of the period, themselves in great poverty, were wont to harass their still poorer tenants at will. They might be, on the whole, termed independent, a circumstance peculiarly galling to Caleb, who had been wont to exercise over them the same sweeping authority in levying contribu-

[1] That is, absolute rights of property for the payment of a sum annually, which is usually a trifle in such cases as are alluded to in the text.

tions which was exercised in former times in England, when "the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of an hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country, and deposited their spoil in an hundred caverns."[1]

Caleb loved the memory and resented the downfall of that authority, which mimicked, on a petty scale, the grand contributions exacted by the feudal sovereigns. And as he fondly flattered himself that the awful rule and right supremacy which assigned to the Barons of Ravenswood the first and most effective interest in all productions of nature within five miles of their castle, only slumbered, and was not departed for ever, he used every now and then to give the recollection of the inhabitants a little jog by some petty exaction. These were at first submitted to, with more or less readiness, by the inhabitants of the hamlet; for they had been so long used to consider the wants of the Baron and his family as having a title to be preferred to their own, that their actual independence did not convey to them an immediate sense of freedom. They resembled a man that has been long fettered, who, even at liberty, feels, in imagination, the grasp of the handcuffs still binding his wrists. But the exercise of freedom is quickly followed with the natural consciousness of its immunities, as the enlarged prisoner, by the free use of his limbs, soon dispels the cramped feeling they had acquired when bound.

The inhabitants of Wolf's-hope began to grumble, to resist, and at length positively to refuse compliance with the exactions of Caleb Balderston. It was in vain he reminded them, that when the eleventh Lord Ravenswood, called the Skipper, from his delight in naval matters, had encouraged the trade of their port by building the pier, (a bulwark of stones rudely piled together,) which protected the fishing-boats from the weather, it had been matter of understanding, that he was to have the first stone of butter after the calving of every cow within the barony, and the first egg, thence called the Monday's egg, laid by every hen on every Monday in the year.

The feuars heard and scratched their heads, coughed, sneezed, and being pressed for answer, rejoined with one voice, "They could not say;"—the universal refuge of a Scottish peasant, when pressed to admit a claim which his conscience owns, or perhaps his feelings, and his interest inclines him to deny.

Caleb, however, furnished the notables of Wolf's-hope with a note of the requisition of butter and eggs, which he claimed as arrears of the aforesaid subsidy, or kindly aid, payable as above mentioned; and having intimated that he would not be averse to compound the same for goods or money, if it was inconvenient to them to pay in kind, left them, as he hoped, to debate the mode of assessing themselves for that purpose. On the contrary, they met with a determined purpose of resisting the exaction, and were only undecided as to the mode of grounding their opposition, when the cooper, a very important person on a fishing station, and one of the Conscript Fathers of the village, observed, "That their hens had caickled mony a day for the Lords of Ravenswood, and it was time they suld caickle for those that gave them roosts and barley." An unanimous grin intimated the assent of the assembly. "And," continued the orator, "if it 's your wull, I 'll just tak a step as far as Dunse for Davie Dingwall the writer, that 's come frae the North to settle amang us, and he 'll pit this job to rights, I 'se warrant him."

A day was accordingly fixed for holding a grand *palaver* at Wolf's-hope on the subject of Caleb's requisitions, and he was invited to attend at the hamlet for that purpose.

He went with open hands and empty stomach, trusting to fill the one on his master's account, and the other on his own score, at the expense of the feuars of Wolf's-hope. But, death to his hopes! as he entered the eastern end of the straggling village, the awful form of Davie Dingwall, a sly, dry, hard-fisted, shrewd country attorney, who had already acted against the family of Ravenswood, and was a principal agent of Sir William Ashton, trotted in at the western extremity, bestriding a leathern portmanteau stuffed with the feu-charters of the hamlet, and hoping he had not kept Mr Balderston waiting, "as he was instructed and fully empowered to pay or receive, compound or compensate, and, in fine, to *agé*[2] as accords, respecting all mutual and unsettled claims whatsoever, belonging or competent to the Honourable Edgar Ravenswood, commonly called the Master of Ravenswood——"

"The *Right* Honourable Edgar *Lord Ravenswood*," said Caleb, with great emphasis; for, though conscious he had little chance of advantage in the conflict to ensue, he was resolved not to sacrifice one jot of honour. "Lord Ravenswood, then," said the man of business: "we shall not quarrel with you about titles of courtesy—commonly called Lord Ravenswood, or Master of Ravenswood, heritable proprietor of the lands and barony of Wolf's Crag, on the one part, and to John Whitefish and others, feuars in the town of Wolf's-hope, within the barony aforesaid, on the other part."

Caleb was conscious, from sad experience, that he would wage a very different strife with this mercenary champion, than with the individual feuars themselves, upon whose old recollections, predilections, and habits of thinking, he might have wrought by an hundred indirect arguments, to which their deputy-representative was totally insensible. The issue of the debate proved the reality of his apprehensions. It was in vain he strained his eloquence and ingenuity, and collected into one mass all arguments arising from antique custom and hereditary respect, from the good deeds done by the Lord of Ravenswood to the community of Wolf's-hope in former days, and from what might be expected from them in future. The writer struck to the contents of his feu-charters—he could not see it—'twas not in the bond. And when Caleb, determined to try what a little spirit would do, deprecated the consequences of Lord Ravenswood's withdrawing his protection from the burgh, and even hinted at his using active measures of resentment, the man of law sneered in his face.

[1] Burke's Speech on Economical Reform.—Works, vol. iii. 250

[2] *i. e.* To act as may be necessary and legal, a Scottish law phrase.

"His clients," he said, "had determined to do the best they could for their own town, and he thought Lord Ravenswood, since he was a lord, might have enough to do to look after his own castle. As to any threats of stouthrief oppression, by rule of thumb, or *via facti*, as the law termed it, he would have Mr Balderston recollect, that new times were not as old times—that they lived on the south of the Forth, and far from the Highlands—that his clients thought they were able to protect themselves; but should they find themselves mistaken, they would apply to the government for the protection of a corporal and four red-coats, who," said Mr Dingwall, with a grin, "would be perfectly able to secure them against Lord Ravenswood, and all that he or his followers could do by the strong hand."

If Caleb could have concentrated all the lightnings of aristocracy in his eye, to have struck dead this contemner of allegiance and privilege, he would have lanched them at his head, without respect to the consequences. As it was, he was compelled to turn his course backward to the castle; and there he remained for full half a day invisible and inaccessible even to Mysie, sequestered in his own peculiar dungeon, where he sat burnishing a single pewter-plate, and whistling Maggy Lauder six hours without intermission.

The issue of this unfortunate requisition had shut against Caleb all resources which could be derived from Wolf's-hope and its purlieus, the El Dorado, or Peru, from which, in all former cases of exigence, he had been able to extract some assistance. He had, indeed, in a manner vowed that the deil should have him, if ever he put the print of his foot within its causeway again. He had hitherto kept his word; and, strange to tell, this secession had, as he intended, in some degree, the effect of a punishment upon the refractory feuars. Mr Balderston had been a person in their eyes connected with a superior order of beings, whose presence used to grace their little festivities, whose advice they found useful on many occasions, and whose communications gave a sort of credit to their village. The place, they acknowledged, "didna look as it used to do, and should do, since Mr Caleb keepit the castle sae closely—but doubtless, touching the eggs and butter, it was a most unreasonable demand, as Mr Dingwall had justly made manifest."

Thus stood matters betwixt the parties, when the old butler, though it was gall and wormwood to him, found himself obliged either to acknowledge before a strange man of quality, and, what was much worse, before that stranger's servant, the total inability of Wolf's Crag to produce a dinner, or he must trust to the compassion of the feuars of Wolf's-hope. It was a dreadful degradation, but necessity was equally imperious and lawless. With these feelings he entered the street of the village.

Willing to shake himself from his companion as soon as possible, he directed Mr Lockhard to Luckie Sma'trash's change-house, where a din, proceeding from the revels of Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and their party, sounded half-way down the street, while the red glare from the window overpowered the grey twilight which was now settling down, and glimmered against a parcel of old tubs, kegs, and barrels, piled up in the cooper's yard, on the other side of the way.

"If you, Mr Lockhard," said the old butler to his companion, "will be pleased to step to the change-house where that light comes from, and where, as I judge, they are now singing 'Cauld Kail in Aberdeen,' ye may do your master's errand about the venison, and I will do mine about Bucklaw's bed, as I return frae getting the rest of the vivers.—It 's no that the venison is actually needfu'," he added, detaining his colleague by the button, "to make up the dinner; but, as a compliment to the hunters, ye ken—and, Mr Lockhard—if they offer ye a drink o' yill, or a cup o' wine, or a glass o' brandy, ye'll be a wise man to take it, in case the thunner should hae soured ours at the castle,—whilk is ower muckle to be dreaded."

He then permitted Lockhard to depart; and with foot heavy as lead, and yet far lighter than his heart, stepped on through the unequal street of the straggling village, meditating on whom he ought to make his first attack. It was necessary he should find some one, with whom old acknowledged greatness should weigh more than recent independence, and to whom his application might appear an act of high dignity, relenting at once and soothing. But he could not recollect an inhabitant of a mind so constructed. "Our kail is like to be cauld enough too," he reflected, as the chorus of Cauld Kail in Aberdeen again reached his ears. The minister—he had got his presentation from the late lord, but they had quarreled about teinds:—the brewster's wife—she had trusted long—and the bill was aye scored up—and unless the dignity of the family should actually require it, it would be a sin to distress a widow woman. None was so able—but, on the other hand, none was likely to be less willing, to stand his friend upon the present occasion, than Gibbie Girder, the man of tubs and barrels already mentioned, who had headed the insurrection in the matter of the egg and butter subsidy.—"But a' comes o' taking folk on the right side, I trow," quoth Caleb to himself; "and I had ance the ill hap to say he was but a Johnny Newcome in our town, and the carle bore the family an ill will ever since. But he married a bonny young quean, Jean Lightbody, auld Lightbody's daughter, him that was in the steading of Loup-the-Dyke,—and auld Light-body was married himsell to Marion, that was about my lady in the family forty years syne—I hae had mony a day's daffing wi' Jean's mither, and they say she bides on wi' them—the carle has Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith, an ane could get at them—and sure I am, it 's doing him an honour him or his never deserved at our hand, the ungracious sumph; and if he loses by us a'thegither, he is e'en cheap o't, he can spare it brawly."

Shaking off irresolution, therefore, and turning at once upon his heel, Caleb walked hastily back to the cooper's house, lifted the latch without ceremony, and, in a moment, found himself behind the *hallan*, or partition, from which position he could, himself unseen, reconnoitre the interior of the *but*, or kitchen apartment, of the mansion.

Reverse of the sad menage at the Castle of Wolf's Crag, a bickering fire roared up the cooper's chimney. His wife on the one side, in her pearlings and pudding sleeves, put the last finishing touch to her holiday's apparel, while she contemplated a very handsome and good-humoured face in a broken mirror, raised upon the *bink* (the shelves on which

the plates are disposed) for her special accommodation. Her mother, old Luckie Loup-the-Dyke, "a canty carline" as was within twenty miles of her, according to the unanimous report of the *cummers*, or gossips, sat by the fire in the full glory of a grogram gown, lammer beads, and a clean cockernony, whiffing a snug pipe of tobacco, and superintending the affairs of the kitchen. For—sight more interesting to the anxious heart and craving entrails of the desponding seneschal, than either buxom dame or canty cummer—there bubbled on the aforesaid bickering fire, a huge pot, or rather cauldron, steaming with beef and brewis; while before it revolved two spits, turned each by one of the cooper's apprentices, seated in the opposite corners of the chimney; the one loaded with a quarter of mutton, while the other was graced with a fat goose and a brace of wild ducks. The sight and scent of such a land of plenty almost wholly overcame the drooping spirits of Caleb. He turned, for a moment's space, to reconnoitre the *ben*, or parlour end of the house, and there saw a sight scarce less affecting to his feelings,—a large round table, covered for ten or twelve persons, *decored* (according to his own favourite term) with *napery* as white as snow; grand flagons of pewter, intermixed with one or two silver cups, containing, as was probable, something worthy the brilliancy of their outward appearance; clean trenchers, cutty spoons, knives and forks, sharp, burnished, and prompt for action, which lay all displayed as for an especial festival.

"The devil 's in the pedling tub-coopering carle!" muttered Caleb, in all the envy of astonishment; "it 's a shame to see the like o' them gusting their gabs at sic a rate. But if some o' that gude cheer does not find its way to Wolf's Crag this night, my name is not Caleb Balderston."

So resolving, he entered the apartment, and, in all courteous greeting, saluted both the mother and the daughter. Wolf's Crag was the court of the barony, Caleb prime minister at Wolf's Crag; and it has ever been remarked, that though the masculine subject who pays the taxes, sometimes growls at the courtiers by whom they are imposed, the said courtiers continue, nevertheless, welcome to the fair sex, to whom they furnish the newest small-talk and the earliest fashions. Both the dames were, therefore, at once about old Caleb's neck, setting up their throats together by way of welcome.

"Ay, sirs, Mr Balderston, and is this you?—A sight of you is gude for sair een—sit down—sit down—the gudeman will be blithe to see you—ye nar saw him sae cadgy in your life; but we are to christen our bit wean the night, as ye will hae heard, and doubtless ye will stay and see the ordinance.—We hae killed a wether, and ane o' our lads has been out wi' his gun at the moss—ye used to like wild-fowl."

"Na—na—gudewife," said Caleb, "I just keekit in to wish ye joy, and I wad be glad to hae spoken wi' the gudeman, but——" moving, as if to go away.

"The ne 'er a fit ye 's gang," said the elder dame, laughing and holding him fast, with a freedom which belonged to their old acquaintance; "wha kens what ill it may bring to the bairn, if ye owerlook it in that gate?"

"But I 'm in a proceese hurry, gudewife," said the butler, suffering himself to be dragged to a seat without much resistance; "and as to eating"—for he observed the mistress of the dwelling bustling about to place a trencher for him—"as for eating—lack-a-day, we are just killed up yonder wi' eating frae morning to night—it 's shamefu' epicurism; but that 's what we hae gotten frae the English pock-puddings."

"Hout—never mind the English pock-puddings," said Luckie Lightbody; "try our puddings, Mr Balderston—there is black pudding and white-hass—try whilk ye like best."

"Baith gude—baith excellent—canna be better; but the very smell is eneugh for me that hae dined sae lately (the faithful wretch had fasted since daybreak.) But I wadna affront your housewifeskep, gudewife; and, with your permission, I 'se e 'en pit them in my napkin, and eat them to my supper at e 'en, for I am wearied of Mysie's pastry and nonsense—ye ken landward dainties aye pleased me best, Marion—and landward lasses too—(looking at the cooper's wife)—Ne 'er a bit but she looks far better than when she married Gilbert, and then she was the bonniest lass in our parochine and the neest till 't—But gawsie cow, goodly calf."

The women smiled at the compliment each to herself, and they smiled again to each other as Caleb wrapt up the puddings in a towel which he had brought with him, as a dragoon carries his foraging bag to receive what may fall in his way.

"And what news at the castle?" quo' the gudewife.

"News?—the bravest news ye ever heard—the Lord Keeper's up yonder wi' his fair daughter, just ready to fling her at my lord's head, if he winna tak her out o' his arms; and I 'se warrant he 'll stitch our auld lands of Ravenswood to her petticoat tail."

"Eh! sirs—ay!—and will he hae her?—and is she weel favoured?—and what 's the colour o' her hair?—and does she wear a habit or a railly?" were the questions which the females showered upon the butler.

"Hout tout!—it wad tak a man a day to answer a' your questions, and I hae hardly a minute. Where 's the gudeman?"

"Awa to fetch the minister," said Mrs Girder, "precious Mr Peter Bide-the-Bent, frae the Mosshead—the honest man has the rheumatism wi' lying in the hills in the persecution."

"Ay!—a whig and a mountain-man—nae less?" said Caleb, with a peevishness he could not suppress; "I hae seen the day, Luckie, when worthy Mr Cuffcushion and the service-book would hae served your turn, (to the elder dame,) or ony honest woman in like circumstances."

"And that 's true too," said Mrs Lightbody, "but what can a body do?—Jean maun baith sing her psalms and busk her cockernony the gate the gudeman likes, and nae ither gate; for he 's maister and mair at hame, I can tell ye, Mr Balderston."

"Ay, ay, and does he guide the gear too?" said Caleb, to whose projects masculine rule boded little good.

"Ilka penny on 't—but he 'll dress her as dink as a daisy, as ye see—sae she has little reason to complain—where there 's ane better aff there 's ten waur."

"Aweel, gudewife," said Caleb, crest-fallen, but not beaten off, "that wasna the way ye guided your

gudeman; but ilka land has its ain lauch. I maun be ganging — I just wanted to round in the gudeman's lug, that I heard them say up by yonder, that Peter Puncheon that was cooper to the Queen's stores at the Timmer Burse at Leith, is dead — sae I thought that maybe a word frae my lord to the Lord Keeper might hae served Gilbert; but since he 's frae hame ——"

"O but ye maun stay his hame-coming," said the dame, "I aye telled the gudeman ye meant weel to him; but he taks the tout at every bit lippening word."

"Aweel, I 'll stay the last minute I can."

"And so," said the handsome young spouse of Mr Girder, "ye think this Miss Ashton is weel-favoured? — troth, and sae should she, to set up for our young lord, with a face, and a hand, and a seat on his horse, that might become a king's son — d 'ye ken that he aye glowers up at my window, Mr Balderston, when he chances to ride thro' the town, sae I hae a right to ken what like he is, as weel as ony body."

"I ken that brawly," said Caleb, "for I hae heard his lordship say, the cooper's wife had the blackest ee in the barony; and I said, Weel may that be, my lord, for it was her mither's afore her, as I ken to my cost — Eh, Marion? Ha, ha, ha! — Ah! these were merry days!"

"Hout awa, auld carle," said the old dame, "to speak sic daffin to young folk. — But, Jean — fie, woman, dinna ye hear the bairn greet? I 'se warrant it 's that dreary weid[1] has come ower 't again."

Up got mother and grandmother, and scoured away, jostling each other as they ran, into some remote corner of the tenement, where the young hero of the evening was deposited. When Caleb saw the coast fairly clear, he took an invigorating pinch of snuff, to sharpen and confirm his resolution.

Cauld be my cast, thought he, if either Bide-the-Bent or Girder taste that broche of wild-fowl this evening; and then addressing the eldest turnspit, a boy of about eleven years old, and putting a penny into his hand, he said, "Here is twal pennies,[2] my man; carry that ower to Mrs Sma'trash, and bid her fill my mill wi' snishing, and I 'll turn the broche for ye in the meantime — and she will gie ye a gingerbread snap for your pains."

No sooner was the elder boy departed on this mission, than Caleb, looking the remaining turnspit gravely and steadily in the face, removed from the fire the spit bearing the wild-fowl of which he had undertaken the charge, clapped his hat on his head, and fairly marched off with it. He stopped at the door of the change-house only to say, in a few brief words, that Mr Hayston of Bucklaw was not to expect a bed that evening in the castle.

If this message was too briefly delivered by Caleb, it became absolute rudeness when conveyed through the medium of a suburb landlady; and Bucklaw was, as a more calm and temperate man might have been, highly incensed. Captain Craigengelt proposed, with the unanimous applause of all present, that they should course the old fox (meaning Caleb) ere he got to cover, and toss him in a blanket. But Lockhard intimated to his master's servants, and those of Lord Bittlebrains, in a tone of authority, that the slightest impertinence to the Master of Ravenswood's domestic, would give Sir William Ashton the highest offence. And having so said, in a manner sufficient to prevent any aggression on their part, he left the public-house, taking along with him two servants loaded with such provisions as he had been able to procure, and overtook Caleb just when he had cleared the village.

[1] *Weid*, a feverish cold; a disorder incident to infants and to females, is so called.

[2] Monotæ Scoticæ, scilicet.

CHAPTER XIII.

> Should I take aught of you? — 'tis true I begged now;
> And what is worse than that, I stole a kindness;
> And, what is worst of all, I lost my way in 't.
> *Wit without Money.*

The face of the little boy, sole witness of Caleb's infringement upon the laws at once of property and hospitality, would have made a good picture. He sat motionless, as if he had witnessed some of the spectral appearances which he had heard told of in a winter's evening; and as he forgot his own duty, and allowed his spit to stand still, he added to the misfortunes of the evening, by suffering the mutton to burn as black as coal. He was first recalled from his trance of astonishment by a hearty cuff, administered by Dame Lightbody, who (in whatever other respects she might conform to her name) was a woman strong of person, and expert in the use of her hands, as some say her deceased husband had known to his cost.

"What gar 'd ye let the roast burn, ye ill-cleckit gude-for-nought?"

"I dinna ken," said the boy.

"And where 's that ill-deedy gett, Giles?"

"I dinna ken," blubbered the astonished declarant.

"And where 's Mr Balderston? — and abune a', and in the name of council and kirk-session, that I suld say sae, where 's the broche wi' the wild-fowl?"

As Mrs Girder here entered, and joined her mother's exclamations, screaming into one ear while the old lady deafened the other, they succeeded in so utterly confounding the unhappy urchin, that he could not for some time tell his story at all, and it was only when the elder boy returned, that the truth began to dawn on their minds.

"Weel, sirs!" said Mrs Lightbody, "wha wad hae thought o' Caleb Balderston playing an auld acquaintance sic a pliskie!"

"O, weary on him!" said the spouse of Mr Girder; "and what am I to say to the gudeman? — he 'll brain me, if there wasna anither woman in a' Wolf's-hope."

"Hout tout, silly quean," said the mother; "na na — it 's come to muckle, but it 's no come to that neither; for an he brain you he maun brain me, and I have garr 'd his betters stand back — hands aff is fair play — we maunna heed a bit flyting."

The tramp of horses now announced the arrival of the cooper, with the minister. They had no sooner dismounted than they made for the kitchen fire, for the evening was cool after the thunder storm, and the woods wet and dirty. The young gude-wife, strong in the charms of her Sunday gown and biggonets, threw herself in the way of receiving the first attack, while her mother, like

the veteran division of the Roman legion, remained in the rear, ready to support her in case of necessity. Both hoped to protract the discovery of what had happened — the mother, by interposing her bustling person betwixt Mr Girder and the fire, and the daughter, by the extreme cordiality with which she received the minister and her husband, and the anxious fears which she expressed lest they should have "gotten cauld."

"Cauld?" quoth the husband surlily — for he was not of that class of lords and masters whose wives are viceroys over them — we'll be cauld eneugh, I think, if ye dinna let us in to the fire."

And so saying, he burst his way through both lines of defence; and, as he had a careful eye over his property of every kind, he perceived at one glance the absence of the spit with its savoury burden. "What the deil, woman ——"

"Fie for shame!" exclaimed both the women; "and before Mr Bide-the-Bent!"

"I stand reproved," said the cooper; "but ——"

"The taking in our mouths the name of the great enemy of our souls," said Mr Bide-the-Bent ——

"I stand reproved," said the cooper.

"Is an exposing ourselves to his temptations," continued the reverend monitor, "and an inviting, or, in some sort, a compelling, of him to lay aside his other trafficking with unhappy persons, and wait upon those in whose speech his name is frequent."

"Weel, weel, Mr Bide-the-Bent, can a man do mair than stand reproved?" said the cooper; "but just let me ask the women what for they hae dished the wild-fowl before we came."

"They arena dished, Gilbert," said his wife; "but — but an accident ——"

"What accident?" said Girder, with flashing eyes — "Nae ill come ower them, I trust? Uh?"

His wife, who stood much in awe of him, durst not reply, but her mother bustled up to her support, with arms disposed as if they were about to be a-kimbo at the next reply. — "I gied them to an acquaintance of mine, Gibbie Girder; and what about it now?"

Her excess of assurance struck Girder mute for an instant. — "And *ye* gied the wild-fowl, the best end of our christening dinner, to a friend of yours, ye auld rudas! And what might *his* name be, I pray ye?"

"Just worthy Mr Caleb Balderston, frae Wolf's Crag," answered Marion, prompt and prepared for battle.

Girder's wrath foamed over all restraint. If there was a circumstance which could have added to the resentment he felt, it was, that this extravagant donation had been made in favour of our friend Caleb, towards whom, for reasons to which the reader is no stranger, he nourished a decided resentment. He raised his riding-wand against the elder matron, but she stood firm, collected in herself, and undauntedly brandished the iron ladle with which she had just been *flambing* (*Anglicè*, basting) the roast of mutton. Her weapon was certainly the better, and her arm not the weakest of the two; so that Gilbert thought it safest to turn short off upon his wife, who had by this time hatched sort of hysterical whine, which greatly moved the minister, who was in fact as simple and kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed. — "And you, ye thowless jadd, to sit still and see my substance disponed upon to an idle, drunken, reprobate, worm-eaten, serving man, just because he kittles the lugs o' a silly auld wife wi' useless clavers, and every twa words a lee? — I'll gar you as gude ——"

Here the minister interposed, both by voice and action, while Dame Lightbody threw herself in front of her daughter, and flourished her ladle.

"Am I no to chastise my ain wife?" exclaimed the cooper, very indignantly.

"Ye may chastise your ain wife if ye like," answered Dame Lightbody; "but ye shall never lay finger on my daughter, and that ye may found upon."

"For shame, Mr Girder!" said the clergyman; "this is what I little expected to have seen of you, that you suld give rein to your sinful passions against your nearest and your dearest; and this night too, when ye are called to the most solemn duty of a Christian parent — and a' for what? for a redundancy of creature-comforts, as worthless as they are unneedful."

"Worthless!" exclaimed the cooper; "a better guse never walkit on stubble; twa finer dentier wild-ducks never wat a feather."

"Be it sae, neighbour," rejoined the minister; "but see what superfluities are yet revolving before your fire. I have seen the day when ten of the bannocks which stand upon that board would have been an acceptable dainty to as many men, that were starving on hills and bogs, and in caves of the earth, for the Gospel's sake."

"And that's what vexes me maist of a'," said the cooper, anxious to get some one to sympathize with his not altogether causeless anger; "an the quean had gien it to ony suffering sant, or to ony body ava but that reaving, lying, oppressing tory villain, that rade in the wicked troop of militia when it was commanded out against the sants at Bothwell Brigg by the auld tyrant Allan Ravenswood, that is gane to his place, I wad the less hae minded it. But to gie the principal part o' the feast to the like o' him! ——"

"Aweel, Gilbert," said the minister, "and dinna ye see a high judgment in this? — The seed of the righteous are not seen begging their bread — think of the son of a powerful oppressor being brought to the pass of supporting his household from your fulness."

"And, besides," said the wife, "it wasna for Lord Ravenswood neither, an he wad hear but a body speak — it was to help to entertain the Lord Keeper, as they ca' him, that's up yonder at Wolf's Crag."

"Sir William Ashton at Wolf's Crag!" ejaculated the astonished man of hoops and staves.

"And hand and glove wi' Lord Ravenswood," added Dame Lightbody.

"Doited idiot! — that auld clavering sneck-drawer wad gar ye trow the moon is made of green cheese. The Lord Keeper and Ravenswood! they are cat and dog, hare and hound."

"I tell ye they are man and wife, and gree better than some others that are sae," retorted the mother-in-law; "forby, Peter Puncheon, that's cooper to the Queen's stores, is dead, and the place is to fill, and ——"

"Od guide us, wull ye haud your skirling tongues?" said Girder, — for we are to remark, that this explanation was given like a catch for two voices, the younger dame, much encouraged by the turn of the debate, taking up, and repeating in a

higher tone, the words as fast as they were uttered by her mother.

"The gudewife says naething but what 's true, maister," said Girder's foreman, who had come in during the fray. "I saw the Lord Keeper's servants drinking and driving ower at Luckie Sma'trash's, ower by yonder."

"And is their maister up at Wolf's Crag?" said Girder.

"Ay, troth is he," replied his man of confidence.

"And friends wi' Ravenswood?"

"It 's like sae," answered the foreman, "since he is putting up[1] wi' him."

"And Peter Puncheon 's dead?"

"Ay, ay — Puncheon has leaked out at last, the auld carle," said the foreman; "mony a dribble o' brandy has gaen through him in his day. — But as for the broche and the wild-fowl, the saddle's no aff your mare yet, maister, and I could follow and bring it back, for Mr Balderston's no far aff the town yet."

"Do sae, Will — and come here — I 'll tell ye what to do when ye owertake him."

He relieved the females of his presence, and gave Will his private instructions.

"A bonny-like thing," said the mother-in-law, as the cooper re-entered the apartment, "to send the innocent lad after an armed man, when ye ken Mr Balderston aye wears a rapier, and whiles a dirk into the bargain."

"I trust," said the minister, "ye have reflected weel on what ye have done, lest you should minister cause of strife, of which it is my duty to say, he who affordeth matter, albeit he himself striketh not, is in no manner guiltless."

"Never fash your beard, Mr Bide-the-Bent," replied Girder; "ane canna get their breath out between wives and ministers — I ken best how to turn my ain cake. — Jean, serve up the dinner, and nae mair about it."

Nor did he again allude to the deficiency in the course of the evening.

Meantime, the foreman, mounted on his master's steed, and charged with his special orders, pricked swiftly forth in pursuit of the marauder Caleb. That personage, it may be imagined, did not linger by the way. He intermitted even his dearly-beloved chatter, for the purpose of making more haste — only assuring Mr Lockhard that he had made the purveyor's wife give the wild-fowl a few turns before the fire, in case that Mysie, who had been so much alarmed by the thunder, should not have her kitchen-grate in full splendour. Meanwhile, alleging the necessity of being at Wolf's Crag as soon as possible, he pushed on so fast that his companions could scarce keep up with him. He began already to think he was safe from pursuit, having gained the summit of the swelling eminence which divides Wolf's Crag from the village, when he heard the distant tread of a horse, and a voice which shouted at intervals, "Mr Caleb — Mr Balderston — Mr Caleb Balderston — hollo — bide a wee!"

Caleb, it may be well believed, was in no hurry to acknowledge the summons. First, he would not hear it, and faced his companions down, that it was the echo of the wind; then he said it was not worth stopping for; and, at length, halting reluctantly, as the figure of the horseman appeared through the shades of the evening, he bent up his whole soul to the task of defending his prey, threw himself into an attitude of dignity, advanced the spit, which in his grasp might with its burden seem both spear and shield, and firmly resolved to die rather than surrender it.

What was his astonishment, when the cooper's foreman, riding up and addressing him with respect, told him, "his master was very sorry he was absent when he came to his dwelling, and grieved that he could not tarry the christening dinner; and that he had taen the freedom to send a sma' rundlet or sack, and ane anker of brandy, as he understood there were guests at the castle, and that they were short of preparation."

I have heard somewhere a story of an elderly gentleman, who was pursued by a bear that had gotten loose from its muzzle, until completely exhausted. In a fit of desperation, he faced round upon Bruin and lifted his cane; at the sight of which the instinct of discipline prevailed, and the animal, instead of tearing him to pieces, rose up upon his hind-legs, and instantly began to shuffle a saraband. Not less than the joyful surprise of the senior, who had supposed himself in the extremity of peril from which he was thus unexpectedly relieved, was that of our excellent friend Caleb, when he found the pursuer intended to add to his prize, instead of bereaving him of it. He recovered his attitude, however, instantly, so soon as the foreman, stooping from his nag, where he sate perched betwixt the two barrels, whispered in his ear, — "If ony thing about Peter Puncheon's place could be airted their way, John Girder wad mak it better to the Master of Ravenswood than a pair of new gloves; and that he wad be blithe to speak wi' Maister Balderston on that head, and he wad find him as pliant as a hoop-willow in a' that he could wish of him."

Caleb heard all this without rendering any answer, except that of all great men from Louis XIV. downwards, namely, "we will see about it;" and then added aloud, for the edification of Mr Lockhard, — "Your master has acted with becoming civility and attention in forwarding the liquors, and I will not fail to represent it properly to my Lord Ravenswood. And, my lad," he said, "you may ride on to the castle, and if none of the servants are returned, whilk is to be dreaded, as they make day and night of it when they are out of sight, ye may put them into the porter's lodge, whilk is on the right hand of the great entry — the porter has got leave to go to see his friends, sae ye will meet no ane to steer ye."

The foreman, having received his orders, rode on; and having deposited the casks in the deserted and ruinous porter's lodge, he returned unquestioned by any one. Having thus executed his master's commission, and doffed his bonnet to Caleb and his company as he repassed them in his way to the village, he returned to have his share of the christening festivity.[2]

[1] Taking up his abode.

[2] See Note B. *Raid of Caleb Balderston*

CHAPTER XIV.

As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle sound,
Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round;
Or, from the garner-door, on ether borne,
The chaff flies devious from the winnow'd corn;
So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,
From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driv'n.
Anonymous.

We left Caleb Balderston in the extremity of triumph at the success of his various achievements for the honour of the house of Ravenswood. When he had mustered and marshalled his dishes of divers kinds, a more royal provision had not been seen in Wolf's Crag, since the funeral feast of its deceased lord. Great was the glory of the serving-man, as he *decored* the old oaken table with a clean cloth, and arranged upon it carbonaded venison and roasted wild-fowl, with a glance, every now and then, as if to upbraid the incredulity of his master and his guests; and with many a story, more or less true, was Lockhard that evening regaled concerning the ancient grandeur of Wolf's Crag, and the sway of its Barons over the country in their neighbourhood.

"A vassal scarce held a calf or a lamb his ain, till he had first asked if the Lord of Ravenswood was pleased to accept it; and they were obliged to ask the lord's consent before they married in these days, and mony a merry tale they tell about that right as weel as others. And although," said Caleb, "these times are not like the gude auld times, when authority had its right, yet true it is, Mr Lockhard, and you yourself may partly have remarked, that we of the House of Ravenswood do our endeavour in keeping up, by all just and lawful exertion of our baronial authority, that due and fitting connection betwixt superior and vassal, whilk is in some danger of falling into desuetude, owing to the general licence and misrule of these present unhappy times."

"Umph!" said Mr Lockhard; "and if I may inquire, Mr Balderston, pray do you find your people at the village yonder amenable? for I must needs say, that at Ravenswood Castle, now pertaining to my master, the Lord Keeper, ye have not left behind ye the most compliant set of tenantry."

"Ah! but Mr Lockhard," replied Caleb, "ye must consider there has been a change of hands, and the auld lord might expect twa turns frae them, when the new comer canna get ane. A dour and fractious set they were, thae tenants of Ravenswood, and ill to live wi' when they dinna ken their master — and if your master put them mad ance, the whole country will not put them down."

"Troth," said Mr Lockhard, "an such be the case, I think the wisest thing for us a' wad be to hammer up a match between your young lord and our winsome young leddy up by there; and Sir William might just stitch your auld barony to her gown-sleeve, and he wad sune cuitle[1] another out o' somebody else, sic a lang head as he has."

Caleb shook his head.—"I wish," he said, "I wish that may answer, Mr Lockhard. There are auld prophecies about this house I wad like ill to see fulfilled wi' my auld een, that has seen evil eneugh already."

"Pshaw! never mind freits," said his brother butler; "if the young folk liked ane anither, they wad make a winsome couple. But, to say truth, there is a leddy sits in our hall-neuk, maun have her hand in that as well as in every other job. But there 's no harm in drinking to their healths, and I will fill Mrs Mysie a cup of Mr Girder's canary."

While they thus enjoyed themselves in the kitchen, the company in the hall were not less pleasantly engaged. So soon as Ravenswood had determined upon giving the Lord Keeper such hospitality as he had to offer, he deemed it incumbent on him to assume the open and courteous brow of a well-pleased host. It has been often remarked, that when a man commences by acting a character, he frequently ends by adopting it in good earnest. In the course of an hour or two, Ravenswood, to his own surprise, found himself in the situation of one who frankly does his best to entertain welcome and honoured guests. How much of this change in his disposition was to be ascribed to the beauty and simplicity of Miss Ashton, to the readiness with which she accommodated herself to the inconveniencies of her situation — how much to the smooth and plausible conversation of the Lord Keeper, remarkably gifted with those words which win the ear, must be left to the reader's ingenuity to conjecture. But Ravenswood was insensible to neither.

The Lord Keeper was a veteran statesman, well acquainted with courts and cabinets, and intimate with all the various turns of public affairs during the last eventful years of the seventeenth century. He could talk, from his own knowledge, of men and events, in a way which failed not to win attention, and had the peculiar art, while he never said a word which committed himself, at the same time to persuade the hearer that he was speaking without the least shadow of scrupulous caution or reserve. Ravenswood, in spite of his prejudices and real grounds of resentment, felt himself at once amused and instructed in listening to him, while the statesman, whose inward feelings had at first so much impeded his efforts to make himself known, had now regained all the ease and fluency of a silver-tongued lawyer of the very highest order.

His daughter did not speak much, but she smiled; and what she did say argued a submissive gentleness, and a desire to give pleasure, which, to a proud man like Ravenswood, was more fascinating than the most brilliant wit. Above all, he could not but observe, that whether from gratitude, or from some other motive, he himself, in his deserted and unprovided hall, was as much the object of respectful attention to his guests, as he would have been when surrounded by all the appliances and means of hospitality proper to his high birth. All deficiencies passed unobserved, or if they did not escape notice, it was to praise the substitutes which Caleb had contrived to supply the want of the usual accommodations. Where a smile was unavoidable, it was a very good-humoured one, and often coupled with some well-turned compliment, to shew how much the guests esteemed the merits of their noble host, how little they thought of the inconveniences with which they were surrounded. I am not sure whether the pride of being found to outbalance, in virtue of his own personal merit, all the disadvantages of fortune, did not make as favourable an impression

[1] *Cuittle* may answer to the elegant modern phrase *diddle*.

upon the haughty heart of the Master of Ravenswood, as the conversation of the father and the beauty of Lucy Ashton.

The hour of repose arrived. The Keeper and his daughter retired to their apartments, which were "decored" more properly than could have been anticipated. In making the necessary arrangements, Mysie had indeed enjoyed the assistance of a gossip who had arrived from the village upon an exploratory expedition, but had been arrested by Caleb, and impressed into the domestic drudgery of the evening. So that, instead of returning home to describe the dress and person of the grand young lady, she found herself compelled to be active in the domestic economy of Wolf's Crag.

According to the custom of the time, the Master of Ravenswood attended the Lord Keeper to his apartment, followed by Caleb, who placed on the table, with all the ceremonials due to torches of wax, two rudely-framed tallow-candles, such as in those days were only used by the peasantry, hooped in paltry clasps of wire, which served for candlesticks. He then disappeared, and presently entered with two earthen flagons, (the china, he said, had been little used since my lady's time,) one filled with canary wine, the other with brandy.[1] The canary sack, unheeding all probabilities of detection, he declared had been twenty years in the cellars of Wolf's Crag, "though it was not for him to speak before their honours; the brandy—it was weel-kend liquor, as mild as mead, and as strong as Sampson—it had been in the house ever since the memorable revel, in which auld Micklestob had been slain at the head of the stair by Jamie of Jenklebrae, on account of the honour of the worshipful Lady Muriend, wha was in some sort an ally of the family; natheless——"

"But to cut that matter short, Mr Caleb," said the Keeper, "perhaps you will favour me with a ewer of water."

"God forbid your lordship should drink water in this family," replied Caleb, "to the disgrace of so honourable an house!"

"Nevertheless, if his lordship have a fancy," said the Master, smiling, "I think you might indulge him; for, if I mistake not, there has been water drank here at no distant date, and with good relish too."

"To be sure, if his lordship has a fancy," said Caleb; and re-entering with a jug of pure element—"He will scarce find such water ony where as is drawn fra the well at Wolf's Crag—nevertheless——"

"Nevertheless, we must leave the Lord Keeper to his repose in this poor chamber of ours," said the Master of Ravenswood, interrupting his talkative domestic, who immediately turning to the doorway, with a profound reverence, prepared to usher his master from the secret chamber.

But the Lord Keeper prevented his host's departure.—"I have but one word to say to the Master of Ravenswood, Mr Caleb, and I fancy he will excuse your waiting."

With a second reverence, lower than the former, Caleb withdrew—and his master stood motionless, expecting, with considerable embarrassment, what was to close the events of a day fraught with unexpected incidents.

"Master of Ravenswood," said Sir William Ashton, with some embarrassment, "I hope you understand the Christian law too well to suffer the sun to set upon your anger."

The Master blushed and replied, "He had no occasion that evening to exercise the duty enjoined upon him by his Christian faith."

"I should have thought otherwise," said his guest, "considering the various subjects of dispute and litigation which have unhappily occurred more frequently than was desirable or necessary betwixt the late honourable lord, your father, and myself."

"I could wish, my lord," said Ravenswood, agitated by suppressed emotion, "that reference to these circumstances should be made any where rather than under my father's roof."

"I should have felt the delicacy of this appeal at another time," said Sir William Ashton, "but now I must proceed with what I mean to say.—I have suffered too much in my own mind, from the false delicacy which prevented my soliciting with earnestness, what indeed I frequently requested, a personal communing with your father—much distress of mind to him and to me might have been prevented."

"It is true," said Ravenswood, after a moment's reflection; "I have heard my father say your lordship had proposed a personal interview."

"Proposed, my dear Master? I did indeed propose it, but I ought to have begged, entreated, beseeched it. I ought to have torn away the veil which interested persons had stretched betwixt us, and shewn myself as I was, willing to sacrifice a considerable part even of my legal rights, in order to conciliate feelings so natural as his must be allowed to have been. Let me say for myself, my young friend, for so I will call you, that had your father and I spent the same time together which my good fortune has allowed me to-day to pass in your company, it is possible the land might yet have enjoyed one of the most respectable of its ancient nobility, and I should have been spared the pain of parting in enmity from a person whose general character I so much admired and honoured."

He put his handkerchief to his eyes. Ravenswood also was moved, but awaited in silence the progress of this extraordinary communication.

"It is necessary," continued the Lord Keeper, "and proper that you should understand, that there have been many points betwixt us, in which, although I judged it proper that there should be an exact ascertainment of my legal rights by the decree of a court of justice, yet it was never my intention to press them beyond the verge of equity."

"My Lord," said the Master of Ravenswood, "it is unnecessary to pursue this topic farther. What the law will give you, or has given you, you enjoy—or you shall enjoy; neither my father, nor I myself, would have received any thing on the footing of favour."

"Favour?—no—you misunderstand me," resumed the Keeper; "or rather you are no lawyer. A right may be good in law, and ascertained to be so, which yet a man of honour may not in every case care to avail himself of."

"I am sorry for it, my lord," said the Master.

"Nay, nay," retorted his guest, "you speak like a young counsellor; your spirit goes before

[1] See Note C. *Ancient Hospitality.*

your wit. There are many things still open for decision betwixt us. Can you blame me, an old man desirous of peace, and in the castle of a young nobleman who has saved my daughter's life and my own, that I am desirous, anxiously desirous, that these should be settled on the most liberal principles?"

The old man kept fast hold of the Master's passive hand as he spoke, and made it impossible for him, be his predetermination what it would, to return any other than an acquiescent reply; and wishing his guest good-night, he postponed farther conference until the next morning.

Ravenswood hurried into the hall, where he was to spend the night, and for a time traversed its pavement with a disordered and rapid pace. His mortal foe was under his roof, yet his sentiments towards him were neither those of a feudal enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, nor follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonourable composition betwixt his resentment against the father and his affection for his daughter. He cursed himself, as he hurried to and fro in the pale moonlight, and more ruddy gleams of the expiring wood-fire. He threw open and shut the latticed windows with violence, as if alike impatient of the admission and exclusion of free air. At length, however, the torrent of passion foamed off its madness, and he flung himself into the chair, which he proposed as his place of repose for the night.

If, in reality, — such were the calmer thoughts that followed the first tempest of his passion, — if, in reality, this man desires no more than the law allows him — if he is willing to adjust even his acknowledged rights upon an equitable footing, what could be my father's cause of complaint? — what is mine? — Those from whom we won our ancient possessions fell under the sword of my ancestors, and left lands and livings to the conquerors; we sink under the force of the law, now too powerful for the Scottish chivalry. Let us parley with the victors of the day, as if we had been besieged in our fortress, and without hope of relief. This man may be other than I have thought him; and his daughter — but I have resolved not to think of her.

He wrapt his cloak around him, fell asleep, and dreamed of Lucy Ashton till daylight gleamed through the lattices.

CHAPTER XV.

> We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen
> Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
> To lift them up, but rather set our feet
> Upon their heads to press them to the bottom,
> As I must yield with you I practised it;
> But now I see you in a way to rise,
> I can and will assist you.
>
> *New Way to Pay Old Debts.*

The Lord Keeper carried with him to a couch harder than he was accustomed to stretch himself upon, the same ambitious thoughts and political perplexities, which drive sleep from the softest down that ever spread a bed of state. He had sailed long enough amid the contending tides and currents of the time to be sensible of their peril, and of the necessity of trimming his vessel to the prevailing wind, if he would have her escape shipwreck in the storm. The nature of his talents, and the timorousness of disposition connected with them, had made him assume the pliability of the versatile old Earl of Northampton, who explained the art by which he kept his ground during all the changes of state, from the reign of Henry the VIII. to that of Elizabeth, by the frank avowal, that he was born of the willow, not of the oak. It had accordingly been Sir William Ashton's policy, on all occasions, to watch the changes in the political horizon, and, ere yet the conflict was decided, to negotiate some interest for himself with the party most likely to prove victorious. His time-serving disposition was well known, and excited the contempt of the more daring leaders of both factions in the state. But his talents were of a useful and practical kind, and his legal knowledge held in high estimation; and they so far counterbalanced other deficiencies, that those in power were glad to use and to reward, though without absolutely trusting or greatly respecting him.

The Marquis of A—— had used his utmost influence to effect a change in the Scottish cabinet, and his schemes had been of late so well laid and so ably supported, that there appeared a very great chance of his proving ultimately successful. He did not, however, feel so strong or so confident as to neglect any means of drawing recruits to his standard. The acquisition of the Lord Keeper was deemed of some importance, and a friend, perfectly acquainted with his circumstances and character, became responsible for his political conversion.

When this gentleman arrived at Ravenswood Castle upon a visit, the real purpose of which was disguised under general courtesy, he found the prevailing fear, which at present beset the Lord Keeper, was that of danger to his own person from the Master of Ravenswood. The language which the blind sibyl, old Alice, had used; the sudden appearance of the Master, armed, and within his precincts, immediately after he had been warned against danger from him; the cold and haughty return received in exchange for the acknowledgments with which he loaded him for his timely protection, had all made a strong impression on his imagination.

So soon as the Marquis's political agent found how the wind sat, he began to insinuate fears and doubts of another kind, scarce less calculated to affect the Lord Keeper. He inquired with seeming interest, whether the proceedings in Sir William's complicated litigation with the Ravenswood family was out of court, and settled without the possibility of appeal? The Lord Keeper answered in the affirmative; but his interrogator was too well informed to be imposed upon. He pointed out to him, by unanswerable arguments, that some of the most important points which had been decided in his favour against the house of Ravenswood, were liable, under the Treaty of Union, to be reviewed by the British House of Peers, a court of equity of which the Lord Keeper felt an instinctive dread. This course came instead of an appeal to the old Scottish Parliament, or, as it was technically termed, "a protestation for remeid in law."

The Lord Keeper, after he had for some time disputed the legality of such a proceeding, was compelled at length to comfort himself with the

improbability of the young Master of Ravenswood's finding friends in parliament, capable of stirring in so weighty an affair.

"Do not comfort yourself with that false hope," said his wily friend; "it is possible that, in the next session of parliament, young Ravenswood may find more friends and favour even than your lordship."

"That would be a sight worth seeing," said the Keeper, scornfully.

"And yet," said his friend, "such things have been seen ere now, and in our own time. There are many at the head of affairs even now, that a few years ago were under hiding for their lives; and many a man now dines on plate of silver, that was fain to eat his crowdy without a bicker; and many a high head has been brought full low among us in as short a space. Scott of Scotstarvet's 'Staggering State of Scots Statesmen,' of which curious memoir you shewed me a manuscript, has been out-staggered in our time."

The Lord Keeper answered with a deep sigh, "that these mutations were no new sights in Scotland, and had been witnessed long before the time of the satirical author he had quoted. It was many a long year," he said, "since Fordun had quoted as an ancient proverb, '*Neque dives, neque fortis, sed nec sapiens Scotus, prædominante invidia, diu durabit in terra.*'"

"And be assured, my esteemed friend," was the answer, "that even your long services to the state, or deep legal knowledge, will not save you, or render your estate stable, if the Marquis of A—— comes in with a party in the British Parliament. You know that the deceased Lord Ravenswood was his near ally, his lady being fifth in descent from the Knight of Tillibardine; and I am well assured that he will take young Ravenswood by the hand, and be his very good lord and kinsman. Why should he not?—The Master is an active and stirring young fellow, able to help himself with tongue and hands; and it is such as he that finds friends among their kindred, and not those unarmed and unable Mephibosheths, that are sure to be a burden to every one that takes them up. And so, if these Ravenswood cases be called over the coals in the House of Peers, you will find that the Marquis will have a crow to pluck with you."

"That would be an evil requital," said the Lord Keeper, "for my long services to the state, and the ancient respect in which I have held his lordship's honourable family and person."

"Ay, but," rejoined the agent of the Marquis, "it is in vain to look back on past service and auld respect, my lord—it will be present service and immediate proofs of regard, which, in these slidd'ery times, will be expected by a man like the Marquis."

The Lord Keeper now saw the full drift of his friend's argument, but he was too cautious to return any positive answer.

"He knew not," he said, "the service which the Lord Marquis could expect from one of his limited abilities, that had not always stood at his command, still saving and reserving his duty to his king and country."

Having thus said nothing, while he seemed to say every thing, for the exception was calculated to cover whatever he might afterwards think proper to bring under it, Sir William Ashton changed the conversation, nor did he again permit the same topic to be introduced. His guest departed, without having brought the wily old statesman the length of committing himself, or of pledging himself to any future line of conduct, but with the certainty that he had alarmed his fears in a most sensible point, and laid a foundation for future and farther treaty.

When he rendered an account of his negotiation to the Marquis, they both agreed that the Keeper ought not to be permitted to relapse into security, and that he should be plied with new subjects of alarm, especially during the absence of his lady. They were well aware that her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit, would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient—that she was immovably attached to the party now in power, with whom she maintained a close correspondence and alliance, and that she hated, without fearing, the Ravenswood family, (whose more ancient dignity threw discredit on the newly acquired grandeur of her husband,) to such a degree, that she would have periled the interest of her own house, to have the prospect of altogether crushing that of her enemy.

But Lady Ashton was now absent. The business which had long detained her in Edinburgh, had afterwards induced her to travel to London, not without the hope that she might contribute her share to disconcert the intrigues of the Marquis at court; for she stood high in favour with the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, to whom, in point of character, she bore considerable resemblance. It was necessary to press her husband hard before her return; and, as a preparatory step, the Marquis wrote to the Master of Ravenswood the letter which we rehearsed in a former chapter. It was cautiously worded, so as to leave it in the power of the writer hereafter to take as deep, or as slight an interest in the fortunes of his kinsman, as the progress of his own schemes might require. But however unwilling, as a statesman, the Marquis might be to commit himself, or assume the character of a patron, while he had nothing to give away, it must be said to his honour, that he felt a strong inclination effectually to befriend the Master of Ravenswood, as well as to use his name as a means of alarming the terrors of the Lord Keeper.

As the messenger who carried this letter was to pass near the house of the Lord Keeper, he had it in direction, that in the village adjoining to the park-gate of the castle, his horse should lose a shoe, and that, while it was replaced by the smith of the place, he should express the utmost regret for the necessary loss of time, and in the vehemence of his impatience, give it to be understood, that he was bearing a message from the Marquis of A—— to the Master of Ravenswood, upon a matter of life and death.

This news, with exaggerations, was speedily carried from various quarters to the ears of the Lord Keeper, and each reporter dwelt upon the extreme impatience of the courier, and the surprising short time in which he had executed his journey. The anxious statesman heard in silence; but in private Lockhard received orders to watch the courier on his return, to waylay him in the village, to ply him with liquor if possible, and to use all means, fair or foul, to learn the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. But as this plot had been foreseen, the messenger returned by a different and

distant road, and thus escaped the snare that was laid for him.

After he had been in vain expected for some time, Mr Dingwall had orders to make especial inquiry among his clients of Wolf's-hope, whether such a domestic belonging to the Marquis of A—— had actually arrived at the neighbouring castle. This was easily ascertained; for Caleb had been in the village one morning by five o'clock, to "borrow twa chappins of ale and a kipper" for the messenger's refreshment, and the poor fellow had been ill for twenty-four hours at Luckie Sma'trash's, in consequence of dining upon "saut saumon and sour drink." So that the existence of a correspondence betwixt the Marquis and his distressed kinsman, which Sir William Ashton had sometimes treated as a bugbear, was proved beyond the possibility of farther doubt.

The alarm of the Lord Keeper became very serious. Since the Claim of Right, the power of appealing from the decisions of the civil court to the Estates of Parliament, which had formerly been held incompetent, had in many instances been claimed, and in some allowed, and he had no small reason to apprehend the issue, if the English House of Lords should be disposed to act upon an appeal from the Master of Ravenswood "for remeid in law." It would resolve into an equitable claim, and be decided, perhaps, upon the broad principles of justice, which were not quite so favourable to the Lord Keeper as those of strict law. Besides, judging, though most inaccurately, from courts which he had himself known in the unhappy times preceding the Scottish Union, the Keeper might have too much right to think, that in the House to which his lawsuits were to be transferred, the old maxim might prevail in Scotland which was too well recognized in former times,—"Shew me the man, and I'll shew you the law." The high and unbiassed character of English judicial proceedings was then little known in Scotland; and the extension of them to that country was one of the most valuable advantages which it gained by the Union. But this was a blessing which the Lord Keeper, who had lived under another system, could not have the means of foreseeing. In the loss of his political consequence, he anticipated the loss of his lawsuit. Meanwhile, every report which reached him served to render the success of the Marquis's intrigues the more probable, and the Lord Keeper began to think it indispensable, that he should look round for some kind of protection against the coming storm. The timidity of his temper induced him to adopt measures of compromise and conciliation. The affair of the wild bull, properly managed, might, he thought, be made to facilitate a personal communication and reconciliation betwixt the Master and himself. He would then learn, if possible, what his own ideas were of the extent of his rights, and the means of enforcing them; and perhaps matters might be brought to a compromise, where one party was wealthy, and the other so very poor. A reconciliation with Ravenswood was likely to give him an opportunity to play his own game with the Marquis of A——. "And besides," said he to himself, "it will be an act of generosity to raise up the heir of this distressed family; and if he is to be warmly and effectually befriended by the new government, who knows but my virtue may prove its own reward?"

Thus thought Sir William Ashton, covering with no unusual self-delusion his interested views with a hue of virtue; and having attained this point, his fancy strayed still farther. He began to bethink himself, "that if Ravenswood was to have a distinguished place of power and trust—and if such a union should sopite the heavier part of his unadjusted claims—there might be worse matches for his daughter Lucy—the Master might be reponed against the attainder—Lord Ravenswood was an ancient title, and the alliance would, in some measure, legitimate his own possession of the greater part of the Master's spoils, and make the surrender of the rest a subject of less bitter regret."

With these mingled and multifarious plans occupying his head, the Lord Keeper availed himself of my Lord Bittlebrains's repeated invitation to his residence, and thus came within a very few miles of Wolf's Crag. Here he found the lord of the mansion absent, but was courteously received by the lady, who expected her husband's immediate return. She expressed her particular delight at seeing Miss Ashton, and appointed the hounds to be taken out for the Lord Keeper's special amusement. He readily entered into the proposal, as giving him an opportunity to reconnoitre Wolf's Crag, and perhaps to make some acquaintance with the owner, if he should be tempted from his desolate mansion by the chase. Lockhard had his orders to endeavour on his part to make some acquaintance with the inmates of the castle, and we have seen how he played his part.

The accidental storm did more to farther the Lord Keeper's plan of forming a personal acquaintance with young Ravenswood, than his most sanguine expectations could have anticipated. His fear of the young nobleman's personal resentment had greatly decreased, since he considered him as formidable from his legal claims, and the means he might have of enforcing them. But although he thought, not unreasonably, that only desperate circumstances drove men on desperate measures, it was not without a secret terror, which shook his heart within him, that he first felt himself enclosed within the desolate Tower of Wolf's Crag; a place so well fitted, from solitude and strength, to be a scene of violence and vengeance. The stern reception at first given to them by the Master of Ravenswood, and the difficulty he felt in explaining to that injured nobleman what guests were under the shelter of his roof, did not soothe these alarms; so that when Sir William Ashton heard the door of the court-yard shut behind him with violence, the words of Alice rung in his ears, "that he had drawn on matters too hardly with so fierce a race as those of Ravenswood, and that they would bide their time to be avenged."

The subsequent frankness of the Master's hospitality, as their acquaintance increased, abated the apprehensions these recollections were calculated to excite; and it did not escape Sir William Ashton, that it was to Lucy's grace and beauty he owed the change in their host's behaviour.

All these thoughts thronged upon him when he took possession of the secret chamber. The iron lamp, the unfurnished apartment, more resembling a prison than a place of ordinary repose, the hoarse and ceaseless sound of the waves rushing against the base of the rock on which the castle was founded, saddened and perplexed his mind. To his own

successful machinations, the ruin of the family had been in a great measure owing, but his disposition was crafty and not cruel; so that actually to witness the desolation and distress he had himself occasioned, was as painful to him as it would be to the humane mistress of a family to superintend in person the execution of the lambs and poultry which are killed by her own directions. At the same time, when he thought of the alternative, of restoring to Ravenswood a large proportion of his spoils, or of adopting, as an ally and member of his own family, the heir of this impoverished house, he felt as the spider may be supposed to do, when his whole web, the intricacies of which had been planned with so much art, is destroyed by the chance sweep of a broom. And then, if he should commit himself too far in this matter, it gave rise to a perilous question which many a good husband, when under temptation to act as a free agent, has asked himself without being able to return a satisfactory answer; "What will my wife—what will Lady Ashton say?" On the whole, he came at length to the resolution in which minds of a weaker cast so often take refuge. He resolved to watch events, to take advantage of circumstances as they occurred, and regulate his conduct accordingly. In this spirit of temporizing policy, he at length composed his mind to rest.

CHAPTER XVI.

"A slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an offer that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, since I desire nothing but right upon both sides."

King and no King.

When Ravenswood and his guest met in the morning, the gloom of the Master's spirit had in part returned. He, also, had passed a night rather of reflection than of slumber; and the feelings which he could not but entertain towards Lucy Ashton, had to support a severe conflict against those which he had so long nourished against her father. To clasp in friendship the hand of the enemy of his house, to entertain him under his roof, to exchange with him the courtesies and the kindness of domestic familiarity, was a degradation which his proud spirit could not be bent to without a struggle.

But the ice being once broken, the Lord Keeper was resolved it should not have time again to freeze. It had been part of his plan to stun and confuse Ravenswood's ideas, by a complicated and technical statement of the matters which had been in debate betwixt their families, justly thinking that it would be difficult for a youth of his age to follow the expositions of a practical lawyer, concerning actions of compt and reckoning, and of multiplepoindings, and adjudications and wadsets, proper and improper, and poindings of the ground, and declarations of the expiry of the legal. Thus, thought Sir William, I shall have all the grace of appearing perfectly communicative, while my party will derive very little advantage from any thing I may tell him. He therefore took Ravenswood aside into the deep recess of a window in the hall, and resuming the discourse of the preceding evening, expressed a hope that his young friend would assume some patience, in order to hear him enter into a minute and explanatory detail of those unfortunate circumstances, in which his late honourable father had stood at variance with the Lord Keeper. The Master of Ravenswood coloured highly, but was silent; and the Lord Keeper, though not greatly approving the sudden heightening of his auditor's complexion, commenced the history of a bond for twenty thousand marks, advanced by his father to the father of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and was proceeding to detail the executorial proceedings by which this large sum had been rendered a *debitum fundi*, when he was interrupted by the Master.

"It is not in this place," he said, "that I can hear Sir William Ashton's explanation of the matters in question between us. It is not here, where my father died of a broken heart, that I can with decency or temper investigate the cause of his distress. I might remember that I was a son, and forget the duties of a host. A time, however, there must come, when these things shall be discussed in a place, and in a presence, where both of us will have equal freedom to speak and to hear."

"Any time," the Lord Keeper said, "any place, was alike to those who sought nothing but justice. Yet it would seem he was, in fairness, entitled to some premonition respecting the grounds upon which the Master proposed to impugn the whole train of legal proceedings, which had been so well and ripely advised in the only courts competent."

"Sir William Ashton," answered the Master, with warmth, "the lands which you now occupy were granted to my remote ancestor for services done with his sword against the Engilsh invaders. How they have glided from us by a train of proceedings that seem to be neither sale, nor mortgage, nor adjudication for debt, but a nondescript and entangled mixture of all these rights—how annualrent has been accumulated upon principal, and no nook or coign of legal advantage left unoccupied, until our interest in our hereditary property seems to have melted away like an icicle in thaw—all this you understand better than I do. I am willing, however, to suppose, from the frankness of your conduct towards me, that I may in a great measure have mistaken your personal character, and that things may have appeared right and fitting to you, a skilful and practised lawyer, which to my ignorant understanding seem very little short of injustice and gross oppression."

"And you, my dear Master," answered Sir William, "you, permit me to say, have been equally misrepresented to me. I was taught to believe you a fierce, imperious, hot-headed youth, ready, at the slightest provocation, to throw your sword into the scales of justice, and to appeal to those rude and forcible measures from which civil polity has long protected the people of Scotland. Then, since we were mutually mistaken in each other, why should not the young nobleman be willing to listen to the old lawyer, while, at least, he explains the points of difference betwixt them?"

"No, my lord," answered Ravenswood; "it is in the house of British Peers,[1] whose honour must be equal to their rank—it is in the court of last resort that we must parley together. The belted

[1] See Note D. *Appeal to Parliament.*

lords of Britain, her ancient peers, must decide, if it is their will that a house, not the least noble of their members, shall be stripped of their possessions, the reward of the patriotism of generations, as the pawn of a wretched mechanic becomes forfeit to the usurer the instant the hour of redemption has passed away. If they yield to the grasping severity of the creditor, and to the gnawing usury that eats into our lands as moths into a raiment, it will be of more evil consequence to them and their posterity than to Edgar Ravenswood—I shall still have my sword and my cloak, and can follow the profession of arms wherever a trumpet shall sound."

As he pronounced these words, in a firm yet melancholy tone, he raised his eyes, and suddenly encountered those of Lucy Ashton, who had stolen unawares on their interview, and observed her looks fastened on them with an expression of enthusiastic interest and admiration, which had wrapt her for a moment beyond the fear of discovery. The noble form and fine features of Ravenswood, fired with the pride of birth and sense of internal dignity—the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's looks.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. "I need fear," said he internally, "neither Parliament nor protestation; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed; we will not strain the line too soon—it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing."

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from considering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he even did not think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection, which could not escape his attention, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderston now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for in those days of substantial feeding, the relics of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning-draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course, for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt.

"In Edinburgh like enough," said Ravenswood; "but in what place, or for what purpose, I am afraid neither you nor I know."

"Aweel!" said Caleb, peevishly, "there's a man standing at the gate already this morning—that's ae thing that I ken—Does your honour ken whether ye will speak wi' him or no?".

"Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?"

"Less will no serve him," said Caleb; "but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket before opening the gate—it 's no every ane we suld let into this castle."

"What! do you suppose him to be a messenge come to arrest me for debt?" said Ravenswood.

"A messenger arrest your honour for debt, and in your castle of Wolf's Crag!—Your honour is jesting wi' auld Caleb this morning." However, he whispered in his ear as he followed him out, "I would be loath to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honour's gude opinion; but I would tak twa looks o' that chield before I let him within these walls."

He was not an officer of the law, however; being no less a person than Captain Craigengelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked-hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side, and pistols at his holsters, and his person arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace,—the very moral of one who would say, Stand, to a true man.

When the Master had recognized him, he ordered the gates to be opened. "I suppose," he said, "Captain Craigengelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at present, and the terms upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them."

Craigengelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavourable reception. "He had no intention," he said, "to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality—he was in the honourable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion."

"Let it be short, sir," said the Master, "for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?"

"My friend Mr Hayston of Bucklaw," answered Craigengelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principal inspired, "who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me," said he, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, "the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire, or second, on his behoof."

"Satisfaction—and equal arms!" repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate—"upon my word, Captain Craigengelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning-draught has

been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?"

"For that, sir," replied Craigengelt, "I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house without reasons assigned."

"It is impossible," replied the Master; "he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe, that, knowing my opinion of you, Captain, he would have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honour to act with you in the office of umpire."

"I slight and inconsiderable!" said Craigengelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; "if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand ——"

"I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigengelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure."

"D——n!" muttered the bully; "and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honourable message?"

"Tell the laird of Bucklaw," answered Ravenswood, "if you are really sent by him, that when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it."

"Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession."

"Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir," replied the Master, "shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not shew me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it."

"Well, Master," said Captain Craigengelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress,—"you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonour, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed!" he continued, looking around him; "why, this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property."

"You insolent rascal," said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the Captain's bridle, "if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will batoon you to death."

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so rapidly round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the courtyard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at the distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigengelt.

"I have seen," said the Lord Keeper, "that gentleman's face, and at no great distance of time —his name is Craig—Craig—something, is it not?"

"Craigengelt is the fellow's name," said the Master, "at least that by which he passes at present."

"Craig-in-guilt," said Caleb, punning upon the word *craig*, which in Scotch signifies throat; "if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as ony chield I ever saw — the loon has woodie written on his very visonomy, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet."

"You understand physiognomy, good Mr Caleb," said the Keeper, smiling; "I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now—for I most distinctly recollect, that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the Privy Council."

"Upon what account?" said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master's arm, and led him back towards the hall. "The answer to your question," he said, "though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear."

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

CHAPTER XVII.

——Here is a father now,
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
To appease the sea at highest.

Anonymous.

The Lord Keeper opened his discourse with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully, the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

"You are aware," he said, "my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom, and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation."

"My Lord Keeper," said the Master, "I think you would not jest on such a subject — yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest."

"Innocence," said the Lord Keeper, "is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so."

"I do not understand," said Ravenswood, "how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous."

"Imprudent, at least, it may be called," said Sir William Ashton, "since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others, of which, in fact, we are only

conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason, make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law will afford him, and sometimes (if his counsel be men of talent) succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle, of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honester folk."

"Allow me to beg you will return to the point," said the Master; "you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion."

"Suspicion, Master?—ay, truly—and I can shew you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me.—Here, Lockhard"—His attendant came—"Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks, that I recommended to your particular charge—d'ye hear?"

"Yes, my lord." Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued, as if half speaking to himself.

"I think the papers are with me—I think so, for as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of—so perhaps you might condescend——"

Here Lockhard entered, and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the Privy Council concerning the riot, as it was termed, at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These documents had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject, without gratifying it, yet to shew that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peacemaker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast-table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeatedly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person, and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise, and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person, supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once suprising, flattering, and affecting.

"Dry your eyes, Lucy," said her father; "why should you weep, because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honourable man?—What have you to thank me for, my dear Master," he continued, addressing Ravenswood, "that you would not have done in my case? '*Suum cuique tribuito*,' was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have ye not overpaid me a thousand times, in saving the life of this dear child?"

"Yes," answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; "but the little service *I* did was an act of mere brutal instinct; *your* defence of my cause, when you knew how ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom."

"Pshaw!" said the Lord Keeper, "each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts—at least I should have made a very sorry *Tauridor*, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself, than I who acted for you before the council."

"My generous friend!" said Ravenswood;—and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished upon him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of a haughty but honourable heart. The Master had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father, cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.

Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity, and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances, in which *he* found himself "over-crowed," to use a phrase of Spenser, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter—his favourite

child — his constant playmate — seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood; and even the fine, delicate, fragile form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollection of the Master's poverty, and the sure displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connection which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this in effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendency over their judgment, and affirm, that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation. — "In your surprise at finding me an honester man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigengelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in, in the course of that matter too."

"The scoundrel!" said Ravenswood; "my connection with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all. — What did he say of me?"

"Enough," said the Keeper, "to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information. — Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or of the Pretender, I don't recollect which, but which the Marquis of A——, one of your best friends, and another person, whom some call one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, somehow, be brought to listen to."

"I am obliged to my honourable friend, — and yet" — shaking the Lord Keeper's hand — "and yet I am still more obliged to my honourable enemy."

"*Inimicus amicissimus*," said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; "but this gentleman — this Mr Hayston of Bucklaw — I am afraid the poor young man — I heard the fellow mention his name — is under very bad guidance."

"He is old enough to govern himself," answered the Master.

"Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him — that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence."

"Mr Hayston of Bucklaw," said the Master, "is, I believe, a most honourable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful."

"Capable of much that is unreasonable, though; that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady Girnington — an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world — is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march[1] with my own — a noble property."

"I am glad of it," said Ravenswood, "and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability."

"He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure," said the Keeper, "and croaks of jail and gallows-tree. — But I see Mr Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast."

CHAPTER XVIII.

> Sir, stay at home and take an old man's counsel;
> Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth;
> Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire;
> Domestic food is wholesome, though 'tis homely,
> And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.
>
> *The French Courtezan.*

The Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visiters, and computing how long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. "He's nae belly god, that's ae blessing; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Cresses or water-purpie, and a bit ait-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as weel as Caleb. Then for dinner — there's no muckle left on the spule-bane; it will brander, though — it will brander[2] very well."

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle and to remain there for a day or two.

"The mercy of Heaven forbid!" said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

"And why, Caleb?" said his master, "why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit!"

"Oh, sir!" replied Caleb — "O Mr Edgar! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak — but I am an auld servant — have served baith your father and gudesire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather — but that was when I was a bairn."

"And what of all this, Balderston?" said the Master; "what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbour?"

[1] *i. e.* They are bounded by my own.

[2] Broil.

"O Mr Edgar,—that is, my lord!" answered the butler, "your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father's son to be neighbouring wi' the like o' him—it isna for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gie ye back your ain, e'en though ye suld honour his house wi' your alliance, I suldna say na—for the young leddy is a winsome sweet creature—But keep your ain state wi' them—I ken the race o' them weel—they will think the mair o' ye."

"Why, now, you go farther than I do, Caleb," said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; "you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit—how's this?—and you look as pale as death besides."

"O, sir," repeated Caleb again, "you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e'en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day—O, that it should e'er have been fulfilled in my time!"

"And what is it, Caleb?" said Ravenswood, wishing to soothe the fears of his old servant.

Caleb replied, "he had never repeated the lines to living mortal—they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan's father when the family were catholic. But mony a time," he said, "I hae soughed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well-a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day."

"Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggerel which has put it into your head," said the Master, impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines:—

"When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!"

"I know the Kelpie's flow well enough," said the Master; "I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf's-hope; but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there——"

"O, never speer ony thing about that, sir—God forbid we should ken what the prophecy means—but just bide you at hame, and let the strangers ride to Ravenswood by themselves. We have done eneugh for them; and to do mair, would be mair against the credit of the family than in its favour."

"Well, Caleb," said the Master, "I give you the best possible credit for your good advice on this occasion; but as I do not go to Ravenswood to seek a bride, dead or alive, I hope I shall choose a better stable for my horse than the Kelpie's quick-sand, and especially as I have always had a particular dread of it since the patrol of dragoons were lost there ten years since. My father and I saw them from the tower struggling against the advancing tide, and they were lost long before any help could reach them."

"And they deserved it weel, the southern loons!" said Caleb; "what had they ado capering on our sands, and hindering a wheen honest folk frae bringing on shore a drap brandy? I hae seen them that busy, that I wad hae fired the auld culverin, or the demisaker that 's on the south bartizan at them, only I was feared they might burst in the ganging aff."

Caleb's brain was now fully engaged with abuse of the English soldiery and excisemen, so that his master found no great difficulty in escaping from him and rejoining his guests. All was now ready for their departure; and one of the Lord Keeper's grooms having saddled the Master's steed, they mounted in the court-yard.

Caleb had, with much toil, opened the double doors of the outward gate, and thereat stationed himself, endeavouring, by the reverential, and, at the same time, consequential air which he assumed, to supply, by his own gaunt, wasted, and thin person, the absence of a whole baronial establishment of porters, warders, and liveried menials.

The Keeper returned his deep reverence with a cordial farewell, stooping at the same time from his horse, and sliding into the butler's hand the remuneration, which in those days was always given by a departing guest to the domestics of the family where he had been entertained. Lucy smiled on the old man with her usual sweetness, bade him adieu, and deposited her guerdon with a grace of action, and a gentleness of accent, which could not have failed to have won the faithful retainer's heart, but for Thomas the Rhymer, and the successful lawsuit against his master. As it was, he might have adopted the language of the Duke, in *As you Like it*—

"Thou wouldst have better pleased me with this deed,
If thou hadst told me of another father."

Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced from the rear that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursing Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the court-yard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamour, when the good old man exclaimed, "Whisht, sir! whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk—there"—(putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received)—"there 's three gowd pieces—and ye 'll want siller upby yonder—But stay, whisht now!"—for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference—"never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit."

"You forget, Caleb," said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold—"You forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and, once more, good day to you. I assure you I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing."

"Aweel, said Caleb, "these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae eneugh, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, Master,

will you bet a broad piece? Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, I carena if I do; and tak care no to agree on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and——"

"This is intolerable, Caleb—I really must be gone."

"And you will go, then?" said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master's cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone—"And you *will* go, for a' I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie's quicksand?—Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way—he that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. But pity of your life, sir, if ye be fowling or shooting in the Park—beware of drinking at the Mermaiden's well——He 's gane! he 's down the path, arrow-flight after her!—The head is as clean taen aff the Ravenswood family this day, as I wad chap the head aff a sybo!"

The old butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. "Close to her bridle-rein—ay, close to her bridle-rein!—Wisely saith the holy man, 'By this also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men;'—and without this lass would not our ruin have been a'thegither fulfilled."

With a heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf's Crag, as soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the group of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the meantime the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton's company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry, which approached as nearly to gaiety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton's profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger,—the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood's disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court-favour to fill his sails.

"What could she desire," he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish—"What could a woman desire in a match, more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly connected—sure to float whenever the tide sets his way—strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in the temper of a swordsman?—Sure no reasonable woman would hesitate,—But, alas!"—Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. "To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood upon terms of easy compromise—it would be the act of a madwoman!"

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains' House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of commonplace eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he not feeling quite easy under their new honours, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal countenance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attention which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood, had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains' general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in all matters of self-interest.

"I wish Lady Ashton had seen this," was his internal reflection; "no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar's messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, pick and choose. They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market."

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics, had drunk *doch-an-dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.

It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society, and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period, when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then "as black as mourning weed." The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparations preceding their

arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart, as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon, or withdrawing room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats, and flutter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armour, and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinners, with a book of devotion in her hand; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or skull-cap, which sate as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance, in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. And it is to make room for such scarecrows as these, thought Ravenswood, that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected! He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton (for she had not entered the apartment with them) seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine, a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the House of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humour, had not been able to give the husband on the canvass that air of awful rule and right supremacy, which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious, at the first glance, that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat henpecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimneys, and ten silver sconces, reflecting with their bright plates the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

"Would you choose any refreshment, Master?" said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him, that he acted a weak, perhaps even a ridiculous part, in suffering himself to be overcome by the circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

"You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father's time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little workshop, where I treasured the few carpenter's tools which old Caleb procured for me, and taught me how to use—there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods, and hunting poles, bows, and arrows."

"I have a young birkie," said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, "of much the same turn—He is never happy, save when he is in the field—I wonder he is not here.—Here, Lockhard—send William Shaw for Mr Henry—I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy's apron string—that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure."

Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recall Ravenswood from his own topic.

"We were obliged to leave," he said, "some armour and portraits in this apartment—may I ask where they have been removed to?"

"Why," answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, "the room was fitted up in our absence—and *cedant arma togæ*, is the maxim of lawyers, you know—I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope—I believe they are safe—I am sure I gave orders—may I hope that when they are recovered, and put in proper order, you will do me the honour to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?"

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stiffly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoilt boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. "Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new pony, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway."

"I think you were very unreasonable to ask her," said the Keeper.

"Then you are as cross as she is," answered the boy; "but when mamma comes home, she 'll claw up both your mittens."

"Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp!" said his father; "where is your tutor?"

"Gone to a wedding at Dunbar—I hope he 'll get a haggis to his dinner;" and he began to sing the old Scottish song,

"There was a haggis in Dunbar,
Fal de ral, &c.
Mony better and few waur,
Fal de ral, &c."

"I am much obliged to Mr Cordery for his attentions," said the Lord Keeper; "and pray who has had the charge of you while I was away, Mr Henry?"

"Norman and Bob Wilson—forby my own self."

"A groom and a gamekeeper, and your own silly self—proper guardians for a young advocate!—Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red-deer, killing salmon, and——"

"And speaking of red-game," said the young scape-grace, interrupting his father without scruple or hesitation, "Norman has shot a buck, and I shewed the branches to Lucy, and she says they have but eight tynes; and she says that you killed a deer with Lord Bittlebrains' hounds, when you were west away, and, do you know, she says it had ten tynes—is it true?"

"It may have had twenty, Henry, for what I know; but if you go to that gentleman, he can tell you all about it—Go speak to him, Henry—it is the Master of Ravenswood."

While they conversed thus, the father and son were standing by the fire; and the Master having walked towards the upper end of the apartment, stood with his back towards them, apparently engaged in examining one of the paintings. The boy ran up to him, and pulled him by the skirt of the coat with the freedom of a spoilt child, saying, "I say, sir—if you please to tell me"——but when the Master turned round, and Henry saw his face, he became suddenly and totally disconcerted—walked two or three steps backward, and still gazed on Ravenswood with an air of fear and wonder, which had totally banished from his features their usual expression of pert vivacity.

"Come to me, young gentleman," said the Master, "and I will tell you all I know about the hunt."

"Go to the gentleman, Henry," said his father; "you are not used to be so shy."

But neither invitation nor exhortation had any effect on the boy. On the contrary, he turned round as soon as he had completed his survey of the Master, and walking as cautiously as if he had been treading upon eggs, he glided back to his father, and pressed as close to him as possible. Ravenswood, to avoid hearing the dispute betwixt the father and the over-indulged boy, thought it most polite to turn his face once more towards the pictures, and pay no attention to what they said.

"Why do you not speak to the Master, you little fool?" said the Lord Keeper.

"I am afraid," said Henry, in a very low tone of voice.

"Afraid, you goose!" said his father, giving him a slight shake by the collar,—"What makes you afraid?"

"What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood, then?" said the boy, whispering.

"What picture, you natural?" said his father. "I used to think you only a scape-grace, but I believe you will turn out a born idiot."

"I tell you it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupen out of the canvass; and it is up in the old Baron's hall that the maids launder the clothes in, and it has armour, and not a coat like the gentleman—and he has not a beard and wiskers like the picture—and it has another kind of thing about the throat, and no band-strings as he has—and——"

"And why should not the gentleman be like his ancestor, you silly boy?" said the Lord Keeper.

"Ay; but if he is come to chase us all out of the castle," said the boy, "and has twenty men at his back in disguise—and is come to say, with a hollow voice, *I bide my time*—and is to kill you on the hearth as Malise did the other man, and whose blood is still to be seen!"

"Hush! nonsense!" said the Lord Keeper, not himself much pleased to hear these disagreeable coincidences forced on his notice.—"Master, here comes Lockhard to say supper is served."

And, at the same instant, Lucy entered at another door, having changed her dress since her return. The exquisite feminine beauty of her countenance, now shaded only by a profusion of sunny tresses; the sylph-like form disencumbered of her heavy riding-skirt, and mantled in azure silk; the grace of her manner and of her smile, cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master himself, all the gloomy and unfavourable thoughts which had for some time overclouded his fancy. In those features, so simply sweet, he could trace no alliance with the pinched visage of the peak-bearded, black-capped puritan, or his starched withered spouse, with the craft expressed in the Lord Keeper's countenance, or the haughtiness which predominated in that of his lady; and, while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.

CHAPTER XIX.

——I do too ill in this,
And must not think but that a parent's plaint
Will move the heavens to pour forth misery
Upon the head of disobediency.
Yet reason tells us, parents are o'erseen,
When with too strict a rein they do hold in
Their child's affection, and control that love,
Which the high powers divine inspire them with.
The Hog hath lost his Pearl.

The feast of Ravenswood Castle was as remarkable for its profusion, as that of Wolf's Crag had been for its ill-veiled penury. The Lord Keeper might feel internal pride at the contrast, but he had too much tact to suffer it to appear. On the contrary, he seemed to remember with pleasure what he called Mr Balderston's bachelor's meal, and to be rather disgusted than pleased with the display upon his own groaning board.

"We do these things," he said, "because others do them—but I was bred a plain man at my father's frugal table, and I should like well would

my wife and family permit me to return to my sowens and my poor-man-of-mutton." *

This was a little overstretched. The Master only answered, "That different ranks — I mean," said he, correcting himself, "different degrees of wealth require a different style of house-keeping."

This dry remark put a stop to farther conversation on the subject, nor is it necessary to record that which was substituted in its place. The evening was spent with freedom, and even cordiality; and Henry had so far overcome his first apprehensions, that he had settled a party for coursing a stag with the representative and living resemblance of grim Sir Malise of Ravenswood, called the Revenger. The next morning was the appointed time. It rose upon active sportsmen and successful sport. The banquet came in course; and a pressing invitation to tarry yet another day was given and accepted. This Ravenswood had resolved should be the last of his stay; but he recollected he had not yet visited the ancient and devoted servant of his house, old Alice, and it was but kind to dedicate one morning to the gratification of so ancient an adherent.

To visit Alice, therefore, a day was devoted, and Lucy was the Master's guide upon the way. Henry, it is true, accompanied them, and took from their walk the air of a *tête-à-tête*, while, in reality, it was little else, considering the variety of circumstances which occurred to prevent the boy from giving the least attention to what passed between his companions. Now a rook settled on a branch within shot — anon a hare crossed their path, and Henry and his greyhound went astray in pursuit of it — then he had to hold a long conversation with the forester, which detained him a while behind his companions — and again he went to examine the earth of a badger, which carried him on a good way before them.

The conversation betwixt the Master and his sister, meanwhile, took an interesting, and almost a confidential turn. She could not help mentioning her sense of the pain he must feel in visiting scenes so well known to him, bearing now an aspect so different; and so gently was her sympathy expressed, that Ravenswood felt it for a moment as a full requital of all his misfortunes. Some such sentiment escaped him, which Lucy heard with more of confusion than displeasure; and she may be forgiven the imprudence of listening to such language, considering that the situation in which she was placed by her father seemed to authorize Ravenswood to use it. Yet she made an effort to turn the conversation, and she succeeded; for the Master also had advanced farther than he intended, and his conscience had instantly checked him when he found himself on the verge of speaking of love to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.

They now approached the hut of old Alice, which had of late been rendered more comfortable, and presented an appearance less picturesque, perhaps, but far neater than before. The old woman was on her accustomed seat beneath the weeping birch, basking, with the listless enjoyment of age and infirmity, in the beams of the autumn sun. At the arrival of her visiters she turned her head towards them. "I hear your step, Miss Ashton," she said, "but the gentleman who attends you is not my lord, your father."

"And why should you think so, Alice?" said Lucy; "or how is it possible for you to judge so accurately by the sound of a step, on this firm earth, and in the open air?"

"My hearing, my child, has been sharpened by my blindness, and I can now draw conclusions from the slightest sounds, which formerly reached my ears as unheeded as they now approach yours. Necessity is a stern, but an excellent schoolmistress, and she that has lost her sight must collect her information from other sources."

"Well, you hear a man's step, I grant it," said Lucy; "but why, Alice, may it not be my father's?"

"The pace of age, my love, is timid and cautious — the foot takes leave of the earth slowly, and is planted down upon it with hesitation; it is the hasty and determined step of youth that I now hear, and — could I give credit to so strange a thought — I should say it was the step of a Ravenswood."

"This is indeed," said Ravenswood, "an acuteness of organ which I could not have credited had I not witnessed it. — I am indeed the Master of Ravenswood, Alice — the son of your old master."

"You!" said the old woman, with almost a scream of surprise — "you the Master of Ravenswood — here — in this place, and thus accompanied? — I cannot believe it — Let me pass my old hand over your face, that my touch may bear witness to my ears."

The Master sate down beside her on the earthen bank, and permitted her to touch his features with her trembling hand.

"It is indeed!" she said, "it is the features as well as the voice of Ravenswood—the high lines of pride, as well as the bold and haughty tone. — But what do you here, Master of Ravenswood? — what do you in your enemy's domain, and in company with his child?"

As old Alice spoke, her face kindled, as probably that of an ancient feudal vassal might have done in whose presence his youthful liege-lord had shewed some symptom of degenerating from the spirit of his ancestors.

"The Master of Ravenswood," said Lucy, who liked not the tone of this expostulation, and was desirous to abridge it, "is upon a visit to my father."

"Indeed!" said the old blind woman, in an accent of surprise.

"I knew," continued Lucy, "I should do him a pleasure by conducting him to your cottage."

"Where, to say the truth, Alice," said Ravenswood, "I expected a more cordial reception."

"It is most wonderful!" said the old woman, muttering to herself; "but the ways of Heaven are not like our ways, and its judgments are brought about by means far beyond our fathoming. — Hearken, young man," she said; "your fathers were implacable, but they were honourable foes; they sought not to ruin their enemies under the mask of hospitality. What have you to do with Lucy Ashton? — why should your steps move in the same footpath with hers? — why should your voice sound in the same chord and time with those of Sir William Ashton's daughter? — Young man, he who aims at revenge by dishonourable means ——"

* See Note E. *Poor-Man-of-Mutton.*

'Be silent, woman!" said Ravenswood, sternly; "is it the devil that prompts your voice?—Know that this young lady has not on earth a friend, who would venture farther to save her from injury or from insult."

"And is it even so?" said the old woman, in an altered but melancholy tone—"Then God help you both!"

"Amen! Alice," said Lucy, who had not comprehended the import of what the blind woman had hinted, "and send you your senses, Alice, and your good-humour. If you hold this mysterious language, instead of welcoming your friends, they will think of you as other people do."

"And how do other people think?" said Ravenswood, for he also began to believe the old woman spoke with incoherence.

"They think," said Henry Ashton, who came up at that moment, and whispered into Ravenswood's ear, "that she is a witch, that should have been burned with them that suffered at Haddington."

"What is that you say?" said Alice, turning towards the boy, her sightless visage inflamed with passion; that I am a witch, and ought to have suffered with the helpless old wretches who were murdered at Haddington?"

"Hear to that now," again whispered Henry, "and me whispering lower than a wren cheeps?"

"If the usurer, and the oppressor, and the grinder of the poor man's face, and the remover of ancient land-marks, and the subverter of ancient houses, were at the same stake with me, I could say, light the fire, in God's name!"

"This is dreadful," said Lucy; "I have never seen the poor deserted woman in this state of mind; but age and poverty can ill bear reproach.—Come, Henry, we will leave her for the present—she wishes to speak with the Master alone. We will walk homeward, and rest us," she added, looking at Ravenswood, "by the Mermaiden's Well."

"And Alice," said the boy, "if you know of any hare that comes through among the deer and makes them drop their calves out of season, you may tell her, with my compliments to command, that if Norman has not got a silver bullet ready for her, I 'll lend him one of my doublet-buttons on purpose."

Alice made no answer till she was aware that the sister and brother were out of hearing. She then said to Ravenswood, "And you, too, are angry with me for my love?—it is just that strangers should be offended, but you, too, are angry!"

"I am not angry, Alice," said the Master, "only surprised that you, whose good sense I have heard so often praised, should give way to offensive and unfounded suspicions."

"Offensive?" said Alice—"Ay, truth is ever offensive—but, surely, not unfounded."

"I tell you, dame, most groundless," replied Ravenswood.

"Then the world has changed its wont, and the Ravenswoods their hereditary temper, and the eyes of old Alice's understanding are yet more blind than those of her countenance. When did a Ravenswood seek the house of his enemy, but with the purpose of revenge?—and hither are you come, Edgar Ravenswood, either in fatal anger, or in still more fatal love."

"In neither," said Ravenswood, "I give you mine honour—I mean, I assure you."

Alice could not see his blushing cheek, but she noticed his hesitation, and that he retracted the pledge which he seemed at first disposed to attach to his denial.

"It is so, then," she said, "and therefore she is to tarry by the Mermaiden's Well! Often has it been called a place fatal to the race of Ravenswood—often has it proved so—but never was it likely to verify old sayings as much as on this day."

"You drive me to madness, Alice," said Ravenswood; "you are more silly and more superstitious than old Balderston. Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I would in the present day levy war against the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times? or do you suppose me so foolish, that I cannot walk by a young lady's side without plunging headlong in love with her?"

"My thoughts," replied Alice, "are my own; and if my mortal sight is closed to objects present with me, it may be I can look with more steadiness into future events. Are you prepared to sit lowest at the board which was once your father's own, unwillingly, as a connection and ally of his proud successor?—Are you ready to live on his bounty—to follow him in the bypaths of intrigue and chicane, which none can better point out to you—to gnaw the bones of his prey when he has devoured the substance?—Can you say as Sir William Ashton says—think as he thinks—vote as he votes, and call your father's murderer your worshipful father-in-law and revered patron?—Master of Ravenswood, I am the eldest servant of your house, and I would rather see you shrouded and coffined!"

The tumult in Ravenswood's mind was uncommonly great; she struck upon and awakened a chord which he had for some time successfully silenced. He strode backwards and forwards through the little garden with a hasty pace; and at length checking himself, and stopping right opposite to Alice, he exclaimed, "Woman! on the verge of the grave, dare you urge the son of your master to blood and to revenge?"

"God forbid!" said Alice solemnly; "and therefore I would have you depart these fatal bounds, where your love, as well as your hatred, threatens sure mischief, or at least disgrace, both to yourself and to others. I would shield, were it in the power of this withered hand, the Ashtons from you, and you from them, and both from their own passions. You can have nothing—ought to have nothing, in common with them—Begone from among them; and if God has destined vengeance on the oppressor's house, do not you be the instrument."

"I will think on what you have said, Alice," said Ravenswood, more composedly. "I believe you mean truly and faithfully by me, but you urge the freedom of an ancient domestic somewhat too far. But farewell; and if Heaven afford me better means, I will not fail to contribute to your comfort."

He attempted to put a piece of gold into her hand, which she refused to receive; and, in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth.

"Let it remain an instant on the ground," said Alice, as the Master stooped to raise it; "and believe me, that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold

as with earthly passions; and the best news that the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is an hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to behold it."

"Alice," said the Master, who began to think this earnestness had some more secret cause than arose from any thing that the blind woman could have gathered from this casual visit, "I have heard you praised by my mother for your sense, acuteness, and fidelity; you are no fool to start at shadows, or to dread old superstitious saws, like Caleb Balderston; tell me distinctly where my danger lies, if you are aware of any which is tending towards me. If I know myself, I am free from all such views respecting Miss Ashton as you impute to me. I have necessary business to settle with Sir William — that arranged, I shall depart; and with as little wish, as you may easily believe, to return to a place full of melancholy subjects of reflection, as you have to see me here."

Alice bent her sightless eyes on the ground, and was for some time plunged in deep meditation. "I will speak the truth," she said at length, raising up her head — "I will tell you the source of my apprehensions, whether my candour be for good or for evil. — Lucy Ashton loves you, Lord of Ravenswood!"

"It is impossible," said the Master.

"A thousand circumstances have proved it to me," replied the blind woman. "Her thoughts have turned on no one else since you saved her from death, and that my experienced judgment has won from her own conversation. Having told you this — if you are indeed a gentleman and your father's son — you will make it a motive for flying from her presence. Her passion will die like a lamp, for want of that the flame should feed upon; but, if you remain here, her destruction, or yours, or that of both, will be the inevitable consequence of her misplaced attachment. I tell you this secret unwillingly, but it could not have been hid long from your own observation; and it is better you learn it from mine. Depart, Master of Ravenswood — you have my secret. If you remain an hour under Sir William Ashton's roof without the resolution to marry his daughter, you are a villain — if with the purpose of allying yourself with him, you are an infatuated and predestined fool."

So saying, the old blind woman arose, assumed her staff, and, tottering to her hut, entered it and closed the door, leaving Ravenswood to his own reflections.

CHAPTER XX.

> Lovelier in her own retired abode
> —— than Naiad by the side
> Of Grecian brook — or Lady of the Mere
> Lone sitting by the shores of old romance.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE meditations of Ravenswood were of a very mixed complexion. He saw himself at once in the very dilemma which he had for some time felt apprehensive he might be placed in. The pleasure he felt in Lucy's company had indeed approached to fascination, yet it had never altogether surmounted his internal reluctance to wed with the daughter of his father's foe; and even in forgiving Sir William Ashton the injuries which his family had received, and giving him credit for the kind intentions he professed to entertain, he could not bring himself to contemplate as possible an alliance betwixt their houses. Still he felt that Alice spoke truth, and that his honour now required he should take an instant leave of Ravenswood Castle, or become a suitor of Lucy Ashton. The possibility of being rejected, too, should he make advances to her wealthy and powerful father — to sue for the hand of an Ashton and be refused — this were a consummation too disgraceful. "I wish her well," he said to himself, "and for her sake I forgive the injuries her father has done to my house; but I will never — no, never see her more!"

With one bitter pang he adopted this resolution, just as he came to where two paths parted; the one to the Mermaiden's Fountain, where he knew Lucy waited him, the other leading to the castle by another and more circuitous road. He paused an instant when about to take the latter path, thinking what apology he should make for conduct which must needs seem extraordinary, and had just muttered to himself, "Sudden news from Edinburgh — any pretext will serve — only let me dally no longer here," when young Henry came flying up to him, half out of breath — "Master, Master, you must give Lucy your arm back to the castle, for I cannot give her mine; for Norman is waiting for me, and I am to go with him to make his ring-walk, and I would not stay away for a gold Jacobus, and Lucy is afraid to walk home alone, though all the wild nowt have been shot, and so you must come away directly."

Betwixt two scales equally loaded, a feather's weight will turn the scale. "It is impossible for me to leave the young lady in the wood alone," said Ravenswood; "to see her once more can be of little consequence, after the frequent meetings we have had — I ought, too, in courtesy, to apprise her of my intention to quit the castle."

And having thus satisfied himself that he was taking not only a wise, but an absolutely necessary step, he took the path to the fatal fountain. Henry no sooner saw him on the way to join his sister, than he was off like lightning in another direction, to enjoy the society of the forester in their congenial pursuits. Ravenswood, not allowing himself to give a second thought to the propriety of his own conduct, walked with a quick step towards the stream, where he found Lucy seated alone by the ruin.

She sate upon one of the disjointed stones of the ancient fountain, and seemed to watch the progress of its current, as it bubbled forth to daylight, in gay and sparkling profusion, from under the shadow of the ribbed and darksome vault, with which veneration, or perhaps remorse, had canopied its source. To a superstitious eye, Lucy Ashton, folded in her plaided mantle, with her long hair, escaping partly from the snood and falling upon her silver neck, might have suggested the idea of the murdered Nymph of the Fountain. But Ravenswood only saw a female exquisitely beautiful, and rendered yet more so in his eyes—how could it be otherwise — by the consciousness that she had placed her affections on him. As he gazed on her, he felt his fixed resolution melting like wax in the sun, and hastened, therefore, from his concealment in the neighbouring thicket. She saluted him, but did not arise from the stone on which she was seated.

"My mad-cap brother," she said, "has left me, but I expect him back in a few minutes — for fortunately, as any thing pleases him for a minute, nothing has charms for him much longer."

Ravenswood did not feel the power of informing Lucy that her brother meditated a distant excursion, and would not return in haste. He sate himself down on the grass, at some little distance from Miss Ashton, and both were silent for a short space.

"I like this spot," said Lucy at length, as if she had found the silence embarrassing; "the bubbling murmur of the clear fountain, the waving of the trees, the profusion of grass and wild-flowers, that rise among the ruins, make it like a scene in romance. I think, too, I have heard it is a spot connected with the legendary lore which I love so well."

"It has been thought," answered Ravenswood, "a fatal spot to my family; and I have some reason to term it so, for it was here I first saw Miss Ashton — and it is here I must take my leave of her for ever."

The blood, which the first part of this speech called into Lucy's cheeks, was speedily expelled by its conclusion.

"To take leave of us, Master!" she exclaimed; "what can have happened to hurry you away! — I know Alice hates — I mean dislikes my father — and I hardly understood her humour to-day, it was so mysterious. But I am certain my father is sincerely grateful for the high service you rendered us. Let me hope that having won your friendship hardly, we shall not lose it lightly."

"Lose it, Miss Ashton?" said the Master of Ravenswood, — "No — wherever my fortune calls me — whatever she inflicts upon me — it is your friend — your sincere friend, who acts or suffers. But there is a fate on me, and I must go, or I shall add the ruin of others to my own."

"Yet do not go from us, Master," said Lucy; and she laid her hand, in all simplicity and kindness, upon the skirt of his cloak, as if to detain him — "You shall not part from us. My father is powerful, he has friends that are more so than himself — do not go till you see what his gratitude will do for you. Believe me, he is already labouring in your behalf with the Council."

"It may be so," said the Master, proudly; "yet it is not to your father, Miss Ashton, but to my own exertions, that I ought to owe success in the career on which I am about to enter. My preparations are already made — a sword and a cloak, and a bold heart and a determined hand.

Lucy covered her face with her hands, and the tears, in spite of her, forced their way between her fingers. "Forgive me," said Ravenswood, taking her right hand, which after slight resistance, she yielded to him, still continuing to shade her face with the left — "I am too rude — too rough — too intractable to deal with any being so soft and gentle as you are. Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life — and let me pursue mine, sure that I can meet with no worse misfortune after the moment it divides me from your side."

Lucy wept on, but her tears were less bitter. Each attempt which the Master made to explain his purpose of departure, only proved a new evidence of his desire to stay; until, at length, instead of bidding her farewell, he gave his faith to her for ever, and received her troth in return. The whole passed so suddenly, and arose so much out of the immediate impulse of the moment, that ere the Master of Ravenswood could reflect upon the consequences of the step which he had taken, their lips, as well as their hands, had pledged the sincerity of their affection.

"And now," he said, after a moment's consideration, "it is fit I should speak to Sir William Ashton — he must know of our engagement. Ravenswood must not seem to dwell under his roof, to solicit clandestinely the affections of his daughter."

"You would not speak to my father on the subject?" said Lucy, doubtingly; and then added more warmly, "O do not — do not! Let your lot in life be determined — your station and purpose ascertained, before you address my father; I am sure he loves you — I think he will consent — but then my mother ——!"

She paused, ashamed to express the doubt she felt how far her father dared to form any positive resolution on this most important subject, without the consent of his lady.

"Your mother, my Lucy?" replied Ravenswood, "she is of the house of Douglas, a house that has intermarried with mine, even when its glory and power were at the highest — what could your mother object to my alliance?"

"I did not say object," said Lucy; "but she is jealous of her rights, and may claim a mother's title to be consulted in the first instance."

"Be it so," replied Ravenswood; "London is distant, but a letter will reach it and receive an answer within a fortnight — I will not press on the Lord Keeper for an instant reply to my proposal."

"But," hesitated Lucy, "were it not better to wait — to wait a few weeks? — Were my mother to see you — to know you — I am sure she would approve; but you are unacquainted personally, and the ancient feud between the families ——"

Ravenswood fixed upon her his keen dark eyes as if he was desirous of penetrating into her very soul.

"Lucy," he said, "I have sacrificed to you projects of vengeance long nursed, and sworn to with ceremonies little better than heathen — I sacrificed them to your image, ere I knew the worth which it represented. In the evening which succeeded my poor father's funeral, I cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation."

"It was a deadly sin," said Lucy, turning pale, "to make a vow so fatal."

"I acknowledge it," said Ravenswood, "and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I abjured these purposes of vengeance, though I scarce knew that such was the argument by which I was conquered, until I saw you once more, and became conscious of the influence you possessed over me."

"And why do you now," said Lucy, "recall sentiments so terrible — sentiments so inconsistent with those you profess for me — with those your importunity has prevailed on me to acknowledge?"

"Because," said her lover, "I would impress on you the price at which I have bought your love — the right I have to expect your constancy. I say not that I have bartered for it the honour of my

house, its last remaining possession—but though I say it not, and think it not, I cannot conceal from myself that the world may do both."

"If such are your sentiments," said Lucy, "you have played a cruel game with me. But it is not too late to give it over—take back the faith and troth which you could not plight to me without suffering abatement of honour—let what is passed be as if it had not been—forget me—I will endeavour to forget myself."

"You do me injustice," said the Master of Ravenswood; "by all I hold true and honourable, you do me the extremity of injustice—if I mentioned the price at which I have bought your love, it is only to shew how much I prize it, to bind our engagement by a still firmer tie, and to shew, by what I have done to attain this station in your regard, how much I must suffer should you ever break your faith."

"And why, Ravenswood," answered Lucy, "should you think that possible?—Why should you urge me with even the mention of infidelity!—Is it because I ask you to delay applying to my father for a little space of time? Bind me by what vows you please; if vows are unnecessary to secure constancy, they may yet prevent suspicion."

Ravenswood pleaded, apologized, and even kneeled, to appease her displeasure; and Lucy, as placable as she was single-hearted, readily forgave the offence which his doubts had implied. The dispute thus agitated, however, ended by the lovers going through an emblematic ceremony of their troth-plight, of which the vulgar still preserve some traces. They broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold which Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood.

"And never shall this leave my bosom," said Lucy, as she hung the piece of gold round her neck, and concealed it with her handkerchief, "until you, Edgar Ravenswood, ask me to resign it to you—and, while I wear it, never shall that heart acknowledge another love than yours."

With like protestations, Ravenswood placed his portion of the coin opposite to his heart. And now, at length, it struck them, that time had hurried fast on during this interview, and their absence at the castle would be subject of remark, if not of alarm. As they arose to leave the fountain which had been witness of their mutual engagement, an arrow whistled through the air, and struck a raven perched on the sere branch of an old oak, near to where they had been seated. The bird fluttered a few yards, and dropped at the feet of Lucy, whose dress was stained with some spots of its blood.

Miss Ashton was much alarmed, and Ravenswood, surprised and angry, looked every where for the marksman, who had given them a proof of his skill as little expected as desired. He was not long of discovering himself, being no other than Henry Ashton, who came running up with a crossbow in his hand.

"I knew I should startle you," he said; "and do you know you looked so busy that I hoped it would have fallen souse on your heads before you were aware of it.—What was the Master saying to you, Lucy?"

"I was telling your sister what an idle lad you were, keeping us waiting here for you so long," said Ravenswood, to save Lucy's confusion.

"Waiting for me? Why, I told you to see Lucy home, and that I was to go to make the ring-walk with old Norman in the Hayberry thicket, and you may be sure that would take a good hour, and we have all the deer's marks and furnishes got, while you were sitting here with Lucy, like a lazy loon."

"Well, well, Mr Henry," said Ravenswood; "but let us see how you will answer to me for killing the raven. Do you know the ravens are all under the protection of the Lords of Ravenswood, and, to kill one in their presence, is such bad luck that it deserves the stab?"

"And that's what Norman said," replied the boy; "he came as far with me, as within a flight-shot of you, and he said he never saw a raven sit still so near living folk, and he wished it might be for good luck; for the raven is one of the wildest birds that flies, unless it be a tame one—and so I crept on and on, till I was within three score yards of him, and then whiz went the bolt, and there he lies, faith! Was it not well shot?—and, I daresay, I have not shot in a crossbow—not ten times, maybe."

"Admirably shot indeed," said Ravenswood; "and you will be a fine marksman if you practise hard."

"And that's what Norman says," answered the boy; "but I am sure it is not my fault if I do not practise enough; for, of free will, I would do little else, only my father and tutor are angry sometimes, and only Miss Lucy there gives herself airs about my being busy, for all she can sit idle by a well side the whole day, when she has a handsome young gentleman to prate with—I have known her do so twenty times, if you will believe me."

The boy looked at his sister as he spoke, and in the midst of his mischievous chatter, had the sense to see that he was really inflicting pain upon her, though without being able to comprehend the cause or the amount.

"Come now, Lucy," he said, "don't greet; and if I have said any thing beside the mark, I'll deny it again—and what does the Master of Ravenswood care if you had a hundred sweethearts? so ne'er put finger in your eye about it."

The Master of Ravenswood was, for the moment, scarce satisfied with what he heard; yet his good sense naturally regarded it as the chatter of a spoilt boy, who strove to mortify his sister in the point which seemed most accessible for the time. But, although of a temper equally slow in receiving impressions, and obstinate in retaining them, the prattle of Henry served to nourish in his mind some vague suspicion, that his present engagement might only end in his being exposed like a conquered enemy in a Roman triumph, a captive attendant on the car of a victor, who meditated only the satiating his pride at the expense of the vanquished. There was, we repeat it, no real ground whatever for such an apprehension, nor could he be said seriously to entertain such for a moment. Indeed, it was impossible to look at the clear blue eye of Lucy Ashton, and entertain the slightest permanent doubt concerning the sincerity of her disposition. Still, however, conscious pride and conscious poverty combined to render a mind suspicious, which in more fortunate circumstances, would have been a stranger to that as well as to every other meanness.

They reached the castle, where Sir William

Ashton, who had been alarmed by the length of their stay, met them in the hall.

"Had Lucy," he said, "been in any other company than that of one who had shewn he had so complete power of protecting her, he confessed he should have been very uneasy, and would have despatched persons in quest of them. But, in the company of the Master of Ravenswood, he knew his daughter had nothing to dread."

Lucy commenced some apology for their long delay, but, conscience struck, became confused as she proceeded; and when Ravenswood, coming to her assistance, endeavoured to render the explanation complete and satisfactory, he only involved himself in the same disorder, like one who, endeavouring to extricate his companion from a slough, entangles himself in the same tenacious swamp. It cannot be supposed that the confusion of the two youthful lovers escaped the observation of the subtle lawyer, accustomed, by habit and profession, to trace human nature through all her windings. But it was not his present policy to take any notice of what he observed. He desired to hold the Master of Ravenswood bound, but wished that he himself should remain free; and it did not occur to him that his plan might be defeated by Lucy's returning the passion which he hoped she might inspire. If she should adopt some romantic feelings towards Ravenswood, in which circumstances, or the positive and absolute opposition of Lady Ashton, might render it unadvisable to indulge her, the Lord Keeper conceived they might be easily superseded and annulled by a journey to Edinburgh, or even to London, a new set of Brussels lace, and the soft whispers of half a dozen lovers, anxious to replace him whom it was convenient she should renounce. This was his provision for the worst view of the case. But, according to its more probable issue, any passing favour she might entertain for the Master of Ravenswood, might require encouragement rather than repression.

This seemed the more likely, as he had that very morning, since their departure from the castle, received a letter, the contents of which he hastened to communicate to Ravenswood. A foot-post had arrived with a packet to the Lord Keeper from that friend whom we have already mentioned, who was labouring hard under-hand to consolidate a band of patriots, at the head of whom stood Sir William's greatest terror, the active and ambitious Marquis of A——. The success of this convenient friend had been such, that he had obtained from Sir William, not indeed a directly favourable answer, but certainly a most patient hearing. This he had reported to his principal, who had replied, by the ancient French adage, "*Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute, l'un et l'autre va se rendre.*" A statesman who hears you propose a change of measures without reply, was, according to the Marquis's opinion, in the situation of the fortress which parleys, and the lady who listens, and he resolved to press the siege of the Lord Keeper.

The packet, therefore, contained a letter from his friend and ally, and another from himself to the Lord Keeper, frankly offering an unceremonious visit. They were crossing the country to go to the southward — the roads were indifferent — the accommodation of the inns as execrable as possible — the Lord Keeper had been long acquainted intimately with one of his correspondents, and though more slightly known to the Marquis, had yet enough of his lordship's acquaintance to render the visit sufficiently natural, and to shut the mouths of those who might be disposed to impute it to a political intrigue. He instantly accepted the offered visit, determined, however, that he would not pledge himself an inch farther for the furtherance of their views than *reason* (by which he meant his own self-interest) should plainly point out to him as proper.

Two circumstances particularly delighted him; the presence of Ravenswood, and the absence of his own lady. By having the former under his own roof, he conceived he might be able to quash all such hazardous and hostile proceedings as he might otherwise have been engaged in, under the patronage of the Marquis; and Lucy, he foresaw, would make, for his immediate purpose of delay and procrastination, a much better mistress of his family than her mother, who would, he was sure, in some shape or other, contrive to disconcert his political schemes by her proud and implacable temper.

His anxious solicitations that the Master would stay to receive his kinsman, were of course readily complied with, since the *éclaircissement* which had taken place at the Mermaiden's Fountain had removed all wish for sudden departure. Lucy and Lockhard had, therefore, orders to provide all things necessary in their different departments, for receiving the expected guests, with a pomp and display of luxury very uncommon in Scotland at that remote period.

CHAPTER XXI.

Marall. Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted ——
Overreach. In without reply,
And do as I command. ——
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?——
New Way to Pay Old Debts.

Sir William Ashton, although a man of sense, legal information, and great practical knowledge of the world, had yet some points of character which corresponded better with the timidity of his disposition and the supple arts by which he had risen in the world, than to the degree of eminence which he had attained; as they tended to shew an original mediocrity of understanding, however highly it had been cultivated, and a native meanness of disposition, however carefully veiled. He loved the ostentatious display of his wealth, less as a man to whom habit has made it necessary, than as one to whom it is still delightful from its novelty. The most trivial details did not escape him; and Lucy soon learned to watch the flush of scorn which crossed Ravenswood's cheek, when he heard her father gravely arguing with Lockhard, nay, even with the old housekeeper, upon circumstances which, in families of rank, are left uncared for, because it is supposed impossible they can be neglected.

"I could pardon Sir William," said Ravenswood, one evening after he had left the room, "some general anxiety upon this occasion, for the Marquis's visit is an honour, and should be received as such; but I am worn out by these miserable minutiæ of the buttery, and the larder, and the very hen-coop — they drive me beyond my patience; I would rather endure the poverty of Wolf's Crag,

than be pestered with the wealth of Ravenswood Castle."

"And yet," said Lucy, "it was by attention to these minutiæ that my father acquired the property ——"

"Which my ancestors sold for lack of it," replied Ravenswood. "Be it so; a porter still bears but a burden, though the burden be of gold."

Lucy sighed; she perceived too plainly that her lover held in scorn the manners and habits of a father, to whom she had long looked up as her best and most partial friend, whose fondness had often consoled her for her mother's contemptuous harshness.

The lovers soon discovered that they differed upon other and no less important topics. Religion, the mother of peace, was, in those days of discord, so much misconstrued and mistaken, that her rules and forms were the subject of the most opposite opinions, and the most hostile animosities. The Lord Keeper, being a whig, was, of course, a Presbyterian, and had found it convenient, at different periods, to express greater zeal for the kirk, than perhaps he really felt. His family, equally of course, were trained under the same institution. Ravenswood, as we know, was a High-Church man, or Episcopalian, and frequently objected to Lucy the fanaticism of some of her own communion, while she intimated, rather than expressed, horror at the latitudinarian principles which she had been taught to think connected with the prelatical form of church-government.

Thus, although their mutual affection seemed to increase rather than to be diminished, as their characters opened more fully on each other, the feelings of each were mingled with some less agreeable ingredients. Lucy felt a secret awe, amid all her affection for Ravenswood. His soul was of a higher, prouder cahracter, than those with whom she had hitherto mixed in intercourse; his ideas were more fierce and free; and he contemned many of the opinions which had been inculcated upon her, as chiefly demanding her veneration. On the other hand, Ravenswood saw in Lucy a soft and flexible character, which, in his eyes at least, seemed too susceptible of being moulded to any form by those with whom she lived. He felt that his own temper required a partner of a more independent spirit, who could set sail with him on his course of life, resolved as himself to dare indifferently the storm and the favouring breeze. But Lucy was so beautiful, so devoutly attached to him, of a temper so exquisitely soft and kind, that, while he could have wished it were possible to inspire her with a greater degree of firmness and resolution, and while he sometimes became impatient of the extreme fear which she expressed of their attachment being prematurely discovered, he felt that the softness of a mind, amounting almost to feebleness, rendered her even dearer to him, as a being who had voluntarily clung to him for protection, and made him the arbiter of her fate for weal or wo. His feelings towards her at such moments, were those which have been since so beautifully expressed by our immortal Joanna Baillie: —

——"Thou sweetest thing,
That e'er did fix its lightly-fibred sprays
To the rude rock, ah! wouldst thou cling to me?
Rough and storm-worn I am — yet love me as
Thou truly dost, I will love thee again
With true and honest heart, though all unmeet
To be the mate of such sweet gentleness."

Thus the very points in which they differed, seemed, in some measure, to ensure the continuance of their mutual affection. If, indeed, they had so fully appreciated each other's character before the burst of passion in which they hastily pledged their faith to each other, Lucy might have feared Ravenswood too much ever to have loved him, and he might have construed her softness and docile temper as imbecility, rendering her unworthy of his regard. But they stood pledged to each other; and Lucy only feared that her lover's pride might one day teach him to regret his attachment; Ravenswood, that a mind so ductile as Lucy's might, in absence or difficulties, be induced, by the entreaties or influence of those around her, to renounce her engagement she had formed.

"Do not fear it," said Lucy, when upon one occasion a hint of such suspicion escaped her lover; "the mirrors which receive the reflection of all successive objects are framed of hard materials like glass or steel — the softer substances, when they receive an impression, retain it undefaced."

"This is poetry, Lucy," said Ravenswood; "and in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction."

"Believe me, then, once more, in honest prose," said Lucy, "that, though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it."

The lovers had ample time for such explanations. Henry was now more seldom their companion, being either a most unwilling attendant upon the lessons of his tutor, or a forward volunteer under the instructions of the foresters or grooms. As for the Keeper, his mornings were spent in his study, maintaining correspondences of all kinds, and balancing in his anxious mind the various intelligence which he collected from every quarter concerning the expected change of Scottish politics, and the probable strength of the parties who were about to struggle for power. At other times he busied himself about arranging, and countermanding, and then again arranging, the preparations which he judged necessary for the reception of the Marquis of A——, whose arrival had been twice delayed by some necessary cause of detention.

In the midst of all these various avocations, political and domestic, he seemed not to observe how much his daughter and his guest were thrown into each other's society, and was censured by many of his neighbours, according to the fashion of neighbours in all countries, for suffering such an intimate connection to take place betwixt two young persons. The only natural explanation was, that he designed them for each other; while, in truth, his only motive was to temporize and procrastinate, until he should discover the real extent of the interest which the Marquis took in Ravenswood's affairs, and the power which he was likely to possess of advancing them. Until these points should be made both clear and manifest, the Lord Keeper resolved that he would do nothing to commit himself, either in one shape or other; and, like many cunning persons, he overreached himself deplorably.

Amongst those who had been disposed to censure with the greatest severity, the conduct of Sir William Ashton, in permitting the prolonged residence of Ravenswood under his roof, and his constant attendance on Miss Ashton, was the new Laird of Girnington, and his faithful squire and bottle-holder, personages formerly well known to us by the names of Hayston and Bucklaw, and his companion Captain Craigengelt. The former had at length succeeded to the extensive property of his long-lived grand-aunt, and to considerable wealth besides, which he had employed in redeeming his paternal acres, (by the title appertaining to which he still chose to be designated,) notwithstanding Captain Craigengelt had proposed to him a most advantageous mode of vesting the money in Law's scheme, which was just then broached, and offered his services to travel express to Paris for the purpose. But Bucklaw had so far derived wisdom from adversity, that he would listen to no proposal which Craigengelt could invent, which had the slightest tendency to risk his newly-acquired independence. He that once had eat pease bannocks, drank sour wine, and slept in the secret chamber at Wolf 's Crag, would, he said, prize good cheer and a soft bed as long as he lived, and take special care never to need such hospitality again.

Craigengelt, therefore, found himself disappointed in the first hopes he had entertained of making a good hand of the Laird of Bucklaw. Still, however, he reaped many advantages from his friend's good fortune. Bucklaw, who had never been at all scrupulous in choosing his companions, was accustomed to, and entertained by a fellow, whom he could either laugh with, or laugh at, as he had a mind, who would take, according to Scottish phrase, "the bit and the buffet," understood all sports, whether within or without doors, and, when the laird had a mind for a bottle of wine, (no infrequent circumstance,) was always ready to save him from the scandal of getting drunk by himself. Upon these terms Craigengelt was the frequent, almost the constant, inmate of the house of Girnington.

In no time, and under no possibility of circumstances, could good have been derived from such an intimacy, however its bad consequences might be qualified by the thorough knowledge which Bucklaw possessed of his dependant's character, and the high contempt in which he held it. But as circumstances stood, this evil communication was particularly liable to corrupt what good principles nature had implanted in the patron.

Craigengelt had never forgiven the scorn with which Ravenswood had torn the mask of courage and honesty from his countenance; and to exasperate Bucklaw's resentment against him, was the safest mode of revenge which occurred to his cowardly, yet cunning and malignant disposition.

He brought up, on all occasions, the story of the challenge which Ravenswood had declined to accept, and endeavoured, by every possible insinuation, to make his patron believe that his honour was concerned in bringing that matter to an issue by a present discussion with Ravenswood. But respecting this subject, Bucklaw imposed on him, at length, a peremptory command of silence.

"I think," he said, "the Master has treated me unlike a gentleman, and I see no right he had to send me back a cavalier answer when I demanded the satisfaction of one — Bnt he gave me my life once — and, in looking the matter over at present, I put myself but on equal terms with him. Should he cross me again, I shall consider the old accompt as balanced, and his Mastership will do well to look to himself."

"That he should," re-echoed Craigengelt; "for when you are in practice, Bucklaw, I would bet a magnum you are through him before the third pass."

"Then you know nothing of the matter," said Bucklaw, "and you never saw him fence."

"And I know nothing of the matter?" said the dependant — "a good jest, I promise you! — and though I never saw Ravenswood fence, have I not been at Monsieur Sagoon's school, who was the first *maître d'armes* at Paris; and have I not been at Signor Poco's at Florence, and Meinheer Durchstossen's at Vienna, and have I not seen all their play?"

"I don't know whether you have or not," said Bucklaw; "but what about it, though you had?"

"Only that I will be d—d if ever I saw French, Italian, or High-Dutchman ever make foot, hand, and eye, keep time half so well as you, Bucklaw."

"I believe you lie, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "however, I can hold my own, both with single rapier, backsword, sword and dagger, broadsword, or case of falchions — and that's as much as any gentleman need know of the matter."

"And the double of what ninety-nine out of a hundred know," said Craigengelt; "they learn to change a few thrusts with the small sword, and then, forsooth, they understand the noble art of defence! Now, when I was at Rouen in the year 1695, there was a Chevalier de Chapon and I went to the Opera, where we found three bits of English birkies ——"

"Is it a long story you are going to tell?" said Bucklaw interrupting him without ceremony.

"Just as you like," answered the parasite, "for we made short work of it."

"Then I like it short," said Bucklaw; "is it serious or merry?"

"Devilish serious, I assure you, and so they found it; for the Chevalier and I ——"

"Then I don't like it at all," said Bucklaw; "so fill a brimmer of my auld auntie's claret, rest her heart! And, as the Hielandman says, *Skioch doch na skiaill.*"[1]

"That was what tough old Sir Evan Dhu used to say to me when I was out with the metall'd lads in 1689. 'Craigengelt,' he used to say, 'you are as pretty a fellow as ever held steel in his grip, but you have one fault.'"

"If he had known you as long as I have done," said Bucklaw, "he would have found out some twenty more; but hang long stories, give us your toast, man."

Craigengelt rose, went a tiptoe to the door, peeped out, shut it carefully, came back again — clapped his tarnished gold-laced hat on one side of his head, took his glass in one hand, and touching the hilt of his hanger with the other, named. "The King over the water."

"I tell you what it is, Captain Craigengelt," said Bucklaw; "I shall keep my mind to myself on these

[1] "Cut a drink with a tale;" equivalent to the English adage of boon companions, "Don't preach over your liquor."

subjects, having too much respect for the memory of my venerable aunt Girnington to put her lands and tenements in the way of committing treason against established authority. Bring me King James to Edinburgh, Captain, with thirty thousand men at his back, and I'll tell you what I think about his title; but as for running my neck into a noose, and my good broad lands into the statutory penalties, 'in that case made and provided,' rely upon it, you will find me no such fool. So, when you mean to vapour with your hanger and your dram-cup in support of treasonable toasts, you must find your liquor and company elsewhere."

"Well, then," said Craigengelt, "name the toast yourself, and be it what it like, I'll pledge you, were it a mile to the bottom."

"And I'll give you a toast that deserves it, my boy," said Bucklaw; "what say you to Miss Lucy Ashton?"

"Up with it," said the Captain, as he tossed off his brimmer, "the bonniest lass in Lothian. What a pity the old sneck-drawing whigamore, her father, is about to throw her away upon that rag of pride and beggary, the Master of Ravenswood!"

"That's not quite so clear," said Bucklaw, in a tone which, though it seemed indifferent, excited his companion's eager curiosity; and not that only, but also his hope of working himself into some sort of confidence, which might make him necessary to his patron, being by no means satisfied to rest on mere sufferance, if he could form by art or industry a more permanent title to his favour.

"I thought," said he, after a moment's pause, "that was a settled matter — they are continually together, and nothing else is spoken of betwixt Lammerlaw and Traprain."

"They may say what they please," replied his patron, "but I know better; and I'll give you Miss Lucy Ashton's health again, my boy."

"And I would drink it on my knee," said Craigengelt, "if I thought the girl had the spirit to jilt that d—d son of a Spaniard."

"I am to request you will not use the word jilt and Miss Ashton's name together," said Bucklaw, gravely.

"Jilt, did I say? — discard, my lad of acres — by Jove, I meant to say discard," replied Craigengelt; "and I hope she'll discard him like a small card at piquet, and take in the King of Hearts, my boy! — But yet ——"

"But what?" said his patron.

"But yet I know for certain they are hours together alone, and in the woods and the fields."

"That's her foolish father's dotage — that will be soon put out of the lass's head, if it ever gets into it," answered Bucklaw. "And now fill your glass again, Captain, I am going to make you happy — I am going to let you into a secret — a plot — a noosing plot — only the noose is but typical."

"A marrying matter?" said Craigengelt, and his jaw fell as he asked the question; for he suspected that matrimony would render his situation at Girnington much more precarious than during the jolly days of his patron's bachelorhood.

"Ay, a marriage, man," said Bucklaw; "but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit, and why grow the rubies on thy cheek so pale? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board-end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary — What, man! I am not the boy to put myself into leading-strings?"

"So says many an honest fellow," said Craigengelt, "and some of my special friends; but, curse me if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out of favour before the honeymoon was over."

"If you could have kept your ground till that was over, you might have made a good year's pension," said Bucklaw.

"But I never could," answered the dejected parasite; "there was my Lord Castle-Cuddy — we were hand and glove — I rode his horses — borrowed money, both for him and from him — trained his hawks, and taught him how to lay his bets; and when he took a fancy of marrying, I married him to Katie Glegg, whom I thought myself as sure of as man could be of woman. Egad, she had me out of the house, as if I had run on wheels, within the first fortnight!"

"Well!" replied Bucklaw, "I think I have nothing of Castle-Cuddy about me, or Lucy of Katie Glegg. But you see the thing will go on whether you like it or no — the only question is, will you be useful?"

"Useful?" exclaimed the Captain; — "and to thee, my lad of lands, my darling boy, whom I would tramp barefooted through the world for! — name time, place, mode, and circumstances, and see if I will not be useful in all uses that can be devised."

"Why, then, you must ride two hundred miles for me," said the patron.

"A thousand, and call them a flea's leap," answered the dependant; "I'll cause saddle my horse directly."

"Better stay till you know where you are to go, and what you are to do," quoth Bucklaw. "You know I have a kinswoman in Northumberland, Lady Blenkensop by name, whose old acquaintance I had the misfortune to lose in the period of my poverty, but the light of whose countenance shone forth upon me when the sun of my prosperity began to arise."

"D—n all such double-faced jades!" exclaimed Craigengelt, heroically; "this I will say for John Craigengelt, that he is his friend's friend through good report and bad report, poverty and riches; and you know something of that yourself, Bucklaw."

"I have not forgot your merits," said his patron; "I do remember, that, in my extremities, you had a mind to *crimp* me for the service of the French king, or of the Pretender; and, moreover, that you afterwards lent me a score of pieces, when, as I firmly believe, you had heard the news that old Lady Girnington had a touch of the dead palsy. But don't be downcast, John; I believe, after all, you like me very well in your way, and it is my misfortune to have no better counsellor at present. To return to this Lady Blenkensop, you must know she is a close confederate of Duchess Sarah."

"What! of Sall Jennings?" exclaimed Craigengelt; "then she must be a good one."

"Hold your tongue, and keep your Tory rants to yourself, if it be possible," said Bucklaw; "I tell you, that through the Duchess of Marlborough has this Northumbrian cousin of mine become a crony of Lady Ashton, the Keeper's wife, or, I may say, the Lord Keeper's Lady Keeper, and she has

favoured Lady Blenkensop with a visit on her return from London, and is just now at her old mansion-house on the banks of the Wansbeck. Now, sir, as it has been the use and wont of these ladies to consider their husbands as of no importance in the management of their own families, it has been their present pleasure, without consulting Sir William Ashton, to put on the *tapis* a matrimonial alliance, to be concluded between Lucy Ashton and my own right honourable self, Lady Ashton acting a self-constituted plenipotentiary on the part of her daughter and husband, and Mother Blenkensop, equally unaccredited, doing me the honour to be my representative. You may suppose I was a little astonished when I found that a treaty, in which I was so considerably interested, had advanced a good way before I was even consulted."

"Capot me if I think that was according to the rules of the game," said his confident; "and pray, what answer did you return?"

"Why, my first thought was to send the treaty to the devil, and the negotiators along with it, for a couple of meddling old women; my next was to laugh very heartily; and my third and last was a settled opinion that the thing was reasonable, and would suit me well enough."

"Why, I thought you had never seen the wench but once — and then she had her riding-mask on — I am sure you told me so."

"Ay — but I liked her very well then. And Ravenswood's dirty usage of me — shutting me out of doors to dine with the lackeys, because he had the Lord Keeper, forsooth, and his daughter, to be guests in his beggarly castle of starvation — D — n me, Craigengelt, if I ever forgive him till I play him as good a trick!"

"No more you should, if you are a lad of mettle," said Craigengelt, the matter now taking a turn in which he could sympathise; "and if you carry this wench from him, it will break his heart."

"That it will not," said Bucklaw; "his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy — things that you, Craigie, know nothing about more than myself, God help me — But it will break his pride, though, and that's what I 'm driving at."

"Distance me," said Craigengelt, "but I know the reason now of his unmannerly behaviour at his old tumble-down tower yonder — Ashamed of your company? — no, no! — Gad, he was afraid you would cut in and carry off the girl."

"Eh! Craigengelt?" said Bucklaw — "do you really think so? — but no, no! — he is a devilish deal prettier man than I am."

"Who — he?" exclaimed the parasite — "he 's as black as the crook; and for his size — he 's a tall fellow, to be sure — but give me a light, stout, middle-sized ——"

"Plague on thee!" said Bucklaw, interrupting him, "and on me for listening to you! — you would say as much if I were hunch-backed. But as to Ravenswood — he has kept no terms with me — I 'll keep none with him — if I *can* win this girl from him, I *will* win her."

"Win her? — 'sblood, you *shall* win her, point, quint, and quatorze, my king of trumps — you shall pique, repique, and capot him."

"Prithee, stop thy gambling cant for one instant," said Bucklaw. "Things have come thus far, that I have entertained the proposal of my kinswoman, agreed to the terms of jointure, amount of fortune, and so forth, and that the affair is to go forward when Lady Ashton comes down, for she takes her daughter and her son in her own hand. Now they want me to send up a confidential person with some writings."

"By this good wine, I 'll ride to the end of the world — the very gates of Jericho, and the judgment-seat of Prester John, for thee!" ejaculated the Captain.

"Why, I believe you would do something for me, and a great deal for yourself. Now, any one could carry the writings; but you will have a little more to do. You must contrive to drop out before my Lady Ashton, just as if it were a matter of little consequence, the residence of Ravenswood at her husband's house, and his close intercourse with Miss Ashton; and you may tell her, that all the country talks of a visit from the Marquis of A——, as it is supposed, to make up the match betwixt Ravenswood and her daughter. I should like to hear what she says to all this; for, rat me, if I have any idea of starting for the plate at all, if Ravenswood is to win the race, and he has odds against me already."

"Never a bit — the wench has too much sense — and in that belief I drink her health a third time; and, were time and place fitting, I would drink it on bended knees, and he that would not pledge me, I would make his guts garter his stockings."

"Hark ye, Craigengelt; as you are going into the society of women of rank," said Bucklaw, "I 'll thank you to forget your strange blackguard oaths and damme's — I 'll write to them, though, that you are a blunt untaught fellow."

"Ay, ay," replied Craigengelt; "a plain, blunt, honest, downright soldier."

"Not too honest, nor too much of the soldier neither; but such as thou art, it is my luck to need thee, for I must have spurs put to Lady Ashton's motions."

"I 'll dash them up to the rowel-heads," said Craigengelt; "she shall come here at the gallop, like a cow chased by a whole nest of hornets, and her tail twisted over her rump like a cork-screw."

"And hear ye, Craigie," said Bucklaw; "your boots and doublet are good enough to drink in, as the man says in the play, but they are somewhat too greasy for tea-table service — prithee, get thyself a little better rigged out, and here is to pay all charges."

"Nay, Bucklaw — on my soul, man — you use me ill — However," added Craigengelt, pocketing the money, "if you will have me so far indebted to you, I must be conforming."

"Well, horse and away!" said the patron, "so soon as you have got your riding livery in trim. You may ride the black crop-ear — and, hark ye, I 'll make you a present of him to boot."

"I drink to the good luck of my mission," answered the ambassador, "in a half-pint bumper."

"I thank ye, Craigie, and pledge you — I see nothing against it but the father or the girl taking a tantrum, and I am told the mother can wind them both round her little finger. Take care not to affront her with any of your Jacobite jargon."

"O ay, true — she is a whig, and a friend of old Sall of Marlborough — thank my stars, I can hoist any colours at a pinch. I have fought as hard under John Churchill as ever I did under Dundee or the Duke of Berwick."

"I verily believe you, Craigie," said the lord of the mansion; "but, Craigie, do you, pray, step down to the cellar, and fetch us up a bottle of the Burgundy, 1678—it is in the fourth bin from the right-hand turn—And I say, Craigie, you may fetch up half-a-dozen whilst you are about it.—Egad, we 'll make a night on 't!"

CHAPTER XXII.

And soon they spied the merry-men greet,
And eke the coach and four.
Duke upon Duke.

Craigengelt set forth on his mission so soon as his equipage was complete, prosecuted his journey with all diligence, and accomplished his commission with all the dexterity for which Bucklaw had given him credit. As he arrived with credentials from Mr Hayston of Bucklaw, he was extremely welcome to both ladies; and those who are prejudiced in favour of a new acquaintance can, for a time at least, discover excellencies in his very faults, and perfections in his deficiencies. Although both ladies were accustomed to good society, yet, being predetermined to find out an agreeable and well-behaved gentleman in Mr Hayston's friend, they succeeded wonderfully in imposing on themselves. It is true that Craigengelt was now handsomely dressed, and that was a point of no small consequence. But, independent of outward show, his blackguard impudence of address was construed into honourable bluntness, becoming his supposed military profession; his hectoring passed for courage, and his sauciness for wit. Lest, however, any one should think this a violation of probability, we must add, in fairness to the two ladies, that their discernment was greatly blinded, and their favour propitiated, by the opportune arrival of Captain Craigengelt in the moment when they were longing for a third hand to make a party at tredrille, in which, as in all games, whether of chance or skill, that worthy person was a great proficient.

When he found himself established in favour, his next point was how best to use it for the furtherance of his patron's views. He found Lady Ashton prepossessed strongly in favour of the motion, which Lady Blenkensop, partly from regard to her kinsman, partly from the spirit of match-making, had not hesitated to propose to her; so that his task was an easy one. Bucklaw, reformed from his prodigality, was just the sort of husband which she desired to have for her Shepherdess of Lammermoor; and while the marriage gave her an easy fortune, and a respectable country gentleman for her husband, Lady Ashton was of opinion that her destinies would be fully and most favourably accomplished. It so chanced, also, that Bucklaw, among his new acquisitions, had gained the management of a little political interest in a neighbouring county, where the Douglas family originally held large possessions. It was one of the bosom-hopes of Lady Ashton, that her eldest son, Sholto, should represent this county in the British Parliament, and she saw this alliance with Bucklaw as a circumstance which might be highly favourable to her wishes.

Craigengelt, who in his way by no means wanted sagacity, no sooner discovered in what quarter the wind of Lady Ashton's wishes sate, than he trimmed his course accordingly. "There was little to prevent Bucklaw himself from sitting for the county—he must carry the heat—must walk the course. Two cousins-german—six more distant kinsmen, his factor and his chamberlain, were all hollow votes—and the Girnington interest had always carried, betwixt love and fear, about as many more. But Bucklaw cared no more about riding the first horse, and that sort of thing, than he, Craigengelt, did about a game at birkie—it was a pity his interest was not in good guidance."

All this Lady Ashton drank in with willing and attentive ears, resolving internally to be herself the person who should take the management of the political influence of her destined son-in-law, for the benefit of her eldest born, Sholto, and all other parties concerned.

When he found her ladyship thus favourably disposed, the Captain proceeded, to use his employer's phrase, to set spurs to her resolution, by hinting at the situation of matters at Ravenswood Castle, the long residence which the heir of that family had made with the Lord Keeper, and the reports which (though he would be d—d ere he gave credit to any of them) had been idly circulated in the neighbourhood. It was not the Captain's cue to appear himself to be uneasy on the subject of these rumours; but he easily saw from Lady Ashton's flushed cheek, hesitating voice, and flashing eye, that she had caught the alarm which he intended to communicate. She had not heard from her husband so often or so regularly as she thought him bound in duty to have written, and of this very interesting intelligence, concerning his visit to the Tower of Wolf's Crag, and the guest whom, with such cordiality, he had received at Ravenswood Castle, he had suffered his lady to remain altogether ignorant, until she now learned it by the chance information of a stranger. Such concealment approached, in her apprehension, to a misprision, at least, of treason, if not to actual rebellion against her matrimonial authority; and in her inward soul did she vow to take vengeance on the Lord Keeper, as on a subject detected in meditating revolt. Her indignation burned the more fiercely, as she found herself obliged to suppress it in presence of Lady Blenkensop, the kinswoman, and of Craigengelt, the confidential friend of Bucklaw, of whose alliance she now became trebly desirous, since it occurred to her alarmed imagination, that her husband might, in his policy or timidity, prefer that of Ravenswood.

The Captain was engineer enough to discover that the train was fired; and therefore heard, in the course of the same day, without the least surprise, that Lady Ashton had resolved to abridge her visit to Lady Blenkensop, and set forth with the peep of morning on her return to Scotland, using all the despatch which the state of the roads, and the mode of travelling, would possibly permit.

Unhappy Lord Keeper!—little was he aware what a storm was travelling towards him in all the speed with which an old-fashioned coach and six could possibly achieve its journey. He, like Don Gayferos, "forgot his lady fair and true," and was only anxious about the expected visit of the Marquis of A——. Soothfast tidings had assured him that this nobleman was at length, and without fail, to honour his castle at one in the afternoon.

being a late dinner-hour; and much was the bustle in consequence of the annunciation. The Lord Keeper traversed the chambers, held consultation with the butler in the cellars, and even ventured, at the risk of a *démêlé* with a cook, of a spirit lofty enough to scorn the admonitions of Lady Ashton herself, to peep into the kitchen. Satisfied, at length, that every thing was in as active a train of preparation as was possible, he summoned Ravenswood and his daughter to walk upon the terrace, for the purpose of watching, from that commanding position, the earliest symptoms of his lordship's approach. For this purpose, with slow and idle step, he paraded the terrace, which, flanked with a heavy stone battlement, stretched in front of the castle upon a level with the first story; while visiters found access to the court by a projecting gate-way, the bartizan or flat leaded roof of which was accessible from the terrace by an easy flight of low and broad steps. The whole bore a resemblance partly to a castle, partly to a nobleman's seat; and though calculated, in some respects, for defence, evinced that it had been constructed under a sense of the power and security of the ancient Lords of Ravenswood.

This pleasant walk commanded a beautiful and extensive view. But what was most to our present purpose, there were seen from the terrace two roads, one leading from the east, and one from the westward, which, crossing a ridge opposed to the eminence on which the castle stood, at different angles, gradually approached each other, until they joined not far from the gate of the avenue. It was to the westward approach that the Lord Keeper, from a sort of fidgeting anxiety, his daughter, from complaisance to him, and Ravenswood, though feeling some symptoms of internal impatience, out of complaisance to his daughter, directed their eyes to see the precursors of the Marquis's approach.

These were not long of presenting themselves. Two running footmen, dressed in white, with black jockey-caps, and long staffs in their hands, headed the train; and such was their agility, that they found no difficulty in keeping the necessary advance, which the etiquette of their station required, before the carriage and horsemen. Onward they came at a long swinging trot, arguing unwearied speed in their long-breathed calling. Such running footmen are often alluded to in old plays, (I would particularly instance "Middleton's Mad World my Masters,") and perhaps may be still remembered by some old persons in Scotland, as part of the retinue of the ancient nobility when travelling in full ceremony.[1] Behind these glancing meteors, who footed it as if the Avenger of Blood had been behind them, came a cloud of dust, raised by riders who preceded, attended, or followed, the state-carriage of the Marquis.

The privilege of nobility, in those days, had something in it impressive on the imagination. The dresses and liveries, and number of their attendants, their style of travelling, the imposing, and almost warlike air of the armed men who surrounded them, placed them far above the laird, who travelled with his brace of footmen; and as to rivalry from the mercantile part of the community, these would as soon have thought of imitating the state equipage of the Sovereign. At present it is different; and I myself, Peter Pattieson, in a late journey to Edinburgh, had the honour, in the mail-coach phrase, to "change a leg" with a peer of the realm. It was not so in the days of which I write; and the Marquis's approach, so long expected in vain, now took place in the full pomp of ancient aristocracy. Sir William Ashton was so much interested in what he beheld, and in considering the ceremonial of reception in case any circumstance had been omitted, that he scarce heard his son Henry exclaim, "There is another coach and six coming down the east road, papa — can they both belong to the Marquis of A——?"

At length, when the youngster had fairly compelled his attention by pulling his sleeve,

> "He turn'd his eyes, and, as he turn'd, survey'd
> An awful vision."

Sure enough, another coach and six, with four servants or out-riders in attendance, was descending the hill from the eastward, at such a pace as made it doubtful which of the carriages thus approaching from different quarters would first reach the gate at the extremity of the avenue. The one coach was green, the other blue; and not the green and blue chariots in the Circus of Rome or Constantinople excited more turmoil among the citizens than the double apparition occasioned in the mind of the Lord Keeper. We all remember the terrible exclamation of the dying profligate, when a friend, to destroy what he supposed the hypochondriac idea of a spectre appearing in a certain shape at a given hour, placed before him a person dressed up in the manner he described. "*Mon Dieu!*" said the expiring sinner, who, it seems, saw both the real and polygraphic apparition — "*il y en a deux!*"

The surprise of the Lord Keeper was scarcely less unpleasing at the duplication of the expected arrival; his mind misgave him strangely. There was no neighbour who would have approached so unceremoniously, at a time when ceremony was held in such respect. It must be Lady Ashton, said his conscience, and followed up the hint with an anxious anticipation of the purpose of her sudden and unannounced return. He felt that he was caught "in the manner." That the company in which she had so unluckily surprised him was likely to be highly distasteful to her, there was no question; and the only hope which remained for him was her high sense of dignified propriety, which, he trusted, might prevent a public explosion. But so active were his doubts and fears, as altogether to derange his purposed ceremonial for the reception of the Marquis.

These feelings of apprehension were not confined to Sir William Ashton. "It is my mother — it is my mother!" said Lucy, turning as pale as ashes, and clasping her hands together as she looked at Ravenswood.

"And if it be Lady Ashton," said her lover to her in a low tone, "what can be the occasion of such alarm! — Surely the return of a lady to the family from which she has been so long absent, should excite other sensations than those of fear and dismay."

"You do not know my mother," said Miss Ashton, in a tone almost breathless with terror; "what will she say when she sees you in this place!"

[1] See Note F. *Middleton. Note by Jedediah Cleishbotham.*

"My stay has been too long," said Ravenswood, somewhat haughtily, "if her displeasure at my presence is likely to be so formidable. My dear Lucy," he resumed, in a tone of soothing encouragement, "you are too childishly afraid of Lady Ashton; she is a woman of family—a lady of fashion—a person who must know the world, and what is due to her husband and her husband's guests."

Lucy shook her head; and, as if her mother, still at the distance of half a mile, could have seen and scrutinized her deportment, she withdrew herself from beside Ravenswood, and, taking her brother Henry's arm, led him to a different part of the terrace. The Keeper also shuffled down towards the portal of the great gate, without inviting Ravenswood to accompany him, and thus he remained standing alone on the terrace, deserted and shunned, as it were, by the inhabitants of the mansion.

This suited not the mood of one who was proud in proportion to his poverty, and who thought that, in sacrificing his deep-rooted resentments so far as to become Sir William Ashton's guest, he conferred a favour and received none. "I can forgive Lucy," he said to himself; "she is young, timid, and conscious of an important engagement assumed without her mother's sanction; yet she should remember with whom it has been assumed, and leave me no reason to suspect that she is ashamed of her choice. For the Keeper, sense, spirit, and expression seem to have left his face and manner since he had the first glimpse of Lady Ashton's carriage. I must watch how this is to end; and, if they give me reason to think myself an unwelcome guest, my visit is soon abridged."

With these suspicions floating on his mind, he left the terrace, and, walking towards the stables of the castle, gave directions that his horse should be kept in readiness, in case he should have occasion to ride abroad.

In the meanwhile the drivers of the two carriages, the approach of which had occasioned so much dismay at the castle, had become aware of each other's presence, as they approached upon different lines to the head of the avenue, as a common centre. Lady Ashton's driver and postilions instantly received orders to get foremost, if possible, her ladyship being desirous of despatching her first interview with her husband before the arrival of these guests, whoever they might happen to be. On the other hand, the coachman of the Marquis, conscious of his own dignity and that of his master, and observing the rival charioteer was mending his pace, resolved, like a true brother of the whip, whether ancient or modern, to vindicate his right of precedence. So that, to increase the confusion of the Lord Keeper's understanding, he saw the short time which remained for consideration abridged by the haste of the contending coachmen, who, fixing their eyes sternly on each other, and applying the lash smartly to their horses, began to thunder down the descent with emulous rapidity, while the horsemen who attended them were forced to put on to a hand-gallop.

Sir William's only chance now remaining was the possibility of an overturn, and that his lady or visiter might break their necks. I am not aware that he formed any distinct wish on the subject, but I have no reason to think that his grief in either case would have been altogether inconsolable. This chance, however, also disappeared; for Lady Ashton, though insensible to fear, began to see the ridicule of running a race with a visiter of distinction, the goal being the portal of her own castle, and commanded her coachman, as they approached the avenue, to slacken his pace, and allow precedence to the stranger's equipage; a command which he gladly obeyed, as coming in time to save his honour, the horses of the Marquis's carriage being better, or, at least, fresher than his own. He restrained his pace, therefore, and suffered the green coach to enter the avenue, with all its retinue, which pass it occupied with the speed of a whirlwind. The Marquis's laced charioteer no sooner found the *pas d' avance* was granted to him, than he resumed a more deliberate pace, at which he advanced under the embowering shade of the lofty elms, surrounded by all the attendants; while the carriage of Lady Ashton followed, still more slowly, at some distance.

In the front of the castle, and beneath the portal which admitted guests into the inner court, stood Sir William Ashton, much perplexed in mind, his younger son and daughter beside him, and in their rear a train of attendants of various ranks, in and out of livery. The nobility and gentry of Scotland, at this period, were remarkable even to extravagance for the number of their servants, whose services were easily purchased in a country where men were numerous beyond proportion to the means of employing them.

The manners of a man, trained like Sir William Ashton, are too much at his command to remain long disconcerted with the most adverse concurrence of circumstances. He received the Marquis, as he alighted foom his equipage, with the usual compliments of welcome; and, as he ushered him into the great hall, expressed his hope that his journey had been pleasant. The Marquis was a tall, well-made man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance, and an eye, in which the fire of ambition had for some years replaced the vivacity of youth; a bold, proud expression of countenance, yet chastened by habitual caution, and the desire which, as the head of a party, he necessarily entertained of acquiring popularity. He answered with courtesy the courteous inquiries of the Lord Keeper, and was formally presented to Miss Ashton, in the course of which ceremony the Lord Keeper gave the first symptom of what was chiefly occupying his mind, by introducing his daughter as "his wife, Lady Ashton."

Lucy blushed; the Marquis looked surprised at the extremely juvenile appearance of his hostess, and the Lord Keeper with difficulty rallied himself so far as to explain. "I should have said my daughter, my lord; but the truth is, that I saw Lady Ashton's carriage enter the avenue shortly after your lordship's, and ——"

"Make no apology, my lord," replied his noble guest; "let me entreat you will wait on your lady, and leave me to cultivate Miss Ashton's acquaintance. I am shocked my people should have taken precedence of our hostess at her own gate; but your lordship is aware, that I supposed Lady Ashton was still in the south. Permit me to beseech you will wave ceremony, and hasten to welcome her."

This was precisely what the Lord Keeper longed to do; and he instantly profited by his lordship's obliging permission. To see Lady Ashton, and encounter the first burst of her displeasure in

private, might prepare her, in some degree, to receive her unwelcome guests with due decorum. As her carriage, therefore, stopped, the arm of the attentive husband was ready to assist Lady Ashton in dismounting. Looking as if she saw him not, she put his arm aside, and requested that of Captain Craigengelt, who stood by the coach with his laced hat under his arm, having acted as *cavalière servente*, or squire in attendance, during the journey. Taking hold of this respectable person's arm as if to support her, Lady Ashton traversed the court, uttering a word or two by way of direction to the servants, but not one to Sir William, who in vain endeavoured to attract her attention, as he rather followed than accompanied her into the hall, in which they found the Marquis in close conversation with the Master of Ravenswood: Lucy had taken the first opportunity of escaping. There was embarrassment on every countenance except that of the Marquis of A——; for even Craigengelt's impudence was hardly able to veil his fear of Ravenswood, and the rest felt the awkwardness of the position in which they were thus unexpectedly placed.

After waiting a moment to be presented by Sir William Ashton, the Marquis resolved to introduce himself. "The Lord Keeper," he said, bowing to Lady Ashton, "has just introduced to me his daughter as his wife—he might very easily present Lady Ashton as his daughter, so little does she differ from what I remember her some years since. —Will she permit an old acquaintance the privilege of a guest?"

He saluted the lady with too good a grace to apprehend a repulse, and then proceeded—"This, Lady Ashton, is a peacemaking visit, and therefore I presume to introduce my cousin, the young Master of Ravenswood, to your favourable notice."

Lady Ashton could not choose but curtsey; but there was in her obeisance an air of haughtiness approaching to contemptuous repulse. Ravenswood could not choose but bow; but his manner returned the scorn with which he had been greeted.

"Allow me," she said, "to present to your lordship *my* friend." Craigengelt, with the forward impudence which men of his cast mistake for ease, made a sliding bow to the Marquis, which he graced by a flourish of his gold-laced hat. The lady turned to her husband—"You and I, Sir William," she said, and these were the first words she had addressed to him, "have acquired new acquaintances since we parted—let me introduce the acquisition I have made to mine—Captain Craigengelt."

Another bow, and another flourish of the gold-laced hat, which was returned by the Lord Keeper without intimation of former recognition, and with that sort of anxious readiness, which intimated his wish, that peace and amnesty should take place betwixt the contending parties, including the auxiliaries on both sides. "Let me introduce you to the Master of Ravenswood," said he to Captain Craigengelt, following up the same amicable system. But the Master drew up his tall form to the full extent of his height, and without so much as looking towards the person thus introduced to him, he said, in a marked tone, "Captain Craigengelt and I are already perfectly well acquainted with each other."

"Perfectly—perfectly," replied the Captain, in a mumbling tone, like that of a double echo, and with a flourish of his hat, the circumference of which was greatly abridged, compared with those which had so cordially graced his introduction to the Marquis and the Lord Keeper.

Lockhard, followed by three menials, now entered with wine and refreshments, which it was the fashion to offer as a whet before dinner; and when they were placed before the guests, Lady Ashton made an apology for withdrawing her husband from them for some minutes upon business of special import. The Marquis, of course, requested her ladyship would lay herself under no restraint; and Craigengelt, bolting with speed a second glass of racy canary, hastened to leave the room, feeling no great pleasure in the prospect of being left alone with the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood; the presence of the former holding him in awe, and that of the latter in bodily terror.

Some arrangements about his horse and baggage formed the pretext for his sudden retreat, in which he persevered, although Lady Ashton gave Lockhard orders to be careful most particularly to accommodate Captain Craigengelt with all the attendance which he could possibly require. The Marquis and the Master of Ravenswood were thus left to communicate to each other their remarks upon the reception which they had met with, while Lady Ashton led the way, and her lord followed somewhat like a condemned criminal, to her ladyship's dressing-room.

So soon as the spouses had both entered, her ladyship gave way to that fierce audacity of temper, which she had with difficulty suppressed, out of respect to appearances. She shut the door behind the alarmed Lord Keeper, took the key out of the spring-lock, and with a countenance which years had not bereft of its haughty charms, and eyes which spoke at once resolution and resentment, she addressed her astounded husband in these words:—"My lord, I am not greatly surprised at the connections you have been pleased to form during my absence—they are entirely in conformity with your birth and breeding; and if I did expect any thing else, I heartily own my error, and that I merit, by having done so, the disappointment you had prepared for me."

"My dear Lady Ashton—my dear Eleanor," said the Lord Keeper, "listen to reason for a moment, and I will convince you I have acted with all the regard due to the dignity, as well as the interest, of my family."

"To the interest of *your* family I conceive you perfectly capable of attending," returned the indignant lady, "and even to the dignity of your own family also, as far as it requires any looking after—But as mine happens to be inextricably involved with it, you will excuse me if I choose to give my own attention so far as that is concerned."

"What would you have, Lady Ashton?" said the husband—"What is it that displeases you? Why is it that on your return after so long an absence, I am arraigned in this manner?"

"Ask your own conscience, Sir William, what has prompted you to become a renegade to your political party and opinions, and led you, for what I know, to be on the point of marrying your only daughter to a beggarly Jacobite bankrupt, the inveterate enemy of your family to the boot."

"Why, what in the name of common sense and

common civility, would you have me do, madam?" answered her husband—"Is it possible for me, with ordinary decency, to turn a young gentleman out of my house, who saved my daughter's life and my own, but the other morning as it were?"

"Saved your life! I have heard of that story," said the lady—"the Lord Keeper was scared by a dun cow, and he takes the young fellow who killed her for Guy of Warwick—any butcher from Haddington may soon have an equal claim on your hospitality."

"Lady Ashton," stammered the Keeper, "this is intolerable—and when I am desirous, too, to make you easy by any sacrifice—if you would but tell me what you would be at."

"Go down to your guests," said the imperious dame, "and make your apology to Ravenswood, that the arrival of Captain Craigengelt and some other friends, renders it impossible for you to offer him lodgings at the castle—I expect young Mr Hayston of Bucklaw."

"Good heavens, madam!" ejaculated her husband—"Ravenswood to give place to Craigengelt, a common gambler and an informer!—it was all I could do to forbear desiring the fellow to get out of my house, and I was much surprised to see him in your ladyship's train."

"Since you saw him there, you might be well assured," answered this meek helpmate, "that he was proper society. As to this Ravenswood, he only meets with the treatment which, to my certain knowledge, he gave to a much-valued friend of mine, who had the misfortune to be his guest some time since. But take your resolution; for, if Ravenswood does not quit the house, I will."

Sir William Ashton paced up and down the apartment in the most distressing agitation; fear, and shame, and anger contending against the habitual deference he was in the use of rendering to his lady. At length it ended, as is usual with timid minds placed in such circumstances, in his adopting a *mezzo termine*, a middle measure.

"I tell you frankly, madam, I neither can nor will be guilty of the incivility you propose to the Master of Ravenswood—he has not deserved it at my hand. If you will be so unreasonable as to insult a man of quality under your own roof, I cannot prevent you; but I will not at least be the agent in such a preposterous proceeding."

"You will not?" asked the lady.

"No, by heavens, madam!" her husband replied; "ask me any thing congruent with common decency, as to drop his acquaintance by degrees, or the like—but to bid him leave my house is what I will not, and cannot consent to."

"Then the task of supporting the honour of the family will fall on me, as it has often done before," said the lady.

She sat down, and hastily wrote a few lines. The Lord Keeper made another effort to prevent her taking a step so decisive, just as she opened the door to call her female attendant from the anteroom. "Think what you are doing, Lady Ashton—you are making a mortal enemy of a young man, who is like to have the means of harming us——"

"Did you ever know a Douglas who feared an enemy?" answered the lady contemptuously.

"Ay, but he is as proud and vindictive as an hundred Douglasses, and an hundred devils to boot. Think of it for a night only."

"Not for another moment," answered the lady;—"here, Mrs Patullo, give this billet to young Ravenswood."

"To the Master, madam?" said Mrs Patullo.

"Ay, to the Master, if you call him so."

"I wash my hands of it entirely," said the Keeper; "and I shall go down into the garden, and see that Jardine gathers the winter fruit for the dessert."

"Do so," said the lady, looking after him with glances of infinite contempt; "and thank God that you leave one behind you as fit to protect the honour of the family, as you are to look after pippins and pears."

The Lord Keeper remained long enough in the garden to give her ladyship's mind time to explode, and to let, as he thought, at least the first violence of Ravenswood's displeasure blow over. When he entered the hall, he found the Marquis of A—— giving orders to some of his attendants. He seemed in high displeasure, and interrupted an apology which Sir William had commenced, for having left his lordship alone.

"I presume, Sir William, you are no stranger to this singular billet with which my kinsman of Ravenswood" (an emphasis on the word *my*) "has been favoured by your lady—and, of course that you are prepared to receive my adieus—My kinsman is already gone, having thought it unnecessary to offer any on his part, since all former civilities had been cancelled by this singular insult."

"I protest, my lord," said Sir William, holding the billet in his hand, "I am not privy to the contents of this letter. I know Lady Ashton is a warm-tempered and prejudiced woman, and I am sincerely sorry for any offence that has been given or taken; but I hope your lordship will consider that a lady——"

"Should bear herself towards persons of a certain rank with the breeding of one," said the Marquis, completing the half-uttered sentence.

"True, my lord," said the unfortunate Keeper; "but Lady Ashton is still a woman——"

"And as such, methinks," said the Marquis, again interrupting him, "should be taught the duties which correspond to her station. But here she comes, and I will learn from her own mouth the reason of this extraordinary and unexpected affront offered to my near relation, while both he and I were her ladyship's guests."

Lady Ashton accordingly entered the apartment at this moment. Her dispute with Sir William, and a subsequent interview with her daughter, had not prevented her from attending to the duties of her toilette. She appeared in full dress; and, from the character of her countenance and manner, well became the splendour with which ladies of quality then appeared on such occasions.

The Marquis of A—— bowed haughtily, and she returned the salute with equal pride and distance of demeanour. He then took from the passive hand of Sir William Ashton the billet he had given him the moment before he approached the lady, and was about to speak, when she interrupted him. "I perceive, my lord, you are about to enter upon an unpleasant subject. I am sorry any such should have occurred at this time, to interrupt, in the slightest degree, the respectful reception due to your lordship—but so it is.—Mr Edgar Ravenswood, for whom I have addressed the billet in your

lordship's hand, has abused the hospitality of this family, and Sir William Ashton's softness of temper, in order to seduce a young person into engagements without her parent's consent, and of which they never can approve."

Both gentlemen answered at once,—"My kinsman is incapable"—— said the Lord Marquis.

"I am confident that my daughter Lucy is still more incapable"—— said the Lord Keeper.

Lady Ashton at once interrupted, and replied to them both.—"My Lord Marquis, your kinsman, if Mr Ravenswood has the honour to be so, has made the attempt privately to secure the affections of this young and inexperienced girl. Sir William Ashton, your daughter has been simple enough to give more encouragement than she ought to have done to so very improper a suitor."

"And I think, madam," said the Lord Keeper, losing his accustomed temper and patience, "that if you had nothing better to tell us, you had better have kept this family secret to yourself also."

"You will pardon me, Sir William," said the lady, calmly; "the noble Marquis has a right to know the cause of the treatment I have found it necessary to use to a gentleman whom he calls his blood-relation."

"It is a cause," muttered the Lord Keeper, "which has emerged since the effect has taken place; for, if it exists at all, I am sure she knew nothing of it when her letter to Ravenswood was written."

"It is the first time that I have heard of this," said the Marquis; "but since your ladyship has tabled a subject so delicate, permit me to say, that my kinsman's birth and connections entitled him to a patient hearing, and at least a civil refusal, even in case of his being so ambitious as to raise his eyes to the daughter of Sir William Ashton."

"You will recollect, my lord, of what blood Miss Lucy Ashton is come by the mother's side," said the lady.

"I do remember your descent—from a younger branch of the house of Angus," said the Marquis—"and your ladyship—forgive me lady—ought not to forget that the Ravenswoods have thrice intermarried with the main stem. Come, madam—I know how matters stand—old and long-fostered prejudices are difficult to get over—I make every allowance for them—I ought not, and I would not otherwise have suffered my kinsman to depart alone, expelled, in a manner, from this house—but I had hopes of being a mediator. I am still unwilling to leave you in anger—and shall not set forward till after noon, as I rejoin the Master of Ravenswood upon the road a few miles from hence. Let us talk over this matter more coolly."

"It is what I anxiously desire, my lord," said Sir William Ashton, eagerly. "Lady Ashton, we will not permit my Lord of A—— to leave us in displeasure. We must compel him to tarry dinner at the castle."

"The castle," said the lady, "and all that it contains, are at the command of the Marquis, so long as he chooses to honour it with his residence; but touching the farther discussion of this disagreeable topic——"

"Pardon me, good madam," said the Marquis; "but I cannot allow you to express any hasty resolution on a subject so important. I see that more company is arriving; and since I have the good fortune to renew my former acquaintance with Lady Ashton, I hope she will give me leave to avoid perilling what I prize so highly upon any disagreeable subject of discussion—at least, till we have talked over more pleasant topics."

The lady smiled, curtsied, and gave her hand to the Marquis, by whom, with all the formal gallantry of the time, which did not permit the guest to tuck the lady of the house under the arm, as a rustic does his sweetheart at a wake, she was ushered to the eating-room.

Here they were joined by Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and other neighbours whom the Lord Keeper had previously invited to meet the Marquis of A——. An apology, founded upon a slight indisposition, was alleged as an excuse for the absence of Miss Ashton, whose seat appeared unoccupied. The entertainment was splendid to profusion, and was protracted till a late hour.

CHAPTER XXIII.

> Such was our fallen father's fate,
> Yet better than mine own;
> He shared his exile with his mate,
> I 'm banish'd forth alone.
>
> WALLER.

I WILL not attempt to describe the mixture of indignation and regret with which Ravenswood left the seat which had belonged to his ancestors. The terms in which Lady Ashton's billet was couched rendered it impossible for him, without being deficient in that spirit of which he perhaps had too much, to remain an instant longer within its walls. The Marquis, who had his share in the affront, was, nevertheless, still willing to make some efforts at conciliation. He therefore suffered his kinsman to depart alone, making him promise, however, that he would wait for him at the small inn called the Tod's-hole, situated, as our readers may be pleased to recollect, half way betwixt Ravenswood Castle and Wolf's Crag, and about five Scottish miles distant from each. Here the Marquis proposed to join the Master of Ravenswood, either that night or the next morning. His own feelings would have induced him to have left the castle directly, but he was loath to forfeit, without at least one effort, the advantages which he had proposed from his visit to the Lord Keeper; and the Master of Ravenswood was, even in the very heat of his resentment, unwilling to foreclose any chance of reconciliation which might arise out of the partiality which Sir William Ashton had shewn towards him, as well as the intercessory arguments of his noble kinsman. He himself departed without a moment's delay, farther than was necessary to make this arrangement.

At first he spurred his horse at a quick pace through an avenue of the park, as if, by rapidity of motion, he could stupify the confusion of feelings with which he was assailed. But as the road grew wilder and more sequestered, and when the trees had hidden the turrets of the castle, he gradually slackened his pace, as if to indulge the painful reflections which he had in vain endeavoured to repress. The path in which he found himself led

him to the Mermaiden's Fountain, and to the cottage of Alice; and the fatal influence which superstitious belief attached to the former spot, as well as the admonitions which had been in vain offered to him by the inhabitant of the latter, forced themselves upon his memory. "Old saws speak truth," he said to himself; "and the Mermaiden's Well has indeed witnessed the last act of rashness of the heir of Ravenswood. — Alice spoke well," he continued, "and I am in the situation which she foretold — or rather, I am more deeply dishonoured — not the dependant and ally of the destroyer of my father's house, as the old sibyl presaged, but the degraded wretch, who has aspired to hold that subordinate character, and has been rejected with disdain."

We are bound to tell the tale as we have received it; and, considering the distance of the time, and propensity of those through whose mouths it has passed to the marvellous, this could not be called a Scottish story, unless it manifested a tinge of Scottish superstition. As Ravenswood approached the solitary fountain, he is said to have met with the following singular adventure: — His horse, which was moving slowly forward, suddenly interrupted its steady and composed pace, snorted, reared, and, though urged by the spur, refused to proceed, as if some object of terror had suddenly presented itself. On looking to the fountain, Ravenswood discerned a female figure, dressed in a white, or rather greyish mantle, placed on the very spot on which Lucy Ashton had reclined while listening to the fatal tale of love. His immediate impression was, that she had conjectured by which path he would traverse the park on his departure, and placed herself at this well-known and sequestered place of rendezvous, to indulge her own sorrow and his in a parting interview. In this belief he jumped from his horse, and, making its bridle fast to a tree, walked hastily towards the fountain, pronouncing eagerly, yet under his breath, the words, "Miss Ashton! — Lucy!"

The figure turned as he addressed it, and displayed to his wondering eyes the features, not of Lucy Ashton, but of old blind Alice. The singularity of her dress, which rather resembled a shroud than the garment of a living woman — the appearance of her person, larger, as it struck him, than it usually seemed to be — above all, the strange circumstance of a blind, infirm, and decrepit person being found alone and at a distance from her habitation, (considerable, if her infirmities be taken into account,) combined to impress him with a feeling of wonder approaching to fear. As he approached, she arose slowly from her seat, held her shrivelled hand up as if to prevent his coming more near, and her withered lips moved fast, although no sound issued from them. Ravenswood stopped; and as, after a moment's pause, he again advanced towards her, Alice, or her apparition, moved or glided backwards towards the thicket, still keeping her face turned towards him. The trees soon hid the form from his sight; and, yielding to the strong and terrific impression that the being which he had seen was not of this world, the Master of Ravenswood remained rooted to the ground whereon he had stood when he caught his last view of her. At length, summoning up his courage, he advanced to the spot on which the figure had seemed to be seated; but neither was there pressure of the grass, nor any other circumstance, to induce him to believe that what he had seen was real and substantial.

Full of those strange thoughts and confused apprehensions which awake in the bosom of one who conceives he has witnessed some preternatural appearance, the Master of Ravenswood walked back towards his horse, frequently however looking behind him, not without apprehension, as if expecting that the vision would re-appear. But the apparition, whether it was real, or whether it was the creation of a heated and agitated imagination, returned not again; and he found his horse sweating and terrified, as if experiencing that agony of fear, with which the presence of a supernatural being is supposed to agitate the brute creation. The Master mounted, and rode slowly forward, soothing his steed from time to time, while the animal seemed internally to shrink and shudder, as if expecting some new object of fear at the opening of every glade. The rider, after a moment's consideration, resolved to investigate the matter farther. "Can my eyes have deceived me," he said, "and deceived me for such a space of time? — Or are this woman's infirmities but feigned, in order to excite compassion? — And even then, her motion resembled not that of a living and existing person. Must I adopt the popular creed, and think that the unhappy being has formed a league with the powers of darkness? — I am determined to be resolved — I will not brook imposition even from my own eyes."

In this uncertainty he rode up to the little wicket of Alice's garden. Her seat beneath the birch-tree was vacant, though the day was pleasant, and the sun was high. He approached the hut, and heard from within the sobs and wailing of a female. No answer was returned when he knocked, so that, after a moment's pause, he lifted the latch and entered. It was indeed a house of solitude and sorrow. Stretched upon her miserable pallet lay the corpse of the last retainer of the house of Ravenswood, who still abode on their paternal domains! Life had but shortly departed; and the little girl, by whom she had been attended in her last moments, was wringing her hands and sobbing, betwixt childish fear and sorrow, over the body of her mistress.

The Master of Ravenswood had some difficulty to compose the terrors of the poor child, whom his unexpected appearance had at first rather appalled than comforted; and when he succeeded, the first expression which the girl used intimated that "he had come too late." Upon inquiring the meaning of this expression, he learned that the deceased, upon the first attack of the mortal agony, had sent a peasant to the castle to beseech an interview of the Master of Ravenswood, and had expressed the utmost impatience for his return. But the messengers of the poor are tardy and negligent: the fellow had not reached the castle, as was afterwards learned, until Ravenswood had left it, and had then found too much amusement among the retinue of the strangers to return in any haste to the cottage of Alice. Meantime her anxiety of mind seemed to increase with the agony of her body; and, to use the phrase of Babie, her only attendant, "she prayed powerfully that she might see her master's son once more, and renew her warning." She died just as the clock in the dis-

tant village tolled one; and Ravenswood remembered, with internal shudderings, that he had heard the chime sound through the wood just before he had seen what he was now much disposed to consider as the spectre of the deceased.

It was necessary, as well from his respect to the departed as in common humanity to her terrified attendant, that he should take some measures to relieve the girl from her distressing situation. The deceased, he understood, had expressed a desire to be buried in a solitary churchyard, near the little inn of the Tod's-hole, called the Hermitage, or more commonly Armitage, in which lay interred some of the Ravenswood family, and many of their followers. Ravenswood conceived it his duty to gratify this predilection, so commonly found to exist among the Scottish peasantry, and despatched Babie to the neighbouring village to procure the assistance of some females, assuring her that, in the meanwhile, he would himself remain with the dead body, which, as in Thessaly of old, it is accounted highly unfit to leave without a watch.

Thus, in the course of a quarter of an hour or little more, he found himself sitting a solitary guard over the inanimate corpse of her, whose dismissed spirit, unless his eyes had strangely deceived him, had so recently manifested itself before him. Notwithstanding his natural courage, the Master was considerably affected by a concurrence of circumstances so extraordinary. "She died expressing her eager desire to see me. Can it be, then,"—was his natural course of reflection—"can strong and earnest wishes, formed during the last agony of nature, survive its catastrophe, surmount the awful bounds of the spiritual world, and place before us its inhabitants in the hues and colouring of life?—And why was that manifested to the eye which could not unfold its tale to the ear?—and wherefore should a breach be made in the laws of nature, yet its purpose remain unknown? Vain questions, which only death, when it shall make me like the pale and withered form before me, can ever resolve."

He laid a cloth, as he spoke, over the lifeless face, upon whose features he felt unwilling any longer to dwell. He then took his place in an old carved oaken chair, ornamented with his own armorial bearings, which Alice had contrived to appropriate to her own use in the pillage which took place among creditors, officers, domestics, and messengers of the law, when his father left Ravenswood Castle for the last time. Thus seated, he banished, as much as he could, the superstitious feelings which the late incident naturally inspired. His own were sad enough, without the exaggeration of supernatural terror, since he found himself transferred from the situation of a successful lover of Lucy Ashton, and an honoured and respected friend of her father, into the melancholy and solitary guardian of the abandoned and forsaken corpse of a common pauper.

He was relieved, however, from his sad office sooner than he could reasonably have expected, considering the distance betwixt the hut of the deceased and the village, and the age and infirmities of three old women, who came from thence, in military phrase, to relieve guard upon the body of the defunct. On any other occasion the speed of these reverend sibyls would have been much more moderate, for the first was eighty years of age and upwards, the second was paralytic, and the third lame of a leg from some accident. But the burial duties rendered to the deceased, are, to the Scottish peasant of either sex, a labour of love. I know not whether it is from the temper of the people, grave and enthusiastic as it certainly is, or from the recollection of the ancient Catholic opinions, when the funeral rites were always considered as a period of festival to the living; but feasting, good cheer, and even inebriety, were, and are, the frequent accompaniments of a Scottish old-fashioned burial. What the funeral feast, or *dirgie*, as it is called, was to the men, the gloomy preparations of the dead body for the coffin were to the women. To straight the contorted limbs upon a board used for that melancholy purpose, to array the corpse in clean linen, and over that in its woollen shroud, were operations committed always to the old matrons of the village, and in which they found a singular and gloomy delight.

The old women paid the Master their salutations with a ghastly smile, which reminded him of the meeting betwixt Macbeth and the witches on the blasted heath of Forres. He gave them some money, and recommended to them the charge of the dead body of their contemporary, an office which they willingly undertook; intimating to him, at the same time, that he must leave the hut, in order that they might begin their mournful duties. Ravenswood readily agreed to depart, only tarrying to recommend to them due attention to the body and to receive information where he was to find the sexton, or beadle, who had in charge the deserted churchyard of the Armitage, in order to prepare matters for the reception of old Alice in the place of repose which she had selected for herself.

"Ye'll no be pinched to find out Johnie Mortsheugh," said the elder sibyl, and still her withered cheek bore a grisly smile,—"he dwells near the Tod's hole, a house of entertainment where there has been mony a blythe birling—for death and drink-draining are near neighbours to ane anither."

"Ay! and that's e'en true, cummer," said the lame hag, propping herself with a crutch which supported the shortness of her left leg, "for I mind when the father of this Master of Ravenswood that is now standing before us, sticked young Blackhall with his whinger, for a wrang word said ower their wine, or brandy, or what not—he gaed in as light as a lark, and he came out wi' his feet foremost. I was at the winding of the corpse; and when the bluid was washed off, he was a bonny bouk of man's body."

It may easily be believed, that this ill-timed anecdote hastened the Master's purpose of quitting a company so evil-omened and so odious. Yet, while walking to the tree to which his horse was tied, and busying himself with adjusting the girths of the saddle, he could not avoid hearing, through the hedge of the little garden, a conversation respecting himself, betwixt the lame woman and the octogenarian sibyl. The pair had hobbled into the garden to gather rosemary, southernwood, rue, and other plants proper to be strewed upon the body, and burned by way of fumigation in the chimney of the cottage. The paralytic wretch, almost exhausted by the journey, was left guard upon the corpse, lest witches or fiends might play their sport with it.

The following low croaking dialogue was necessarily overheard by the Master of Ravenswood :—

"That's a fresh and full-grown hemlock, Annie Winnie—mony a cummer lang syne wad hae sought nae better horse to flee over hill and how, through mist and moonlight, and light down in the King of France's cellar.

"Ay, cummer ! but the very deil has turned as hard-hearted now as the Lord Keeper, and the grit folk that hae breasts like whin-stane. They prick us and they pine us, and they pit us on the pinny-winkles for witches ; and, if I say my prayers backwards ten times ower, Satan will never gie me amends o' them."

"Did ye ever see the foul thief?" asked her neighbour.

"Na !" replied the other spokeswoman ; "but I trow I hae dreamed of him mony a time, and I think the day will come they will burn me for 't.—But ne'er mind, cummer ! we hae this dollar of the Master's, and we'll send doun for bread and for yill, tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee pickle saft sugar—and be there deil, or nae deil, lass, we 'll hae a merry night o 't."

Here her leathern chops uttered a sort of cackling ghastly laugh, resembling, to a certain degree, the cry of the screech-owl.

"He 's a frank man, and a free-handed man, the Master," said Annie Winnie, "and a comely personage—broad in the shouthers, and narrow around the lungies—he wad mak a bonny corpse —I wad like to hae the streaking and winding o' him."

"It is written on his brow, Annie Winnie," returned the octogenarian, her companion, "that hand of woman, or of man either, will never straught him—dead-deal will never be laid on his back—make you your market of that, for I hae it frae a sure hand."

"Will it be his lot to die on the battle-ground then, Ailsie Gourlay ?—Will he die by the sword or the ball, as his forbears hae dune before him, mony ane o' them ?"

"Ask nae mair questions about it—he 'll no be graced sae far," replied the sage.

"I ken ye are wiser than ither folk, Ailsie Gourlay—But wha tell'd ye this ?"

"Fashna your thumb about that, Annie Winnie," answered the sibyl—"I hae it frae a hand sure aneugh."

"But ye said ye never saw the foul thief," reiterated her inquisitive companion.

"I hae it frae as sure a hand," said Ailsie, "and frae them that spaed his fortune before the sark gaed ower his head."

"Hark ! I hear his horse's feet riding aff," said the other ; "they dinna sound as if good luck was wi' them."

"Mak haste, sirs," cried the paralytic hag from the cottage, "and let us do what is needfu', and say what is fitting ; for if the dead corpse binna straughted it will girn and thraw, and that will fear the best o' us."

Ravenswood was now out of hearing. He despised most of the ordinary prejudices about witchcraft, omens, and vaticination, to which his age and country still gave such implicit credit, that to express a doubt of them, was accounted a crime equal to the unbelief of Jews or Saracens ; he knew also that the prevailing belief concerning witches, operating upon the hypochondriac habits of those whom age, infirmity, and poverty rendered liable to suspicion, and enforced by the fear of death, and the pangs of the most cruel tortures, often extorted those confessions which encumber and disgrace the criminal records of Scotland during the seventeenth century. But the vision of that morning, whether real or imaginary, had impressed his mind with a superstitious feeling which he in vain endeavoured to shake off. The nature of the business which awaited him at the little inn, called Tod's-hole, where he soon after arrived, was not of a kind to restore his spirits.

It was necessary he should see Mortsheugh, the sexton of the old burial-ground at Armitage, to arrange matters for the funeral of Alice ; and as the man dwelt near the place of her late residence, the Master, after a slight refreshment, walked towards the place where the body of Alice was to be deposited. It was situated in the nook formed by the eddying sweep of a stream, which issued from the adjoining hills. A rude cavern in an adjacent rock, which, in the interior, was cut into the shape of a cross, formed the hermitage, where some Saxon saint had in ancient times done penance, and given name to the place. The rich Abbey of Coldinghame had, in latter days, established a chapel in the neighbourhood, of which no vestige was now visible, though the churchyard which surrounded it was still, as upon the present occasion, used for the interment of particular persons. One or two shattered yew-trees still grew within the precincts of that which had once been holy ground. Warriors and barons had been buried there of old, but their names were forgotten, and their monuments demolished. The only sepulchral memorials which remained, were the upright headstones which mark the graves of persons of inferior rank. The abode of the sexton was a solitary cottage adjacent to the ruined wall of the cemetery, but so low, that, with its thatch, which nearly reached the ground, covered with a thick crop of grass, fog, and house-leeks, it resembled an overgrown grave. On inquiry, however, Ravenswood found that the man of the last mattock was absent at a bridal, being fiddler as well as grave-digger to the vicinity. He therefore retired to the little inn, leaving a message, that early next morning he would again call for the person whose double occupation connected him at once with the house of mourning and the house of feasting.

An outrider of the Marquis arrived at Tod's-hole shortly after, with a message, intimating that his Master would join Ravenswood at that place on the following morning ; and the Master, who would otherwise have proceeded to his old retreat at Wolf's Crag, remained there accordingly, to give meeting to his noble kinsman.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business ?—he sings at grave making.
Horatio. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.
Hamlet. 'Tis e'en so : the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

Hamlet, Act V. Scene I.

THE sleep of Ravenswood was broken by ghastly and agitating visions, and his waking intervals

disturbed by melancholy reflections on the past, and painful anticipations of the future. He was perhaps the only traveller who ever slept in that miserable kennel without complaining of his lodgings, or feeling inconvenience from their deficiencies. It is when "the mind is free the body's delicate." Morning, however, found the Master an early riser, in hopes that the fresh air of the dawn might afford the refreshment which night had refused him. He took his way toward the solitary burial-ground, which lay about half a mile from the inn.

The thin blue smoke, which already began to curl upward, and to distinguish the cottage of the living from the habitation of the dead, apprized him that its inmate had returned and was stirring. Accordingly, on entering the little churchyard, he saw the old man labouring in a half made grave. My destiny, thought Ravenswood, seems to lead me to scenes of fate and of death; but these are childish thoughts, and they shall not master me. I will not again suffer my imagination to beguile my senses.—The old man rested on his spade as the Master approached him, as if to receive his commands; and as he did not immediately speak, the sexton opened the discourse in his own way.

"Ye will be a wedding customer, sir, I'se warrant?"

"What makes you think so, friend?" replied the Master.

"I live by twa trades, sir," replied the blithe old man; "fiddle, sir, and spade; filling the world, and emptying of it; and I suld ken baith cast of customers by head-mark in thirty years' practice."

"You are mistaken, however, this morning," replied Ravenswood.

"Am I?" said the old man, looking keenly at him, "troth and it may be; since, for as brent as your brow is, there is something sitting upon it this day, that is as near akin to death as to wedlock. Weel, weel; the pick and shovel are as ready to your order as bow and fiddle."

"I wish you," said Ravenswood, "to look after the decent interment of an old woman, Alice Gray, who lived at the Craigfoot in Ravenswood Park."

"Alice Gray! blind Alice!" said the sexton; "and is she gane at last? that's another jow of the bell to bid me be ready. I mind when Habbie Gray brought her down to this land; a likely lass she was then, and looked over her southland nose at us a'. I trow her pride got a downcome. And is she e'en gane?"

"She died yesterday," said Ravenswood; "and desired to be buried here, beside her husband; you know where he lies, no doubt?"

"Ken where he lies?" answered the sexton, with national indirection of response, "I ken whar a' body lies, that lies here. But ye were speaking o' her grave?—Lord help us—it's no an ordinar grave that will haud her in, if a's true that folk said of Alice in her auld days; and if I gae to six feet deep,—and a warlock's grave shouldna be an inch mair ebb, or her ain witch cummers would soon whirl her out of her shroud for a' their auld acquaintance—and be't six feet, or be't three, wha's to pay the making o't, I pray ye?"

"I will pay that, my friend, and all reasonable charges."

"Reasonable charges?" said the sexton; "ou, there's grund-mail—and bell-siller—(though the bell's broken nae doubt)—and the kist—and my day's wark—and my bit fee—and some brandy and yill to the drigie—I am no thinking that you can inter her, to ca' decently, under saxteen pund Scots."

"There is the money, my friend," said Ravenswood, "and something over. Be sure you know the grave."

"Ye'll be ane o' her English relations, I'se warrant," said the hoary man of skulls; "I hae heard she married far below her station; it was very right to let her bite on the bridle when she was living, and it's very right to gie her a decent burial now she's dead, for that's a matter o' credit to yoursell rather than to her. Folk may let their kindred shift for themsells when they are alive, and can bear the burden of their ain misdoings; but it's an unnatural thing to let them be buried like dogs, when a' the discredit gangs to the kindred—what kens the dead corpse about it?"

"You would not have people neglect their relations on a bridal occasion neither?" said Ravenswood, who was amused with the professional limitation of the grave-digger's philanthropy.

The old man cast up his sharp grey eyes with a shrewd smile, as if he understood the jest, but instantly continued, with his former gravity,—"Bridals—wha wad neglect bridals, that had ony regard for plenishing the earth? To be sure, they suld be celebrated with all manner of good cheer, and meeting of friends, and musical instruments, harp, sackbut, and psaltery; or gude fiddle and pipes, when these auld-warld instruments of melody are hard to be compassed."

"The presence of the fiddle, I daresay," replied Ravenswood, "would atone for the absence of all the others."

The sexton again looked sharply up at him, as he answered, "Nae doubt—nae doubt—if it were weel played;—but yonder," he said, as if to change the discourse, "is Halbert Gray's lang hame, that ye were speering after, just the third bourock beyond the muckle through-stane that stands on sax legs yonder, abune some ane of the Ravenswoods; for there is mony of their kin and followers here, deil lift them! though it isna just their main burial-place."

"They are no favourites, then, of yours, these Ravenswoods?" said the Master, not much pleased with the passing benediction which was thus bestowed on his family and name.

"I kenna wha should favour them," said the grave-digger; "when they had lands and power, they were ill guides of them baith, and now their head's down, there's few care how lang they may be of lifting it again."

"Indeed!" said Ravenswood; "I never heard that this unhappy family deserved ill-will at the hands of their country. I grant their poverty—if that renders them contemptible."

"It will gang a far way till 't," said the sexton of Hermitage, "ye may tak my word for that—at least, I ken naething else that suld mak myself contemptible, and folk are far frae respecting me as they wad do if I lived in a twa-lofted sclated house. But as for the Ravenswoods, I hae seen three generations of them, and deil ane to mend other."

"I thought they had enjoyed a fair character in the country," said their descendant.

"Character! Ou, ye see, sir," said the sexton, "as for the auld gude-sire body of a lord, I lived on his land when I was a swanking young chield, and could hae blawn the trumpet wi' ony body, for I had wind eneugh then — and touching this trumpeter Marine that I have heard play afore the Lords of the Circuit, I wad hae made nae mair o' him than of a bairn and a bawbee whistle — I defy him to hae played 'Boot and saddle,' or 'Horse and away,' or 'Gallants, come trot,' with me — he hadna the tones."

"But what is all this to old Lord Ravenswood, my friend?" said the Master, who, with an anxiety not unnatural in his circumstances, was desirous of prosecuting the musician's first topic — "What had his memory to do with the degeneracy of the trumpet music?"

"Just this, sir," answered the sexton, "that I lost my wind in his service. Ye see I was trumpeter at the castle, and had allowance for blawing at break of day, and at dinner-time, and other whiles when there was company about, and it pleased my lord; and when he raised his militia to caper awa to Bothwell Brigg against the wrang-headed wast-land whigs, I behoved, reason or nane, to munt a horse and caper awa wi' them."

"And very reasonable," said Ravenswood; "you were his servant and vassal."

"Servitor, say ye?" replied the sexton, "and so I was — but it was to blaw folk to their warm dinner, or at the warst to a decent kirkyard, and no to skirl them awa to a bluidy brae side, where there was deil a bedral but the hooded craw. But bide ye — ye shall hear what cam o't, and how far I am bund to be bedesman to the Ravenswoods.—Till't, ye see, we gaed on a braw simmer morning, twenty-fourth of June, saxteen hundred and se'enty-nine, of a' the days of the month and year, — drums beat — guns rattled — horses kicked and trampled. Hackstoun of Rathillet keepit the brigg wi' musket and carabine and pike, sword and scythe for what I ken, and we horsemen were ordered down to cross at the ford, — I hate fords at a' times, let abe when there's thousands of armed men on the other side. There was auld Ravenswood brandishing his Andrew Ferrara at the head, and crying to us to come and buckle to, as if we had been gaun to a fair, — there was Caleb Balderston, that is living yet, flourishing in the rear, and swearing Gog and Magog, he would put steel through the guts of ony man that turned bridle, — there was young Allan Ravenswood, that was then Master, wi' a bended pistol in his hand, — it was a mercy it gaed na aff, — crying to me, that had scarce as much wind left as serve the necessary purpose of my ain lungs, 'Sound, you poltroon! sound, you damned cowardly villain, or I will blow your brains out!' and, to be sure, I blew sic points of war, that the scraugh of a clockin-hen was music to them."

"Well, sir, cut all this short," said Ravenswood.

"Short!—I had like to hae been cut short mysell, in the flower of my youth, as Scripture says; and that's the very thing that I compleen o'. — Weel! in to the water we behoved a' to splash, heels ower head, sit or fa' — ae horse driving on anither, as is the way of brute beasts, and riders that hae as little sense, — the very bushes on the ither side were ableeze, wi' the flashes of the whig guns; and my horse had just taen the grund, when a blackavised westland carle — I wad mind the face o' him a hundred years yet — an ee like a wild falcon's, and a beard as broad as my shovel, clapped the end o' his lang black gun within a quarter's length of my lug! — by the grace o' Mercy, the horse swarved round, and I fell aff at the tae side as the ball whistled by at the tither, and the fell auld lord took the whig such a swauk wi' his broad-sword that he made twa pieces o' his head, and down fell the lurdane wi' a' his bowk abune me."

"You were rather obliged to the old lord, I think," said Ravenswood.

"Was I? my sartie! first for bringing me into jeopardy, would I nould I — and then for whomling a chield on the tap o' me, that dang the very wind out of my body? — I hae been short-breathed ever since, and canna gang twenty yards without peghing like a miller's aiver."

"You lost, then, your place as trumpeter!" said Ravenswood.

"Lost it? to be sure I lost it," replied the sexton, "for I couldna hae played pew upon a dry humlock; — but I might hae dune weel eneugh, for I keepit the wage and the free house, and little to do but play on the fiddle to them, but for Allan, last Lord Ravenswood, that was far waur than ever his father was."

"What," said the Master, "did my father — I mean, did his father's son — this last Lord Ravenswood, deprive you of what the bounty of his father allowed you?"

"Ay, troth did he," answered the old man; "for he loot his affairs gang to the dogs, and let in this Sir William Ashton on us, that will gie naething for naething, and just removed me and a' the puir creatures that had bite and soup in the castle, and a hole to put our heads in, when things were in the auld way."

"If Lord Ravenswood protected his people, my friend, while he had the means of doing so, I think they might spare his memory," replied the Master.

"Ye are welcome to your ain opinion, sir," said the sexton; "but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty, either to himsell or to huz puir dependent creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done — he might hae gien us liferent tacks of our bits o' houses and yards — and me, that's an auld man, living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise, and John Smith in my dainty bit mailing, and his window glazen, and a' because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule!"

"It is but too true," said Ravenswood, conscience-struck; "the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings."

"However," said the sexton, "this young man Edgar is like to avenge my wrangs on the hail of his kindred."

"Indeed?" said Ravenswood; "why should you suppose so?"

"They say he is about to marry the daughter of Leddy Ashton; and let her leddyship get his head ance under her oxter, and see you if she winna gie his neck a thraw. Sorra a bit, if I were him — Let her alane for hauding a' thing in het water that draws near her — sae the warst wish I shall wish the lad is, that he may take his ain creditable gate o't, and ally himsell wi' his father's enemies, that have taken his broad lands and my bonny kailyard from the lawful owners thereof."

Cervantes acutely remarks, that flattery is pleasing even from the mouth of a madman; and censure, as well as praise, often affects us, while we despise the opinions and motives on which it is founded and expressed. Ravenswood, abruptly reiterating his command that Alice's funeral should be attended to, flung away from the sexton, under the painful impression that the great, as well as the small vulgar, would think of his engagement with Lucy like this ignorant and selfish peasant.

"And I have stooped to subject myself to these calumnies, and am rejected notwithstanding! Lucy, your faith must be true and perfect as the diamond, to compensate for the dishonour which men's opinions, and the conduct of your mother, attach to the heir of Ravenswood!"

As he raised his eyes, he beheld the Marquis of A——, who, having arrived at the Tod's-hole, had walked forth to look for his kinsman.

After mutual greetings, he made some apology to the Master for not coming forward on the preceding evening. "It was his wish," he said, "to have done so, but he had come to the knowledge of some matters which induced him to delay his purpose. I find," he proceeded, "there has been a love affair here, kinsman; and though I might blame you for not having communicated with me, as being in some degree the chief of your family——"

"With your lordship's permission," said Ravenswood. "I am deeply grateful for the interest you are pleased to take in me—but *I* am the chief and head of my family."

"I know it—I know it," said the Marquis; "in a strict heraldic and genealogical sense, you certainly are so—what I mean is, that being in some measure under my guardianship——"

"I must take the liberty to say, my lord," answered Ravenswood—and the tone in which he interrupted the Marquis boded no long duration to the friendship of the noble relatives, when he himself was interrupted by the little sexton, who came puffing after them, to ask if their honours would choose music at the change-house to make up for short cheer.

"We want no music," said the Master abruptly.

"Your honour disna ken what ye're refusing, then," said the fiddler, with the impertinent freedom of his profession. "I can play, 'Wilt thou do't again,' and 'the Auld Man's Mear's Dead,' sax times better than ever Pattie Birnie. I'll get my fiddle in the turning of a coffin-screw."

"Take yourself away, sir," said the Marquis.

"And if your honour be a north-country gentleman," said the persevering minstrel, "whilk I wad judge from your tongue, I can play 'Liggeram Cosh,' and 'Mullin Dhu,' and 'the Cummers of Athole.'"

"Take yourself away, friend; you interrupt our conversation."

"Or if, under your honour's favour, ye should happen to be a thought honest, I can play," (this in a low and confidential tone,) "'Killiecrankie,' and 'the King shall hae his ain,' and 'the Auld Stewarts back again,'—and the wife at the change-house is a decent discreet body, neither kens nor cares what toasts are drucken, and what tunes are played in her house—she's deaf to a' thing but the clink o' the siller."

The Marquis, who was sometimes suspected of Jacobitism, could not help laughing as he threw the fellow a dollar, and bid him go play to the servants if he had a mind, and leave them at peace.

"Aweel, gentlemen," said he, "I am wishing your honours gude-day—I'll be a' the better of the dollar, and ye'll be the waur of wanting the music, I'se tell ye—But I'se gang hame, and finish the grave in the tuning o' a fiddle-string, lay by my spade, and then get my tother bread-winner, and awa to your folk, and see if they hae better lugs than their masters."

CHAPTER XXV.

> True love, an thou be true,
> Thou has ane kittle part to play;
> For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou,
> Maun strive for many a day.
>
> I've kend by mony a friend's tale,
> Far better by this heart of mine,
> What time and change of fancy avail
> A true-love knot to untwine.
>
> HENDERSOUN.

"I WISHED to tell you, my good kinsman," said the Marquis, "now that we are quit of that impertinent fiddler, that I had tried to discuss this love affair of yours with Sir William Ashton's daughter. I never saw the young lady but for a few minutes to-day; so, being a stranger to her personal merits, I pay a compliment to you, and offer her no offence, in saying you might do better."

"My lord, I am much indebted for the interest you have taken in my affairs," said Ravenswood. "I did not intend to have troubled you in any matter concerning Miss Ashton. As my engagement with that young lady has reached your lordship, I can only say, that you must necessarily suppose that I was aware of the objections to my marrying into her father's family, and of course must have been completely satisfied with the reasons by which these objections are overbalanced, since I have proceeded so far in the matter."

"Nay, Master, if you had heard me out," said his noble relation, "you might have spared that observation; for without questioning that you had reasons which seemed to you to counterbalance every other obstacle, I set myself, by every means that it became me to use towards the Ashtons, to persuade them to meet your views."

"I am obliged to your lordship for your unsolicited intercession," said Ravenswood; "especially as I am sure your lordship would never carry it beyond the bounds which it became me to use."

"Of that," said the Marquis, "you may be confident; I myself felt the delicacy of the matter too much to place a gentleman nearly connected with my house in a degrading or dubious situation with these Ashtons. But I pointed out all the advantages of their marrying their daughter into a house so honourable, and so nearly related with the first in Scotland; I explained the exact degree of relationship in which the Ravenswoods stand to ourselves; and I even hinted how political matters were like to turn, and what cards would be trumps next Parliament. I said I regarded you as a son—or a nephew, or so—rather than as a more distant relation; and that I made your affair entirely my own."

"And what was the issue of your lordship's explanation?" said Ravenswood, in some doubt whether he should resent or express gratitude for his interference.

"Why, the Lord Keeper would have listened to reason," said the Marquis; "he is rather unwilling to leave his place, which, in the present view of a change, must be vacated; and to say truth, he seemed to have a liking for you, and to be sensible of the general advantages to be attained by such a match. But his lady, who is tongue of the trump, Master,——"

"What of Lady Ashton, my lord?" said Ravenswood; "let me know the issue of this extraordinary conference—I can bear it."

"I am glad of that, kinsman," said the Marquis, "for I am ashamed to tell you half what she said. It is enough—her mind is made up—and the mistress of a first-rate boarding-school could not have rejected with more haughty indifference the suit of a half-pay Irish officer, beseeching permission to wait upon the heiress of a West India planter, than Lady Ashton spurned every proposal of mediation which it could at all become me to offer in behalf of you, my good kinsman. I cannot guess what she means. A more honourable connection she could not form, that's certain. As for money and land, that used to be her husband's business rather than hers; I really think she hates you for having the rank which her husband has not, and perhaps for not having the lands that her goodman has. But I should only vex you to say more about it—here we are at the change-house."

The Master of Ravenswood paused as he entered the cottage, which reeked through all its crevices, and they were not few, from the exertions of the Marquis's travelling-cooks to supply good cheer, and spread, as it were, a table in the wilderness.

"My Lord Marquis," said Ravenswood, "I already mentioned that accident has put your lordship in possession of a secret, which, with my consent, should have remained one even to you, my kinsman, for some time. Since the secret was to part from my own custody, and that of the only person besides who was interested in it, I am not sorry it should have reached your lordship's ears, as being fully aware that you are my noble kinsman and friend."

"You may believe it is safely lodged with me, Master of Ravenswood," said the Marquis; "but I should like well to hear you say, that you renounced the idea of an alliance, which you can hardly pursue without a certain degree of degradation."

"Of that, my lord, I shall judge," answered Ravenswood, "and I hope with delicacy as sensitive as any of my friends. But I have no engagement with Sir William and Lady Ashton. It is with Miss Ashton alone that I have entered upon the subject, and my conduct in the matter shall be entirely ruled by hers. If she continues to prefer me in my poverty to the wealthier suitors whom her friends recommend, I may well make some sacrifice to her sincere affection—I may well surrender to her the less tangible and less palpable advantages of birth, and the deep-rooted prejudices of family hatred. If Miss Lucy Ashton should change her mind on a subject of such delicacy, I trust my friends will be silent on my disappointment, and I shall know how to make my enemies so."

"Spoke like a gallant young nobleman," said the Marquis; "for my part I have that regard for you, that I should be sorry the thing went on. This Sir William Ashton was a pretty enough pettifogging kind of a lawyer twenty years ago, and betwixt battling at the bar, and leading in committees of Parliament, he has got well on—the Darien matter lent him a lift, for he had good intelligence and sound views, and sold out in time—but the best work is had out of him. No government will take him at his own, or rather his wife's, extravagant valuation; and betwixt his indecision and her insolence, from all I can guess, he will outsit his market and be had cheap when no one will bid for him. I say nothing of Miss Ashton; but I assure you, a connection with her father will be neither useful nor ornamental, beyond that part of your father's spoils which he may be prevailed upon to disgorge by way of tocher-good—and take my word for it, you will get more if you have spirit to bell the cat with him in the House of Peers.—And I will be the man, cousin," continued his lordship, "will course the fox for you, and make him rue the day that ever he refused a composition too honourable for him, and proposed by me on the behalf of a kinsman."

There was something in all this that, as it were, overshot the mark. Ravenswood could not disguise from himself that his noble kinsman had more reasons for taking offence at the reception of his suit, than regarded his interest and honour, yet he could neither complain nor be surprised that it should be so. He contented himself therefore with repeating, that his attachment was to Miss Ashton personally; that he desired neither wealth nor aggrandizement from her father's means and influence; and that nothing should prevent his keeping his engagement, excepting her own express desire that it should be relinquished—and he requested as a favour that the matter might be no more mentioned betwixt them at present, assuring the Marquis of A—— that he should be his confident in its progress or its interruption.

The Marquis soon had more agreeable, as well as more interesting subjects on which to converse. A foot-post, who had followed him from Edinburgh to Ravenswood Castle, and had traced his steps to the Tod's-hole, brought him a packet laden with good news. The political calculations of the Marquis had proved just, both in London and at Edinburgh, and he saw almost within his grasp, the pre-eminence for which he had panted.—The refreshments which the servants had prepared were now put on the table, and an epicure would perhaps have enjoyed them with additional zest, from the contrast which such fare afforded to the miserable cabin in which it was served up.

The turn of conversation corresponded with and added to the social feelings of the company. The Marquis expanded with pleasure on the power which probable incidents were likely to assign to him, and on the use which he hoped to make of it in serving his kinsman Ravenswood. Ravenswood could but repeat the gratitude which he really felt, even when he considered the topic as too long dwelt upon. The wine was excellent, notwithstanding its having been brought in a runlet from Edinburgh; and the habits of the Marquis, when engaged with such good cheer, were somewhat sedentary. And so it fell out that they delayed

their journey two hours later than was their original purpose.

"But what of that, my good young friend?" said the Marquis; "your Castle of Wolf's Crag is but at five or six miles distance, and will afford the same hospitality to your kinsman of A——, that it gave to this same Sir William Ashton."

"Sir William took the castle by storm," said Ravenswood, "and, like many a victor, had little reason to congratulate himself on his conquest."

"Well, well!" said Lord A——, whose dignity was something relaxed by the wine he had drunk, —"I see I must bribe you to harbour me—Come, pledge me in a bumper health to the last young lady that slept at Wolf's Crag, and liked her quarters.—My bones are not so tender as hers, and I am resolved to occupy her apartment to-night, that I may judge how hard the couch is that love can soften."

"Your lordship may choose what penance you please," said Ravenswood; "but I assure you, I should expect my old servant to hang himself, or throw himself from the battlements, should your lordship visit him so unexpectedly—I do assure you, we are totally and literally unprovided."

But his declaration only brought from his noble patron an assurance of his own total indifference as to every species of accommodation, and his determination to see the Tower of Wolf's Crag. His ancestor, he said, had been feasted there, when he went forward with the then Lord Ravenswood to the fatal battle of Flodden, in which they both fell. Thus hard pressed, the Master offered to ride forward to get matters put in such preparation as time and circumstances admitted; but the Marquis protested his kinsman must afford him his company, and would only consent that an avant-courier should carry to the destined Seneschal, Caleb Balderston, the unexpected news of this invasion.

The Master of Ravenswood soon after accompanied the Marquis in his carriage, as the latter had proposed; and when they became better acquainted in the progress of the journey, his noble relation explained the very liberal views which he entertained for his relation's preferment, in case of the success of his own political schemes. They related to a secret, and highly important commission beyond sea, which could only be intrusted to a person of rank, talent, and perfect confidence, and which, as it required great trust and reliance on the envoy employed, could not but prove both honourable and advantageous to him. We need not enter into the nature and purpose of this commission farther than to acquaint our readers that the charge was in prospect highly acceptable to the Master of Ravenswood, who hailed with pleasure the hope of emerging from his present state of indigence and inaction, into independence and honourable exertion. While he listened thus eagerly to the details with which the Marquis now thought it necessary to intrust him, the messenger who had been despatched to the tower of Wolf's Crag, returned with Caleb Balderston's humble duty, and an assurance that "a' should be in seemly order, sic as the hurry of time permitted, to receive their lordships as it behoved."

Ravenswood was too well accustomed to his Seneschal's mode of acting and speaking, to hope much from this confident assurance. He knew that Caleb acted upon the principle of the Spanish generals, in the campaign of ——, who, much to the perplexity of the Prince of Orange, their commander-in-chief, used to report their troops as full in number, and possessed of all necessary points of equipment, not considering it consistent with their dignity, or the honour of Spain, to confess any deficiency either in men or munition, until the want of both was unavoidably discovered in the day of battle. Accordingly, Ravenswood thought it necessary to give the Marquis some hint, that the fair assurance which they had just received from Caleb, did not by any means insure them against a very indifferent reception.

"You do yourself injustice, Master," said the Marquis, "or you wish to surprise me agreeably. From this window I see a great light in the direction where, if I remember aright, Wolf's Crag lies; and, to judge from the splendour which the old Tower sheds around it, the preparations for our reception must be of no ordinary description. I remember your father putting the same deception on me, when we went to the Tower for a few days' hawking, about twenty years since, and yet we spent our time as jollily at Wolf's Crag as we could have done at my own hunting seat at B——."

"Your lordship, I fear, will experience that the faculty of the present proprietor to entertain his friends is greatly abridged," said Ravenswood; "the will, I need hardly say, remains the same. But I am as much at a loss as your lordship to account for so strong and brilliant a light as is now above Wolf's Crag,—the windows of the Tower are few and narrow, and those of the lower story are hidden from us by the walls of the court. I cannot conceive that any illumination of an ordinary nature could afford such a blaze of light."

The mystery was soon explained; for the cavalcade almost instantly halted, and the voice of Caleb Balderston was heard at the coach window, exclaiming, in accents broken by grief and fear, "Och, gentlemen—Och, my gude lords—Och, haud to the right!—Wolf's Crag is burning, bower and ha'—a' the rich plenishing outside and inside—a' the fine graith, pictures, tapestries, needlewark, hangings, and other decorements—a' in a bleeze, as if they were nae mair than sae mony peats, or as muckle peas strae? Haud to the right, gentlemen, I implore ye—there is some sma' provision making at Lucky Sma'trash's—but O, wae for this night, and wae for me that lives to see it!"

Ravenswood was at first stunned by this new and unexpected calamity; but after a moment's recollection, he sprang from the carriage, and hastily bidding his noble kinsman good-night, was about to ascend the hill towards the castle, the broad and full conflagration of which now flung forth a high column of red light, that flickered far to seaward upon the dashing waves of the ocean.

"Take a horse, Master," exclaimed the Marquis, greatly affected by this additional misfortune, so unexpectedly heaped upon his young protegé; "and give me my ambling palfrey;—and haste forward, you knaves, to see what can be done to save the furniture, or to extinguish the fire—ride, you knaves, for your lives!"

The attendants bustled together, and began to strike their horses with the spur, and call upon Caleb to shew them the road. But the voice of

that careful Seneschal was heard above the tumult, "O stop — sirs, stop — turn bridle, for the love of mercy — add not loss of lives to the loss of warld's gear! — Thirty barrels of powther, landed out of a Dunkirk dogger in the auld lord's time a' in the vau'ts of the auld tower, — the fire canna be far aff it, I trow — Lord's sake, to the right, lads — to the right — let's pit the hill atween us and peril, — a wap wi' a corner stane o' Wolf's Crag wad defy the doctor!"

It will readily be supposed that this annunciation hurried the Marquis and his attendants into the route which Caleb prescribed, dragging Ravenswood along with them, although there was much in the matter which he could not possibly comprehend. "Gunpowder!" he exclaimed, laying hold of Caleb, who in vain endeavoured to escape from him, "what gunpowder? How any quantity of powder could be in Wolf's Crag without my knowledge, I cannot possibly comprehend."

"But I can," interrupted the Marquis, whispering him, "I can comprehend it thoroughly — for God's sake, ask him no more questions at present."

"There it is now," said Caleb, extricating himself from his master, and adjusting his dress, "your honour will believe his lordship's honourable testimony — His lordship minds weel, how, in the year that hin they ca'd King Willie died ——"

"Hush! hush, my good friend?" said the Marquis: "I shall satisfy your master upon that subject."

"And the people at Wolf's-hope" — said Ravenswood, "did none of them come to your assistance before the flame got so high?"

"Ay did they, mony ane of them, the rapscallions!" said Caleb; "but truly I was in nae hurry to let them into the Tower, where there were so much plate and valuables."

"Confound you for an impudent liar!" said Ravenswood, in uncontrollable ire, "there was not a single ounce of ——"

"Forby," said the butler, most irreverently raising his voice to a pitch which drowned his master's, "the fire made fast on us, owing to the store of tapestry and carved timmer in the banqueting ha', and the loons ran like scauded rats sae sune as they heard of the gunpouther."

"I do entreat," said the Marquis to Ravenswood, "you will ask him no more questions."

"Only one, my lord — What has become of poor Mysie?"

"Mysie?" said Caleb, "I had nae time to look about ony Mysie — she's in the tower, I'se warrant, biding her awful doom."

"By Heaven," said Ravenswood, "I do not understand all this! The life of a faithful old creature is at stake — my lord, I will be withheld no longer — I will at least ride up, and see whether the danger is as imminent as this old fool pretends."

"Weel, then, as I live by bread," said Caleb, "Mysie is weel and safe. I saw her out of the castle before I left it mysell. Was I ganging to forget an auld fellow-servant?"

"What made you tell me the contrary this moment?" said his master.

"Did I tell you the contrary?" said Caleb; "then I maun hae been dreaming surely, or this awsome night has turned my judgment — but safe she is, and ne'er a living soul in the castle, a' the better for them — they wad have gotten an unco heezy."

The Master of Ravenswood, upon this assurance being solemnly reiterated, and notwithstanding his extreme wish to witness the last explosion, which was to ruin to the ground the mansion of his fathers, suffered himself to be dragged onward towards the village of Wolf's-hope, where not only the change-house, but that of our well-known friend the cooper, were all prepared for reception of himself and his noble guest, with a liberality of provision which requires some explanation.

We omitted to mention in its place, that Lockhard, having fished out the truth concerning the mode by which Caleb had obtained the supplies for his banquet, the Lord Keeper, amused with the incident, and desirous at the time to gratify Ravenswood, had recommended the cooper of Wolf's-hope to the official situation under government, the prospect of which had reconciled him to the loss of his wild-fowl. Mr Girder's preferment had occasioned a pleasing surprise to old Caleb; for when, some days after his master's departure, he found himself absolutely compelled, by some necessary business, to visit the fishing hamlet, and was gliding like a ghost past the door of the cooper, for fear of being summoned to give some account of the progress of the solicitation in his favour, or, more probably, that the inmates might upbraid him with the false hope he had held out upon the subject, he heard himself, not without some apprehension, summoned at once in treble, tenor, and bass, — a trio performed by the voices of Mrs Girder, old Dame Loup-the-dyke, and the goodman of the dwelling — "Mr Caleb — Mr Caleb — Mr Caleb Balderston! I hope ye arena ganging dry-lipped by our door, and we sae muckle indebted to you?"

This might be said ironically as well as in earnest. Caleb augured the worst, turned a deaf ear to the trio aforesaid, and was moving doggedly on, his ancient castor pulled over his brows, and his eyes bent on the ground, as if to count the flinty pebbles with which the rude pathway was causewayed. But on a sudden he found himself surrounded in his progress, like a stately merchantman in the Gut of Gibraltar (I hope the ladies will excuse the tarpaulin phrase) by three Algerine galleys.

"Gude guide us, Mr Balderston!" said Mrs Girder.

"Wha wad hae thought it of an auld and kend friend?" said the mother.

"And no sae muckle as stay to receive our thanks," said the cooper himself, "and frae the like o' me that seldom offers them? I am sure I hope there 's nae ill seed sawn between us, Mr Balderston. — Ony man that has said to ye, I am no gratefu' for the situation of Queen's cooper, let me hae a whample at him wi' mine eatche [1] — that's a.'"

"My good friends — my dear friends," said Caleb, still doubting how the certainty of the matter might stand, "what needs a' this ceremony? — ane tries to serve their friends, and sometimes they may happen to prosper, and sometimes to misgie — naething I care to be fashed wi' less than thanks — I never could bide them."

"Faith, Mr Balderston ye suld hae been fashed wi' few o' mine," said the downright man of staves and hoops, "if I had only your gude-will to thank

[1] *Anglicè*, adze.

ye for — I suld e'en hae set the guse, and the wild deukes, and the runlet of sack, to balance that account. Gude-will, man, is a geizen'd tub, that hauds in nae liquor — but gude-deed 's like the cask tight, round, and sound, that will haud liquor for the king."

"Have ye no heard of our letter," said the mother-in-law, "making our John the Queen's cooper for certain? — and scarce a chield that had ever hammered gird upon tub but was applying for it?"

"Have I heard!!!" said Caleb, (who now found how the wind set,) with an accent of exceeding contempt at the doubt expressed — "Have I heard, quo' she!!!" — and as he spoke, he changed his shambling, skulking, dodging pace, into a manly and authoritative step, re-adjusted his cocked hat, and suffered his brow to emerge from under it in all the pride of aristocracy, like the sun from behind a cloud.

"To be sure he canna but hae heard," said the good woman.

"Ay, to be sure, it 's impossible but I should," said Caleb; "and sae I 'll be the first to kiss ye, joe, and wish you, cooper, much joy of your preferment, naething doubting but ye ken wha are your friends, and *have* helped ye, and *can* help ye. I thought it right to look a wee strange upon it at first," added Caleb, "just to see if ye were made of the right mettle — but ye ring true, lad, ye ring true!"

So saying, with a most lordly air he kissed the women, and abandoned his hand, with an air of serene patronage, to the hearty shake of Mr Girder's horn-hard palm. Upon this complete and to Caleb most satisfactory, information, he did not, it may readily be believed, hesitate to accept an invitation to a solemn feast, to which were invited, not only all the *notables* of the village, but even his ancient antagonist, Mr Dingwall himself. At this festivity he was, of course, the most welcome and most honoured guest; and so well did he ply the company with stories of what he could do with his master, his master with the Lord Keeper, the Lord Keeper with the Council, and the Council with the King, that before the company dismissed, (which was, indeed, rather at an early hour than a late one,) every man of note in the village was ascending to the top-gallant of some ideal preferment by the ladder of ropes which Caleb had presented to their imagination. Nay, the cunning butler regained in that moment, not only all the influence he possessed formerly over the villagers, when the baronial family which he served were at the proudest, but acquired even an accession of importance. The writer — the very attorney himself — such is the thirst of preferment — felt the force of the attraction, and taking an opportunity to draw Caleb into a corner, spoke, with affectionate regret, of the declining health of the sheriff-clerk of the county.

"An excellent man — a most valuable man, Mr Caleb — but fat sall I say! — we are peer feckless bodies — here the day, and awa by cock-screech the morn — and if he failzies, there maun be somebody in his place — and gif that ye could airt it my way, I sall be thankful, man — a gluve stuffed wi' gowd nobles — an' hark ye, man, something canny till yoursell — and the Wolf's-hope carles to settle kindly wi' the Master of Ravenswood — that is, Lord Ravenswood — God bless his lordship!"

A smile, and a hearty squeeze by the hand, was the suitable answer to this overture — and Caleb made his escape from the jovial party, in order to avoid committing himself by any special promises.

"The Lord be gude to me," said Caleb, when he found himself in the open air, and at liberty to give vent to the self-exultation with which he was, as it were distended; "did ever ony man see sic a set of green-gaislings! — the very pick-maws and solan-geese outby yonder at the Bass hae ten times their sense! — God, an I had been the Lord High Commissioner to the Estates o' Parliament, they couldna hae beflumm'd me mair — and, to speak Heaven's truth, I could hardly hae beflumm'd them better neither! But the writer — ha! ha! ha! — ah, ha! ha! ha! mercy on me, that I suld live in my auld days to gie the gang-by to the very writer! — Sheriff-clerk!!! — But I hae an auld account to settle wi' the carle; and to make amends for byganes, the office shall just cost him as much time-serving, as if he were to get it in gude earnest — of whilk there is sma' appearance, unless the Master learns mair the ways of this warld, whilk it is muckle to be doubted that he never will do."

CHAPTER XXVI.

> Why flames yon far summit — why shoot to the blast
> Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast? —
> 'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
> From thine eyry, that beacons the darkness of Heaven.
> CAMPBELL.

The circumstances announced in the conclusion of the last chapter, will account for the ready and cheerful reception of the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood in the village of Wolf's-hope. In fact, Caleb had no sooner announced the conflagration of the tower, than the whole hamlet were upon foot to hasten to extinguish the flames. And although that zealous adherent diverted their zeal by intimating the formidable contents of the subterranean apartments, yet the check only turned their assiduity into another direction. Never had there been such slaughtering of capons, and fat geese, and barn-door fowls, — never such boiling of *reested* hams, — never such making of car-cakes and sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails, — delicacies little known to the present generation. Never had there been such a tapping of barrels, and such uncorking of greybeards, in the village of Wolf's-hope. All the inferior houses were thrown open for the reception of the Marquis's dependants, who came, it was thought, as precursors of the shower of preferment, which hereafter was to leave the rest of Scotland dry, in order to distil its rich dews on the village of Wolf's-hope under Lammermoor. The minister put in his claim to have the guests of distinction lodged at the Manse, having his eye, it was thought, upon a neighbouring preferment, where the incumbent was sickly; but Mr Balderston destined that honour to the cooper, his wife, and wife's mother, who danced for joy at the preference thus assigned them.

Many a beck and many a bow welcomed these noble guests to as good entertainment as persons of such rank could set before such visiters; and the old dame, who had formerly lived in Ravenswood Castle, and knew, as she said, the ways of the nobi-

ity, was in no whit wanting in arranging matters, as well as circumstances permitted, according to the etiquette of the times. The cooper's house was so roomy, that each guest had his separate retiring room, to which they were ushered with all due ceremony, while the plentiful supper was in the act of being placed upon the table.

Ravenswood no sooner found himself alone, than, impelled by a thousand feelings, he left the apartment, the house, and the village, and hastily retraced his steps to the brow of the hill, which rose betwixt the village, and screened it from the tower, in order to view the final fall of the house of his fathers. Some idle boys from the hamlet had taken the same direction out of curiosity, having first witnessed the arrival of the coach-and-six and its attendants. As they ran one by one past the Master, calling to each other to "come and see the auld tower blaw up in the lift like the peelings of an ingan," he could not but feel himself moved with indignation. "And these are the sons of my father's vassals," he said — "of men bound, both by law and gratitude, to follow our steps through battle, and fire, and flood; and now the destruction of their liege-lord's house is but a holiday's sight to them!"

These exasperating reflections were partly expressed in the acrimony with which he exclaimed, on feeling himself pulled by the cloak, — "What do you want, you dog?"

"I am a dog, and an auld dog too," answered Caleb, for it was he who had taken the freedom, "and I am like to get a dog's wages — but it does not signification a pinch of sneeshing, for I am ower auld a dog to learn new tricks, or to follow a new master."

As he spoke, Ravenswood attained the ridge of the hill from which Wolf's Crag was visible; the flames had entirely sunk down, and, to his great surprise, there was only a dusky reddening upon the clouds immediately over the castle, which seemed the reflection of the embers of the sunken fire.

"The place cannot have blown up," said the Master; "we must have heard the report — if a quarter of the gunpowder was there you tell me of, it would have been heard twenty miles off."

"It's very like it wad," said Balderston, composedly.

"Then the fire cannot have reached the vaults?"

"It's like no," answered Caleb, with the same impenetrable gravity.

"Hark ye, Caleb," said his master, "this grows a little too much for my patience. I must go and examine how matters stand at Wolf's Crag myself."

"Your honour is ganging to gang nae sic gate," said Caleb, firmly.

"And why not?" said Ravenswood, sharply; "who or what shall prevent me?"

"Even I mysell," said Caleb, with the same determination.

"You, Balderston!" replied the Master; "you are forgetting yourself, I think."

"But I think no," said Balderston; "for I can just tell ye a' about the castle on this knowe-head as weel as if ye were at it. Only dinna pit yoursell into a kippage, and expose yoursell before the weans, or before the Marquis, when ye gang downby."

"Speak out, you old fool," replied his master, "and let me know the best and the worst at once."

"Ou, the best and the warst is, just that the tower is standing hale and feir, as safe and as empty as when ye left it."

"Indeed! — and the fire?" said Ravenswood.

"Not a gleed of fire, then, except the bit kindling peat, and maybe a spunk in Mysie's cutty-pipe," replied Caleb.

"But the flame!" demanded Ravenswood; "the broad blaze which might have been seen ten miles off — what occasioned that?"

"Hout awa! it's an auld saying and a true, —

> Little 's the light
> Will be seen far in a mirk night.

A wheen fern and horse litter that I fired in the court-yard, after sending back the loun of a footman; and, to speak heaven's truth, the next time that ye send or bring ony body here, let them be gentles allenarly, without ony fremd servants, like that chield Lockhard, to be gledging and gleeing about, and looking upon the wrang side of ane's housekeeping, to the discredit of the family, and forcing ane to damn their souls wi' telling ae lee after another faster than I can count them — I wad rather set fire to the tower in gude earnest, and burn it ower my ain head into the bargain, or I see the family dishonoured in the sort."

"Upon my word, I am infinitely obliged by the proposal, Caleb," said his master, scarce able to restrain his laughter, though rather angry at the same time. "But the gunpowder? — is there such a thing in the tower? — The Marquis seemed to know of it."

"The pouther — ha! ha! ha! — the Marquis — ha! ha! ha!" replied Caleb; "if your honour were to brain me, I behooved to laugh — the Marquis — the pouther! — was it there? ay, it was there. Did he ken o't! — my certie! the Marquis kend o't, and it was the best o' the game; for, when I couldna pacify your honour wi' a' that I could say, I aye threw out a word mair about the gunpouther, and garr'd the Marquis tak the job in his ain hand."

"But you have not answered my question," said the Master, impatiently; "how came the powder there, and where is it now?"

"Ou, it came there, an ye maun needs ken," said Caleb, looking mysteriously, and whispering, "when there was like to be a wee bit rising here; and the Marquis, and a' the great lords of the north, were a' in it, and mony a gudely gun and broadsword were ferried ower frae Dunkirk forby the pouther — awfu' wark we had getting them into the tower under cloud o' night, for ye maun think it wasna every body could be trusted wi' sic kittle jobs — But if ye will gae hame to your supper, I will tell you a' about it as ye gang down."

"And these wretched boys," said Ravenswood, "is it your pleasure they are to sit there all night, to wait for the blowing up of a tower that is not even on fire?"

"Surely not, if it is your honour's pleasure that they suld gang hame; although," added Caleb, "it wadna do them a grain's damage — they wad screigh less the next day, and sleep the sounder at e'en — But just as your honour likes."

Stepping accordingly towards the urchins who manned the knolls near which they stood, Caleb

informed them, in an authoritative tone, that their Honours Lord Ravenswood and the Marquis of A—— had given orders that the tower was not to blow up till next day at noon. The boys dispersed upon this comfortable assurance. One or two, however, followed Caleb for more information, particularly the urchin whom he had cheated while officiating as turnspit, who screamed, "Mr Balderston! Mr Balderston! than the castle 's gane out like an auld wife's spunk?"

"To be sure it is, callant," said the butler; "do ye think the castle of as great a lord as Lord Ravenswood wad continue in a bleeze, and him standing looking on wi' his ain very een?—It 's aye right," continued Caleb, shaking off his ragged page, and closing in to his master, "to train up weans, as the wise man says, in the way they should go, and, aboon a', to teach them respect to their superiors."

"But all this while, Caleb, you have never told me what became of the arms and powder," said Ravenswood.

"Why, as for the arms," said Caleb, "it was just like the bairns' rhyme—

'Some gaed east, and some gaed west,
And some gaed to the craw's nest:

And for the pouther, I e 'en changed it, as occasion served, with the skippers o' Dutch luggers and French vessels, for gin and brandy, and it served the house mony a year—a gude swap too, between what cheereth the soul of man and that which dingeth it clean out of his body; forby, I keepit a wheen pounds of it for yoursell when ye wanted to take the pleasure o' shooting—whiles, in these latter days, I wad hardly hae kend else whar to get pouther for your pleasure.—And now that your anger is ower, sir, wasna that weel managed o' me, and arena you far better sorted down yonder, than ye could hae been in your ain auld ruins upby yonder, as the case stands wi' us now?—the mair 's the pity."

"I believe you may be right, Caleb; but, before burning down my castle, either in jest or in earnest," said Ravenswood, "I think I had a right to be in the secret."

"Fie for shame, your honour!" replied Caleb; "it fits an auld carle like me weel eneugh to tell lees for the credit of the family, but it wadna beseem the like o' your honour's sell; besides, young folk are no judicious—they cannot make the maist of a bit figment. Now this fire—for a fire it sall be, if I suld burn the auld stable to make it mair feasible—this fire, besides that it will be an excuse for asking ony thing we want through the country, or doun at the haven—this fire will settle mony things on an honourable footing for the family's credit, that cost me telling twenty daily lees to a wheen idle chaps and queans, and, what 's waur, without gaining credence."

"That was hard, indeed, Caleb; but I do not see how this fire should help your veracity or your credit."

"There it is now!" said Caleb; "wasna I saying that young folk had a green judgment?—How suld it help me, quotha?—it will be a creditable apology for the honour of the family for this score of years to come, if it is weel guided. Where 's the family pictures? says ae meddling body—the great fire at Wolf's Crag, answers I. Where 's the family plate? says another—the great fire, says I, wha was to think of plate, when life and limb were in danger?—Where 's the wardrobe and the linens!—where 's the tapestries and the decorements?—beds of state, twilts, pands, and testors, napery and broidered wark?—The fire—the fire—the fire. Guide the fire weel, and it will serve ye for a' that ye suld have and have not—and, in some sort, a gude excuse is better than the things themselves; for they maun crack and wear out, and be consumed by time, whereas a gude offcome, prudently and creditably handled, may serve a nobleman and his family, Lord kens how lang!"

Ravenswood was too well acquainted with his butler's pertinacity and self-opinion, to dispute the point with him any farther. Leaving Caleb, therefore, to the enjoyment of his own successful ingenuity, he returned to the hamlet, where he found the Marquis and the good women of the mansion under some anxiety—the former on account of his absence, the others for the discredit their cookery might sustain by the delay of the supper. All were now at ease, and heard with pleasure that the fire at the castle had burned out of itself without reaching the vaults, which was the only information that Ravenswood thought it proper to give in public concerning the event of his butler's stratagem.

They sat down to an excellent supper. No invitation could prevail on Mr and Mrs Girder, even in their own house, to sit down at table with guests of such high quality. They remained standing in the apartment, and acted the part of respectful and careful attendants on the company. Such were the manners of the time. The elder dame, confident through her age and connection with the Ravenswood family, was less scrupulously ceremonious. She played a mixed part betwixt that of the hostess of an inn, and the mistress of a private house, who receives guests above her own degree. She recommended, and even pressed, what she thought best, and was herself easily entreated to take a moderate share of the good cheer, in order to encourage her guests by her own example. Often she interrupted herself, to express her regret that "my Lord did not eat—that the Master was pyking a bare bane—that, to be sure, there was naething there fit to set before their honours—that Lord Allan, rest his saul, used to like a pouthered guse, and said it was Latin for a tass o' brandy—that the brandy came frae France direct; for, for a' the English laws and gaugers, the Wolf's-hope brigs hadna forgotten the gate to Dunkirk."

Here the cooper admonished his mother-in-law with his elbow, which procured him the following special notice in the progress of her speech.

"Ye needna be dunshin that gate, John," continued the old lady; "naebody says that *ye* ken whar the brandy comes frae; and it wadna be fitting ye should, and you the queen's cooper; and what signifies 't," continued she, addressing Lord Ravenswood, "to king, queen, or keiser, whar an auld wife like me buys her pickle sneeshin, or her drap brandy-wine, to haud her heart up?"

Having thus extricated herself from her supposed false step, Dame Loup-the-dyke proceeded, during the rest of the evening, to supply, with great animation, and very little assistance from her guests, the funds necessary for the support of the conversation, until, declining any farther circulation of their

glass, her guests requested her permission to retire to their apartments.

The Marquis occupied the chamber of dais, which, in every house above the rank of a mere cottage, was kept sacred for such high occasions as the present. The modern finishing with plaster was then unknown, and tapestry was confined to the houses of the nobility and superior gentry. The cooper, therefore, who was a man of some vanity, as well as some wealth, had imitated the fashion observed by the inferior landholders and clergy, who usually ornamented their state apartments with hangings of a sort of stamped leather, manufactured in the Netherlands, garnished with trees and animals executed in copper foil, and with many a pithy sentence of morality, which, although couched in Low Dutch, were perhaps as much attended to in practice as if written in broad Scotch. The whole had somewhat of a gloomy aspect; but the fire, composed of old pitch-barrel staves, blazed merrily up the chimney; the bed was decorated with linen of most fresh and dazzling whiteness, which had never before been used, and might, perhaps, have never been used at all, but for this high occasion. On the toilette beside, stood an old-fashioned mirror, in a fillagree frame, part of the dispersed finery of the neighbouring castle. It was flanked by a long-necked bottle of Florence wine, by which stood a glass nearly as tall, resembling in shape that which Teniers usually places in the hands of his own portrait, when he paints himself as mingling in the revels of a country village. To counterbalance those foreign sentinels, there mounted guard on the other side of the mirror two stout warders of Scottish lineage; a jug, namely, of double ale, which held a Scotch pint, and a quegh, or bicker, of ivory and ebony, hooped with silver, the work of John Girder's own hands and the pride of his heart. Besides these preparations against thirst, there was a goodly diet-loaf, or sweet cake; so that, with such auxiliaries, the apartment seemed victualled against a siege of two or three days.

It only remains to say, that the Marquis's valet was in attendance, displaying his Master's brocaded night-gown, and richly embroidered velvet cap, lined and faced with Brussels lace, upon a huge leathern easy chair, wheeled round so as to have the full advantage of the comfortable fire which we have already mentioned. We therefore commit that eminent person to his night's repose, trusting he profited by the ample preparations made for his accommodation,—preparations which we have mentioned in detail, as illustrative of ancient Scottish manners.

It is not necessary we should be equally minute in describing the sleeping apartment of the Master of Ravenswood, which was that usually occupied by the goodman and goodwife themselves. It was comfortably hung with a sort of warm-coloured worsted, manufactured in Scotland, approaching in texture to what is now called shaloon. A staring picture of John Girder himself ornamented this dormitory, painted by a starving Frenchman, who had, God knows how or why, strolled over from Flushing or Dunkirk to Wolf's-hope in a smuggling dogger. The features were, indeed, those of the stubborn, opinionative, yet sensible artisan, but Monsieur had contrived to throw a French grace into the look and manner, so utterly inconsistent with the dogged gravity of the original, that it was impossible to look at it without laughing. John and his family, however, piqued themselves not a little upon this picture, and were proportionably censured by the neighbourhood, who pronounced that the cooper, in sitting for the same, and yet more in presuming to hang it up in his bedchamber, had exceeded his privilege as the richest man of the village; at once stept beyond the bounds of his own rank, and encroached upon those of the superior orders; and, in fine, had been guilty of a very overweening act of vanity and presumption. Respect for the memory of my deceased friend, Mr Richard Tinto, has obliged me to treat this matter at some length; but I spare the reader his prolix, though curious observations, as well upon the character of the French school, as upon the state of painting in Scotland, at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The other preparations of the Master's sleeping apartment, were similar to those in the chamber of dais.

At the usual early hour of that period, the Marquis of A—— and his kinsman prepared to resume their journey. This could not be done without an ample breakfast, in which cold meat and hot meat, and oatmeal flummery, wine and spirits, and milk varied by every possible mode of preparation, evinced the same desire to do honour to their guests which had been shewn by the hospitable owners of the mansion upon the evening before. All the bustle of preparation for departure now resounded through Wolf's-hope. There was paying of bills and shaking of hands, and saddling of horses, and harnessing of carriages, and distributing of drink-money. The Marquis left a broad piece for the gratification of John Girder's household, which he, the said John, was for some time disposed to convert to his own use; Dingwall the writer assuring him he was justified in so doing, seeing he was the disburser of those expenses which were the occasion of the gratification. But, notwithstanding this legal authority, John could not find in his heart to dim the splendour of his late hospitality, by pocketing any thing in the nature of a gratuity. He only assured his menials he would consider them as a damned ungrateful pack, if they bought a gill of brandy elsewhere than out of his own stores; and as the drink-money was likely to go to its legitimate use, he comforted himself that, in this manner, the Marquis's donative would, without any impeachment of credit and character, come ultimately into his own exclusive possession.

While arrangements were making for departure, Ravenswood made blithe the heart of his ancient butler, by informing him, cautiously however, (for he knew Caleb's warmth of imagination,) of the probable change which was about to take place in his fortunes. He deposited with Balderston, at the same time, the greater part of his slender funds, with an assurance, which he was obliged to reiterate more than once, that he himself had sufficient supplies in certain prospect. He, therefore, enjoined Caleb, as he valued his favour, to desist from all farther manœuvres against the inhabitants of Wolf's-hope, their cellars, poultry-yards, and substance whatsoever. In this prohibition, the old domestic acquiesced more readily than his master expected.

"It was doubtless," he said, "a shame, a discredit, and a sin, to harry the puir creatures, when the family were in circumstances to live honourably

on their ain means; and there might be wisdom," he added, "in giving them a while's breathing time at any rate, that they might be the more readily brought forward upon his honour's future occasions."

This matter being settled, and having taken an affectionate farewell of his old domestic, the Master rejoined his noble relative, who was now ready to enter his carriage. The two landladies, old and young, having received in all kindly greeting, a kiss from each of their noble guests, stood simpering at the door of their house, as the coach-and-six, followed by its train of clattering horsemen, thundered out of the village. John Girder also stood upon his threshold, now looking at his honoured right hand, which had been so lately shaken by a marquis and a lord, and now giving a glance into the interior of his mansion, which manifested all the disarray of the late revel, as if balancing the distinction which he had attained with the expenses of the entertainment.

At length he opened his oracular jaws. "Let every man and woman here set about their ain business, as if there was nae sic thing as marquis or master, duke or drake, laird or lord, in this world. Let the house be redd up, the broken meat set by, and if there is ony thing totally uneatable, let it be gien to the puir folk; and, gudemother and wife, I hae just ae thing to entreat ye, that ye will never speak to me a single word, good or bad, anent a' this nonsense wark, but keep a' your cracks about it to yoursells and your kimmers, for my head is weelnigh dung donnart wi' it already."

As John's authority was tolerably absolute, all departed to their usual occupations, leaving him to build castles in the air, if he had a mind, upon the court favour which he had acquired by the expenditure of his worldly substance.

CHAPTER XXVII.

> Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,
> And if she escapes my grasp, the fault is mine;
> He that hath buffeted with stern adversity,
> Best knows to shape his course to favouring breezes.
> *Old Play.*

Our travellers reached Edinburgh without any farther adventure, and the Master of Ravenswood, as had been previously settled, took up his abode with his noble friend.

In the meantime, the political crisis which had been expected, took place, and the Tory party obtained, in the Scottish, as in the English councils of Queen Anne, a short-lived ascendency, of which it is not our business to trace either the cause or consequences. Suffice it to say, that it affected the different political parties according to the nature of their principles. In England, many of the High Church party, with Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, at their head, affected to separate their principles from those of the Jacobites, and, on that account, obtained the denomination of Whimsicals. The Scottish High Church party, on the contrary, or, as they termed themselves, the Cavaliers, were more consistent, if not so prudent, in their politics, and viewed all the changes now made, as preparatory to calling to the throne, upon the queen's demise, her brother, the Chevalier de St George. Those who had suffered in his service, now entertained the most unreasonable hopes, not only of indemnification, but of vengeance upon their political adversaries; while families attached to the Whig interest, saw nothing before them but a renewal of the hardships they had undergone during the reigns of Charles the Second and his brother, and a retaliation of the confiscation which had been inflicted upon the Jacobites during that of King William.

But the most alarmed at the change of system, was that prudential set of persons, some of whom are found in all governments, but who abound in a provincial administration like that of Scotland during the period, and who are what Cromwell called waiters upon Providence, or, in other words, uniform adherents to the party who are uppermost. Many of these hastened to read their recantation to the Marquis of A——; and, as it was easily seen that he took a deep interest in the affairs of his kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood, they were the first to suggest measures for retrieving at least a part of his property, and for restoring him in blood against his father's attainder.

Old Lord Turntippet professed to be one of the most anxious for the success of these measures; for "it grieved him to the very saul," he said, "to see so brave a young gentleman, of sic auld and undoubted nobility, and, what was mair than a' that, a bluid relation of the Marquis of A——, the man whom," he swore, "he honoured most upon the face of the yearth, brought to so severe a pass. For his ain puir peculiar," as he said, "and to contribute something to the rehabilitation of sae auld ane house," the said Turntippet sent in three family pictures lacking the frames, and six high-backed chairs, with worked Turkey cushions, having the crest of Ravenswood broidered thereon, without charging a penny either of the principal or interest they had cost him, when he bought them, sixteen years before, at a roup of the furniture of Lord Ravenswood's lodgings in the Canongate.

Much more to Lord Turntippet's dismay than to his surprise, although he affected to feel more of the latter than the former, the Marquis received his gift very drily, and observed, that his lordship's restitution, if he expected it to be received by the Master of Ravenswood and his friends, must comprehend a pretty large farm, which, having been mortgaged to Turntippet for a very inadequate sum, he had contrived, during the confusion of the family affairs, and by means well understood by the lawyers of that period, to acquire to himself in absolute property.

The old time-serving lord winced excessively under this requisition, protesting to God, that he saw no occasion the lad could have for the instant possession of the land, seeing he would doubtless now recover the bulk of his estate from Sir William Ashton, to which he was ready to contribute by every means in his power, as was just and reasonable; and finally declaring, that he was willing to settle the land on the young gentleman, after his own natural demise.

But all these excuses availed nothing, and he was compelled to disgorge the property, on receiving back the sum for which it had been mortgaged. Having no other means of making peace with the higher powers, he returned home sorrowful and malecontent, complaining to his confidents, "that every mutation or change in the state had hitherto

been productive of some sma' advantage to him in his ain quiet affairs; but that the present had (pize upon it!) cost him one of the best pen-feathers o' his wing."

Similar measures were threatened against others who had profited by the wreck of the fortune of Ravenswood; and Sir William Ashton, in particular, was menaced with an appeal to the House of Peers against the judicial sentences under which he held the Castle and Barony of Ravenswood. With him, however, the Master, as well for Lucy's sake as on account of the hospitality he had received from him, felt himself under the necessity of proceeding with great candour. He wrote to the late Lord Keeper, for he no longer held that office, stating frankly the engagement which existed between him and Miss Ashton, requesting his permission for their union, and assuring him of his willingness to put the settlement of all matters between them upon such a footing, as Sir William himself should think favourable.

The same messenger was charged with a letter to Lady Ashton, deprecating any cause of displeasure which the Master might unintentionally have given her, enlarging upon his attachment to Miss Ashton, and the length to which it had proceeded, and conjuring the lady, as a Douglas in nature as well as in name, generously to forget ancient prejudices and misunderstandings; and to believe that the family had acquired a friend, and she herself a respectful and attached humble servant, in him who subscribed himself Edgar, Master of Ravenswood.

A third letter Ravenswood addressed to Lucy, and the messenger was instructed to find some secret and secure means of delivering it into her own hands. It contained the strongest protestations of continued affection, and dwelt upon the approaching change of the writer's fortunes, as chiefly valuable by tending to remove the impediments to their union. He related the steps he had taken to overcome the prejudices of her parents, and especially of her mother, and expressed his hopes they might prove effectual. If not, he still trusted that his absence from Scotland upon an important and honourable mission might give time for prejudices to die away; while he hoped and trusted Miss Ashton's constancy, on which he had the most implicit reliance, would baffle any effort that might be used to divert her attachment. Much more there was, which, however interesting to the lovers themselves, would afford the reader neither interest nor information. To each of these three letters the Master of Ravenswood received an answer, but by different means of conveyance, and certainly couched in very different styles.

Lady Ashton answered his letter by his own messenger, who was not allowed to remain at Ravenswood a moment longer than she was engaged in penning these lines. "For the hand of Mr Ravenswood of Wolf's Crag—These:

"Sir, unknown,

"I have received a letter, signed Edgar, Master of Ravenswood, concerning the writer whereof I am uncertain, seeing that the honours of such a family were forfeited for high treason in the person of Allan, late Lord Ravenswood. Sir, if you shall happen to be the person so subscribing yourself, you will please to know, that I claim the full interest of a parent in Miss Lucy Ashton, which I have disposed of irrevocably in behalf of a worthy person. And, sir, were this otherwise, I would not listen to a proposal from you, or any of your house, seeing their hand has been uniformly held up against the freedom of the subject, and the immunities of God's kirk. Sir, it is not a flightering blink of prosperity which can change my constant opinion in this regard, seeing it has been my lot before now, like holy David, to see the wicked great in power, and flourishing like a green bay tree; nevertheless I passed, and they were not, and the place thereof knew them no more. Wishing you to lay these things to your heart for your own sake so far as they may concern you, I pray you to take no farther notice of her, who desires to remain your unknown servant,

Margaret Douglas,
"otherwise Ashton."

About two days after he had received this very unsatisfactory epistle, the Master of Ravenswood, while walking up the High Street of Edinburgh, was jostled by a person, in whom, as the man pulled off his hat to make an apology, he recognized Lockhard, the confidential domestic of Sir William Ashton. The man bowed, slipt a letter into his hand, and disappeared. The packet contained four close-written folios, from which, however, as is sometimes incident to the compositions of great lawyers, little could be extracted, excepting that the writer felt himself in a very puzzling predicament.

Sir William spoke at length of his high value and regard for his dear young friend, the Master of Ravenswood, and of his very extreme high value and regard for the Marquis of A——, his very dear old friend;—he trusted that any measures that they might adopt, in which he was concerned, would be carried on with due regard to the sanctity of decrees, and judgments obtained *in foro contentioso;* protesting, before men and angels, that if the law of Scotland, as declared in her supreme courts, were to undergo a reversal in the English House of Lords, the evils which would thence arise to the public would inflict a greater wound upon his heart, than any loss he might himself sustain by such irregular proceedings. He flourished much on generosity and forgiveness of mutual injuries, and hinted at the mutability of human affairs, always favourite topics with the weaker party in politics. He pathetically lamented, and gently censured, the haste which had been used in depriving him of his situation of Lord Keeper, which his experience had enabled him to fill with some advantage to the public, without so much as giving him an opportunity of explaining how far his own views of general politics might essentially differ from those now in power. He was convinced the Marquis of A—— had as sincere intentions towards the public, as himself or any man; and if, upon a conference, they could have agreed upon the measures by which it was to be pursued, his experience and his interest should have gone to support the present administration. Upon the engagement betwixt Ravenswood and his daughter, he spoke in a dry and confused manner. He regretted so premature a step as the engagement of the young people should have been taken, and conjured the Master to rem-

ber he had never given any encouragement thereunto; and observed, that, as a transaction *inter minores*, and without concurrence of his daughter's natural curators, the engagement was inept, and void in law. This precipitate measure, he added, had produced a very bad effect upon Lady Ashton's mind, which it was impossible at present to remove. Her son, Colonel Douglas Ashton, had embraced her prejudices in the fullest extent, and it was impossible for Sir William to adopt a course disagreeable to them, without a fatal and irreconcilable breach in his family, which was not at present to be thought of. Time, the great physician, he hoped, would mend all.

In a postscript, Sir William said something more explicitly, which seemed to intimate, that rather than the law of Scotland should sustain a severe wound through his sides, by a reversal of the judgment of her supreme courts, in the case of the Barony of Ravenswood, through the intervention of what, with all submission, he must term a foreign court of appeal, he himself would extrajudicially consent to considerable sacrifices.

From Lucy Ashton, by some unknown conveyance, the Master received the following lines:—"I received yours, but it was at the utmost risk; do not attempt to write again till better times. I am sore beset, but I will be true to my word, while the exercise of my reason is vouchsafed to me. That you are happy and prosperous is some consolation, and my situation requires it all." The note was signed L. A.

This letter filled Ravenswood with the most lively alarm. He made many attempts, notwithstanding her prohibition, to convey letters to Miss Ashton, and even to obtain an interview; but his plans were frustrated, and he had only the mortification to learn, that anxious and effectual precautions had been taken to prevent the possibility of their correspondence. The Master was the more distressed by these circumstances, as it became impossible to delay his departure from Scotland, upon the important mission which had been confided to him. Before his departure, he put Sir William Ashton's letter into the hands of the Marquis of A——, who observed with a smile, that Sir William's day of grace was past, and that he had now to learn which side of the hedge the sun had got to. It was with the greatest difficulty that Ravenswood extorted from the Marquis a promise, that he would compromise the proceedings in Parliament, providing Sir William should be disposed to acquiesce in a union between him and Lucy Ashton.

"I would hardly," said the Marquis, "consent to your throwing away your birth-right in this manner, were I not perfectly confident that Lady Ashton, or Lady Douglas, or whatever she calls herself, will as Scotchmen say, keep her threep; and that her husband dares not contradict her."

"But yet," said the Master, "I trust your lordship will consider my engagement as sacred?"

"Believe my word of honour," said the Marquis, "I would be a friend even to your follies; and having thus told you *my* opinion, I will endeavour as occasion offers, to serve you according to your own."

The Master of Ravenswood could but thank his generous kinsman and patron, and leave him full power to act in all his affairs. He departed from Scotland upon his mission, which, it was supposed, might detain him upon the Continent for some months.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

> Was ever woman in this humour wooed?
> Was ever woman in this humour won?
> I'll have her.
>
> *Richard the Third.*

Twelve months had passed away since the Master of Ravenswood's departure for the Continent, and although his return to Scotland had been expected in a much shorter space, yet the affairs of his mission, or, according to a prevailing report, others of a nature personal to himself, still detained him abroad. In the meantime, the altered state of affairs in Sir William Ashton's family may be gathered from the following conversation which took place betwixt Bucklaw and his confidential bottle companion and dependent, the noted Captain Craigengelt.

They were seated on either side of the huge sepulchral-looking freestone chimney in the low hall at Girnington. A wood fire blazed merrily in the grate; a round oaken table, placed between them, supported a stoup of excellent claret, two rummer glasses, and other good cheer; and yet, with all these appliances and means to boot, the countenance of the patron was dubious, doubtful, and unsatisfied, while the invention of his dependent was taxed to the utmost, to parry what he most dreaded, a fit, as he called it, of the sullens, on the part of his protector. After a long pause, only interrupted by the devil's tattoo, which Bucklaw kept beating against the hearth with the toe of his boot, Craigengelt at last ventured to break silence. "May I be double distanced," said he, "if ever I saw a man in my life have less the air of a bridegroom! Cut me out of feather, if you have not more the look of a man condemned to be hanged!"

"My kind thanks for the compliment," replied Bucklaw; "but I suppose you think upon the predicament in which you yourself are most likely to be placed;—and pray, Captain Craigengelt, if it please your worship, why should I look merry, when I'm sad, and devilish sad too?"

"And that's what vexes me," said Craigengelt. "Here is this match, the best in the whole country, and which you were so anxious about, is on the point of being concluded, and you are as sulky as a bear that has lost its whelps."

"I do not know," answered the laird, doggedly, "whether I should conclude it or not, if it was not that I am too far forwards to leap back."

"Leap back!" exclaimed Craigengelt, with a well-assumed air of astonishment, "that would be playing the back-game with a witness! Leap back, Why, is not the girl's fortune——"

"The young lady's, if you please," said Hayston, interrupting him.

"Well, well, no disrespect meant—Will Miss Ashton's tocher not weigh against any in Lothian?"

"Granted," answered Bucklaw; "but I care not a penny for her tocher—I have enough of my own."

"And the mother, that loves you like her own child?"

"Better than some of her children, I believe,"

said Bucklaw, "or there would be little love wared on the matter."

"And Colonel Sholto Douglas Ashton, who desires the marriage above all earthly things?"

"Because," said Bucklaw, "he expects to carry the county of —— through my interest."

"And the father, who is as keen to see the match concluded, as ever I have been to win a main?"

"Ay," said Bucklaw, in the same disparaging manner, "it lies with Sir William's policy to secure the next best match, since he cannot barter his child to save the great Ravenswood estate, which the English House of Lords are about to wrench out of his clutches."

"What say you to the young lady herself?" said Craigengelt; "the finest young woman in all Scotland, one that you used to be so fond of when she was cross, and now she consents to have you, and gives up her engagement with Ravenswood, you are for jibbing — I must say, the devil's in ye, when ye neither know what you would have, nor what you would want."

"I'll tell you my meaning in a word," answered Bucklaw, getting up and walking through the room; "I want to know what the devil is the cause of Miss Ashton's changing her mind so suddenly?"

"And what need you care," said Craigengelt, "since the change is in your favour?"

"I'll tell you what it is," returned his patron, "I never knew much of that sort of fine ladies, and I believe they may be as capricious as the devil; but there is something in Miss Ashton's change, a devilish deal too sudden, and too serious for a mere flisk of her own. I'll be bound Lady Ashton understands every machine for breaking in the human mind, and there are as many as there are cannon-bits, martingales, and cavessons for young colts."

"And if that were not the case," said Craigengelt, "how the devil should we ever get them into training at all?"

"And that's true too," said Bucklaw, suspending his march through the dining-room, and leaning upon the back of a chair.—"And besides, here's Ravenswood in the way still; do you think he'll give up Lucy's engagement?"

"To be sure he will," answered Craigengelt; "what good can it do him to refuse, since he wishes to marry another woman, and she another man?"

"And you believe seriously," said Bucklaw, "that he is going to marry the foreign lady we heard of?"

"You heard yourself," answered Craigengelt, "what Captain Westenho said about it, and the great preparation made for their blithesome bridal."

"Captain Westenho," replied Bucklaw, "has rather too much of your own cast about him, Craigie, to make what Sir William would call a 'famous witness.' He drinks deep, plays deep, swears deep, and I suspect can lie and cheat a little into the bargain. Useful qualities, Craigie, if kept in their proper sphere, but which have a little too much of the freebooter to make a figure in a court of evidence."

"Well, then," said Craigengelt, "will you believe Colonel Douglas Ashton, who heard the Marquis of A——say in a public circle, but not aware that he was within ear-shot, that his kinsman had made a better arrangement for himself than to give his father's land for the pale-cheeked daughter of a broken-down fanatic, and that Bucklaw was welcome to the wearing of Ravenswood's shaughled shoes."

"Did he say so, by heavens!" cried Bucklaw, breaking out into one of those incontrollable fits of passion to which he was constitutionally subject, —"if I had heard him, I would have torn the tongue out of his throat before all his pets and minions, and Highland bullies into the bargain. Why did not Ashton run him through the body?"

"Capote me if I know," said the Captain. "He deserved it sure enough; but he is an old man, and a minister of state, and there would be more risk than credit in meddling with him. You had more need to think of making up to Miss Lucy Ashton the disgrace that's like to fall upon her, than of interfering with a man too old to fight, and on too high a stool for your hand to reach him."

"It *shall* reach him, though, one day," said Bucklaw, "and his kinsman Ravenswood to boot. In the meantime, I'll take care Miss Ashton receives no discredit for the slight they have put upon her. It's an awkward job, however, and I wish it were ended; I scarce know how to talk to her,—but fill a bumper, Craigie, and we'll drink her health. It grows late, and a night-cowl of good claret is worth all the considering-caps in Europe."

CHAPTER XXIX.

> It was the copy of our conference.
> In bed she slept not, for my urging it;
> At board she fed not, for my urging it;
> Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
> In company I often glanced at it.
>
> *Comedy of Errors.*

The next morning saw Bucklaw, and his faithful Achates, Craigengelt, at Ravenswood Castle. They were most courteously received by the knight and his lady, as well as by their son and heir, Colonel Ashton. After a good deal of stammering and blushing, — for Bucklaw, notwithstanding his audacity in other matters, had all the sheepish bashfulness common to those who have lived little in respectable society, — he contrived at length to explain his wish to be admitted to a conference with Miss Ashton upon the subject of their approaching union. Sir William and his son looked at Lady Ashton, who replied with the greatest composure, "that Lucy would wait upon Mr Hayston directly. I hope," she added with a smile, "that as Lucy is very young, and has been lately trepanned into an engagement, of which she is now heartily ashamed, our dear Bucklaw will excuse her wish, that I should be present at their interview?"

"In truth, my dear lady," said Bucklaw, "it is the very thing that I would have desired on my own account; for I have been so little accustomed to what is called gallantry, that I shall certainly fall into some cursed mistake, unless I have the advantage of your ladyship as an interpreter."

It was thus that Bucklaw, in the perturbation of his embarrassment upon this critical occasion, forgot the just apprehensions he had entertained of Lady Ashton's overbearing ascendency over her daughter's mind, and lost an opportunity of ascer-

taining, by his own investigation, the real state of Lucy's feelings.

The other gentlemen left the room, and in a short time, Lady Ashton, followed by her daughter, entered the apartment. She appeared, as he had seen her on former occasions, rather composed than agitated; but a nicer judge than he could scarce have determined, whether her calmness was that of despair, or of indifference. Bucklaw was too much agitated by his own feelings minutely to scrutinize those of the lady. He stammered out an unconnected address, confounding together the two or three topics to which it related, and stopt short before he brought it to any regular conclusion. Miss Ashton listened, or looked as if she listened, but returned not a single word in answer, continuing to fix her eyes on a small piece of embroidery, on which, as if by instinct or habit, her fingers were busily employed. Lady Ashton sat at some distance, almost screened from notice by the deep embrasure of the window in which she had placed her chair. From this she whispered, in a tone of voice, which, though soft and sweet, had something in it of admonition, if not command,—"Lucy, my dear, remember—have you heard what Bucklaw has been saying?"

The idea of her mother's presence seemed to have slipped from the unhappy girl's recollection. She started, dropped her needle, and repeated hastily, and almost in the same breath, the contradictory answers, "Yes, madam—no, my lady—I beg pardon, I did not hear."

"You need not blush, my love, and still less need you look so pale and frightened," said Lady Ashton, coming forward; "we know that maiden's ears must be slow in receiving a gentleman's language; but you must remember Mr Hayston speaks on a subject on which you have long since agreed to give him a favourable hearing. You know how much your father and I have our hearts set upon an event so extremely desirable."

In Lady Ashton's voice, a tone of impressive, and even stern innuendo was sedulously and skilfully concealed, under an appearance of the most affectionate maternal tenderness. The manner was for Bucklaw, who was easily enough imposed upon; the matter of the exhortation was for the terrified Lucy, who well knew how to interpret her mother's hints, however skilfully their real purport might be veiled from general observation.

Miss Ashton sat upright in her chair, cast round her a glance, in which fear was mingled with a still wilder expression, but remained perfectly silent. Bucklaw, who had in the meantime paced the room to and fro, until he had recovered his composure, now stopped within two or three yards of her chair, and broke out as follows:—"I believe I have been a d—d fool, Miss Ashton; I have tried to speak to you as people tell me young ladies like to be talked to, and I don't think you comprehend what I have been saying; and no wonder, for d—n me if I understand it myself! But, however, once for all, and in broad Scotch, your father and mother like what is proposed, and if you can take a plain young fellow for your husband, who will never cross you in any thing you have a mind to, I will place you at the head of the best establishment in the three Lothians; you shall have Lady Girnington's lodging in the Canongate of Edinburgh, go where you please, do what you please, and see what you please, and that's fair. Only I must have a corner at the board-end for a worthless old playfellow of mine, whose company I would rather want than have, if it were not that the d—d fellow has persuaded me that I can't do without him; and so I hope you won't except against Craigie, although it might be easy to find much better company."

"Now, out upon you, Bucklaw," said Lady Ashton, again interposing,—"how can you think Lucy can have any objection to that blunt, honest, good-natured creature, Captain Craigengelt?"

"Why, madam," replied Bucklaw, "as to Craigie's sincerity, honesty, and good-nature, they are, I believe, pretty much upon a par—but that's neither here nor there—the fellow knows my ways, and has got useful to me, and I cannot well do without him, as I said before. But all this is nothing to the purpose; for since I have mustered up courage to make a plain proposal, I would fain hear Miss Ashton, from her own lips, give me a plain answer."

"My dear Bucklaw," said Lady Ashton, "let me spare Lucy's bashfulness. I tell you, in her presence, that she has already consented to be guided by her father and me in this matter.—Lucy, my love," she added, with that singular combination of suavity of tone and pointed energy which we have already noticed—"Lucy, my dearest love? speak for yourself, is it not as I say?"

Her victim answered in a tremulous and hollow voice—"I *have* promised to obey you,—but upon one condition."

"She means," said Lady Ashton, turning to Bucklaw, "she expects an answer to the demand which she has made upon the man at Vienna, or Ratisbon, or Paris—or where is he—for restitution of the engagement in which he had the art to involve her. You will not, I am sure, my dear friend, think it is wrong that she should feel much delicacy upon this head; indeed, it concerns us all."

"Perfectly right—quite fair," said Bucklaw, half humming, half speaking the end of the old song—

> "It is best to be off wi' the old love
> Before you be on wi' the new."

"But I thought," said he, pausing, "you might have had an answer six times told from Ravenswood. D—n me, if I have not a mind to go and fetch one myself, if Miss Ashton will honour me with the commission."

"By no means," said Lady Ashton, "we have had the utmost difficulty of preventing Douglas, (for whom it would be more proper,) from taking so rash a step; and do you think we could permit you, my good friend, almost equally dear to us, to go to a desperate man upon an errand so desperate? In fact, all the friends of the family are of opinion, and my dear Lucy herself ought so to think, that, as this unworthy person has returned no answer to her letter, silence must on this, as in other cases, be held to give consent, and a contract must be supposed to be given up, when the party waves insisting upon it. Sir William, who should know best, is clear upon this subject; and therefore, my dear Lucy——"

"Madam," said Lucy, with unwonted energy, "urge me no farther—if this unhappy engagement be restored, I have already said you shall dispose of me as you will—till then I should com-

mit a heavy sin in the sight of God and man, in doing what you require."

"But, my love, if this man remains obstinately silent——"

"He will *not* be silent," answered Lucy; "it is six weeks since I sent him a double of my former letter by a sure hand."

"You have not — you could not — you durst not," said Lady Ashton, with violence inconsistent with the tone she had intended to assume; but instantly correcting herself, "My dearest Lucy," said she, in her sweetest tone of expostulation, "how could you think of such a thing?"

"No matter," said Bucklaw; "I respect Miss Ashton for her sentiments, and I only wish I had been her messenger myself."

"And pray how long, Miss Ashton," said her mother ironically, "are we to wait the return of your Pacolet — your fairy messenger — since our humble couriers of flesh and blood could not be trusted in this matter?"

"I have numbered weeks, days, hours, and minutes," said Miss Ashton; "within another week I shall have an answer, unless he is dead. — Till that time, sir," she said, addressing Bucklaw, "let me be thus far beholden to you, that you will beg my mother to forbear me upon this subject."

"I will make it my particular entreaty to Lady Ashton," said Bucklaw. "By my honour, madam, I respect your feelings; and, although the prosecution of this affair be rendered dearer to me than ever, yet, as I am a gentleman, I would renounce it, were it so urged as to give you a moment's pain."

"Mr Hayston, I think, cannot apprehend that," said Lady Ashton, looking pale with anger, "when the daughter's happiness lies in the bosom of the mother. — Let me ask you, Miss Ashton, in what terms your last letter was couched?"

"Exactly in the same, madam," answered Lucy, "which you dictated on a former occasion."

"When eight days have elapsed, then," said her mother, resuming her tone of tenderness "we shall hope, my dearest love, that you will end this suspense."

"Miss Ashton must not be hurried, madam," said Bucklaw, whose bluntness of feeling did not by any means arise from want of good nature — "messengers may be stopped or delayed. I have known a day's journey broke by the casting of a fore-shoe. — Stay, let me see my calendar — the 20th day from this is St Jude's, and, the day before, I must be at Caverton Edge to see the match between the Laird of Kittlegirth's black mare, and Johnston the meal-monger's four-year-old colt; but I can ride all night, or Craigie can bring me word how the match goes; and I hope, in the meantime, as I shall not myself distress Miss Ashton with any farther importunity, that your ladyship yourself, and Sir William, and Colonel Douglas, will have the goodness to allow her uninterrupted time for making up her mind."

"Sir," said Miss Ashton, "you are generous."

"As for that, madam," answered Bucklaw, "I only pretend to be a plain good-humoured young fellow, as I said before, who will willingly make you happy if you will permit him, and shew him how to do so."

Having said this, he saluted her with more emotion than was consistent with his usual train of feeling, and took his leave; Lady Ashton, as she accompanied him out of the apartment, assuring him that her daughter did full justice to the sincerity of his attachment, and requesting him to see Sir William before his departure, "since," as she said, with a keen glance reverting towards Lucy, "against St Jude's day, we must all be ready to *sign and seal*."

"To sign and seal!" echoed Lucy in a muttering tone, as the door of the apartment closed — "To sign and seal — to do and die!" and, clasping her extenuated hands together, she sunk back on the easy-chair she occupied, in a state resembling stupor.

From this she was shortly after awakened by the boisterous entry of her brother Henry, who clamorously reminded her of a promise to give him two yards of carnation ribbon to make knots to his new garters. With the most patient composure Lucy arose, and opened a little ivory-cabinet, sought out the ribbon the lad wanted, measured it accurately, cut it off into proper lengths, and knotted into the fashion his boyish whim required.

"Dinna shut the cabinet yet," said Henry, "for I must have some of your silver wire to fasten the bells to my hawk's jesses, — and yet the new falcon's not worth them neither; for do you know, after all the plague we had to get her from an eyry, all the way at Posso, in Mannor Water, she's going to prove, after all, nothing better than a rifler — she just wets her singles in the blood of the partridge, and then breaks away, and lets her fly; and what good can the poor bird do after that, you know, except pine and die in the first heather-cow or whin-bush she can crawl into?"

"Right, Henry — right, very right," said Lucy, mournfully, holding the boy fast by the hand, after she had given him the wire he wanted; "but there are more riflers in the world than your falcon, and more wounded birds that seek but to die in quiet, that can find neither brake nor whin-bush to hide their heads in."

"Ah! that's some speech out of your romances," said the boy; "and Sholto says they have turned your head. But I hear Norman whistling to the hawk; I must go fasten on the jesses."

And he scampered away with the thoughtless gaiety of boyhood, leaving his sister to the bitterness of her own reflections.

"It is decreed," she said, "that every living creature, even those who owe me most kindness, are to shun me, and leave me to those by whom I am beset. It is just it should be thus. Alone and uncounselled, I involved myself in these perils — alone and uncounselled, I must extricate myself or die."

CHAPTER XXX.

——— What doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,
And, at her heels, a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life?
Comedy of Errors.

As some vindication of the ease with which Bucklaw (who otherwise, as he termed himself, was really a very good-humoured fellow) resigned his judgment to the management of Lady Ashton,

while paying his addresses to her daughter, the reader must call to mind the strict domestic discipline, which, at this period, was exercised over the females of a Scottish family.

The manners of the country in this, as in many other respects, coincided with those of France before the revolution. Young women of the higher ranks seldom mingled in society until after marriage, and, both in law and fact, were held to be under the strict tutelage of their parents, who were too apt to enforce the views for their settlement in life, without paying any regard to the inclination of the parties chiefly interested. On such occasions, the suitor expected little more from his bride than a silent acquiescence in the will of her parents; and as few opportunities of acquaintance, far less of intimacy, occurred, he made his choice by the outside, as the lovers in the Merchant of Venice select the casket, contented to trust to chance the issue of the lottery, in which he had hazarded a venture.

It was not therefore surprising, such being the general manners of the age, that Mr Hayston of Bucklaw, whom dissipated habits had detached in some degree from the best society, should not attend particularly to those feelings in his elected bride to which many men of more sentiment, experience, and reflection, would, in all probability, have been equally indifferent. He knew what all accounted the principal point, that her parents and friends, namely, were decidedly in his favour, and there existed most powerful reasons for their predilection.

In truth, the conduct of the Marquis of A—— since Ravenswood's departure, had been such as almost to bar the possibility of his kinsman's union with Lucy Ashton. The Marquis was Ravenswood's sincere, but misjudging friend; or rather, like many friends and patrons, he consulted what he considered to be his relation's true interest, although he knew that in doing so he run counter to his inclinations.

The Marquis drove on, therefore, with the plenitude of ministerial authority, an appeal to the British House of Peers against those judgments of the courts of law, by which Sir William became possessed of Ravenswood's hereditary property. As this measure, enforced with all the authority of power, was new in Scottish judicial proceedings, though now so frequently resorted to, it was exclaimed against by the lawyers on the opposite side of politics, as an interference with the civil judicature of the country, equally new, arbitrary, and tyrannical. And if it thus affected even strangers connected with them only by political party, it may be guessed what the Ashton family themselves said and thought under so gross a dispensation. Sir William, still more worldly-minded than he was timid, was reduced to despair by the loss by which he was threatened. His son's haughtier spirit was exalted into rage at the idea of being deprived of his expected patrimony. But to Lady Ashton's yet more vindictive temper, the conduct of Ravenswood, or rather of his patron, appeared to be an offence challenging the deepest and most mortal revenge. Even the quiet and confiding temper of Lucy herself, swayed by the opinions expressed by all around her, could not but consider the conduct of Ravenswood as precipitate, and even unkind. "It was my father," she repeated with a sigh, "who welcomed him to this place, and encouraged, or at least allowed, the intimacy between us. Should he not have remembered this, and requited it with at least some moderate degree of procrastination in the assertion of his own alleged rights? I would have forfeited for him double the value of these lands, which he pursues with an ardour that shews he has forgotten how much I am implicated in the matter."

Lucy, however, could only murmur these things to herself, unwilling to increase the prejudices against her lover entertained by all around her, who exclaimed against the steps pursued on his account, as illegal, vexatious, and tyrannical, resembling the worst measures in the worst times of the worst Stewarts, and a degradation of Scotland, the decisions of whose learned judges were thus subjected to the review of a court, composed, indeed, of men of the highest rank, but who were not trained to the study of any municipal law, and might be supposed specially to hold in contempt that of Scotland. As a natural consequence of the alleged injustice meditated towards her father, every means was resorted to, and every argument urged, to induce Miss Ashton to break off her engagement with Ravenswood, as being scandalous, shameful, and sinful, formed with the mortal enemy of her family, and calculated to add bitterness to the distress of her parents.

Lucy's spirit, however, was high; and although unaided and alone, she could have borne much—she could have endured the repinings of her father—his murmurs against what he called the tyrannical usage of the ruling party—his ceaseless charges of ingratitude against Ravenswood—his endless lectures on the various means by which contracts may be voided and annulled—his quotations from the civil, the municipal, and the canon law—and his prelections upon the *patria potestas*.

She might have borne also in patience, or repelled with scorn, the bitter taunts and occasional violence of her brother Colonel Douglas Ashton, and the impertinent and intrusive interference of other friends and relations. But it was beyond her power effectually to withstand or elude the constant and unceasing persecution of Lady Ashton, who, laying every other wish aside, had bent the whole efforts of her powerful mind to break her daughter's contract with Ravenswood, and to place a perpetual bar between the lovers, by effecting Lucy's union with Bucklaw. Far more deeply skilled than her husband in the recesses of the human heart, she was aware, that in this way she might strike a blow of deep and decisive vengeance upon one, whom she esteemed as her mortal enemy; nor did she hesitate at raising her arm, although she knew that the wound must be dealt through the bosom of her daughter. With this stern and fixed purpose, she sounded every deep and shallow of her daughter's soul, assumed alternately every disguise of manner which could serve her object, and prepared at leisure every species of dire machinery, by which the human mind can be wrenched from its settled determination. Some of these were of an obvious description, and require only to be cursorily mentioned; others were characteristic of the time, the country, and the persons engaged in this singular drama.

It was of the last consequence, that all intercourse betwixt the lovers should be stopped, and by dint of gold and authority, Lady Ashton con-

trived to possess herself of such a complete command of all who were placed around her daughter, that, in fact, no leaguered fortress was ever more completely blockaded; while, at the same time, to all outward appearance, Miss Ashton lay under no restriction. The verge of her parents' domains became, in respect to her, like the viewless and enchanted line drawn around a fairy castle, where nothing unpermitted can either enter from without, or escape from within. Thus every letter, in which Ravenswood conveyed to Lucy Ashton the indispensable reasons which detained him abroad, and more than one note which poor Lucy had addressed to him through what she thought a secure channel, fell into the hands of her mother. It could not be, but that the tenor of these intercepted letters, especially those of Ravenswood, should contain something to irritate the passions, and fortify the obstinacy, of her into whose hands they fell; but Lady Ashton's passions were too deep-rooted to require this fresh food. She burnt the papers as regularly as she perused them; and as they consumed into vapour and tinder, regarded them with a smile upon her compressed lips, and an exultation in her steady eye, which shewed her confidence that the hopes of the writers should soon be rendered equally unsubstantial.

It usually happens, that fortune aids the machinations of those who are prompt to avail themselves of every chance that offers. A report was wafted from the Continent, founded, like others of the same sort, upon many plausible circumstances, but without any real basis, stating the Master of Ravenswood to be on the eve of marriage with a foreign lady of fortune and distinction. This was greedily caught up by both the political parties, who were at once struggling for power and for popular favour, and who seized, as usual, upon the most private circumstances in the lives of each other's partisans, to convert them into subjects of political discussion.

The Marquis of A—— gave his opinion aloud and publicly, not indeed in the coarse terms ascribed to him by Captain Craigengelt, but in a manner sufficiently offensive to the Ashtons:—"He thought the report," he said, "highly probable, and heartily wished it might be true. Such a match was fitter and far more creditable for a spirited young fellow, than a marriage with the daughter of an old whig lawyer, whose chicanery had so nearly ruined his father."

The other party, of course, laying out of view the opposition which the Master of Ravenswood received from Miss Ashton's family, cried shame upon his fickleness and perfidy, as if he had seduced the young lady into an engagement, and wilfully and causelessly abandoned her for another.

Sufficient care was taken that this report should find its way to Ravenswood Castle through every various channel, Lady Ashton being well aware, that the very reiteration of the same rumour from so many quarters could not but give it a semblance of truth. By some it was told as a piece of ordinary news, by some communicated as serious intelligence; now it was whispered to Lucy Ashton's ear in the tone of malignant pleasantry, and now transmitted to her as a matter of grave and serious warning.

Even the boy Henry was made the instrument of adding to his sister's torments. One morning he rushed into the room with a willow branch in his hand, which he told her had arrived that instant from Germany for her special wearing. Lucy, as we have seen, was remarkably fond of her younger brother, and at that moment his wanton and thoughtless unkindness seemed more keenly injurious than even the studied insults of her elder brother. Her grief, however, had no shade of resentment; she folded her arms about the boy's neck, and saying, faintly, "Poor Henry! you speak but what they tell you," she burst into a flood of unrestrained tears. The boy was moved, notwithstanding the thoughtlessness of his age and character. "The devil take me," said he, "Lucy, if I fetch you any more of these tormenting messages again; for I like you better," said he, kissing away the tears, "than the whole pack of them; and you shall have my grey pony to ride on, and you shall canter him if you like,—ay, and ride beyond the village, too, if you have a mind."

"Who told you," said Lucy, "that I am not permitted to ride where I please?"

"That 's a secret," said the boy; "but you will find you can never ride beyond the village but your horse will cast a shoe, or fall lame, or the castle bell will ring, or something will happen to bring you back.—But if I tell you more of these things, Douglas will not get me the pair of colours they have promised me, and so good-morrow to you."

This dialogue plunged Lucy in still deeper dejection, as it tended to shew her plainly, what she had for some time suspected, that she was little better than a prisoner at large in her father's house. We have described her in the outset of our story as of a romantic disposition, delighting in tales of love and wonder, and readily identifying herself with the situation of those legendary heroines, with whose adventures, for want of better reading, her memory had become stocked. The fairy wand, with which in her solitude she had delighted to raise visions of enchantment, became now the rod of a magician, the bond slave of evil genii, serving only to invoke spectres at which the exorcist trembled. She felt herself the object of suspicion, of scorn, of dislike at least, if not of hatred, to her own family; and it seemed to her that she was abandoned by the very person on whose account she was exposed to the enmity of all around her. Indeed, the evidence of Ravenswood's infidelity began to assume every day a more determined character.

A soldier of fortune, of the name of Westenho, an old familiar of Craigengelt's, chanced to arrive from abroad about this time. The worthy Captain, though without any precise communication with Lady Ashton, always acted most regularly and sedulously in support of her plans, and easily prevailed upon his friend, by dint of exaggeration of real circumstances, and coining of others, to give explicit testimony to the truth of Ravenswood's approaching marriage.

Thus beset on all hands, and in a manner reduced to despair, Lucy's temper gave way under the pressure of constant affliction and persecution. She became gloomy and abstracted, and, contrary to her natural and ordinary habit of mind, sometimes turned with spirit, and even fierceness, on those by whom she was long and closely annoyed. Her health also began to be shaken, and her hectic cheek and wandering eye gave symptoms of what is called a fever upon the spirits. In most mothers

this would have moved compassion; but Lady Ashton, compact and firm of purpose, saw these waverings of health and intellect with no greater sympathy than that with which the hostile engineer regards the towers of a beleagured city as they reel under the discharge of his artillery; or rather, she considered these starts and inequalities of temper as symptoms of Lucy's expiring resolution; as the angler, by the throes and convulsive exertions of the fish which he has hooked, becomes aware that he soon will be able to land him. To accelerate the catastrophe in the present case, Lady Ashton had recourse to an expedient very consistent with the temper and credulity of those times, but which the reader will probably pronounce truly detestable and diabolical.

CHAPTER XXXI.

* * * * * *

In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weeds,
And wilful want, all careless of her needs;
So choosing solitary to abide,
Far from all neighbours, that her devilish deeds
And hellish arts from people she might hide,
And hurt far off, unknown, whome'er she envied.
Fairy Queen.

The health of Lucy Ashton soon required the assistance of a person more skilful in the office of a sick-nurse than the female domestics of the family. Ailsie Gourlay, sometimes called the Wise Woman of Bowden, was the person whom, for her own strong reasons, Lady Ashton selected as an attendant upon her daughter.

This woman had acquired a considerable reputation among the ignorant by the pretended cures which she performed, especially in *oncomes*, as the Scotch call them, or mysterious diseases, which baffle the regular physician. Her pharmacopœia consisted partly of herbs selected in planetary hours, partly of words, signs, and charms, which sometimes, perhaps, produced a favourable influence upon the imagination of her patients. Such was the avowed profession of Lucky Gourlay, which, as may well be supposed, was looked upon with a suspicious eye, not only by her neighbours, but even by the clergy of the district. In private, however, she traded more deeply in the occult sciences; for, notwithstanding the dreadful punishments inflicted upon the supposed crime of witchcraft, there wanted not those who, steeled by want and bitterness of spirit, were willing to adopt the hateful and dangerous character, for the sake of the influence which its terrors enabled them to exercise in the vicinity, and the wretched emolument which they could extract by the practice of their supposed art.

Ailsie Gourlay was not indeed fool enough to acknowledge a compact with the Evil One, which would have been a swift and ready road to the stake and tar-barrel. Her fairy, she said, like Caliban's, was a harmless fairy. Nevertheless, she "spaed fortunes," read dreams, composed philtres, discovered stolen goods, and made and dissolved matches as successfully as if, according to the belief of the whole neighbourhood, she had been aided in those arts by Beelzebub himself. The worst of the pretenders to these sciences was, that they were generally persons who, feeling themselves odious to humanity, were careless of what they did to deserve the public hatred. Real crimes were often committed under pretence of magical imposture; and it somewhat relieves the disgust with which we read, in the criminal records, the conviction of these wretches, to be aware that many of them merited, as poisoners, suborners, and diabolical agents in secret domestic crimes, the severe fate to which they were condemned for the imaginary guilt of witchcraft.

Such was Ailsie Gourlay, whom, in order to attain the absolute subjugation of Lucy Ashton's mind, her mother thought it fitting to place near her person. A woman of less consequence than Lady Ashton had not dared to take such a step; but her high rank and strength of character set her above the censure of the world, and she was allowed to have selected for her daughter's attendant the best and most experienced sick-nurse "and mediciner" in the neighbourhood, where an inferior person would have fallen under the reproach of calling in the assistance of a partner and ally of the great Enemy of mankind.

The beldam caught her cue readily and by innuendo, without giving Lady Ashton the pain of distinct explanation. She was in many respects qualified for the part she played, which indeed could not be efficiently assumed without some knowledge of the human heart and passions. Dame Gourlay perceived that Lucy shuddered at her external appearance, which we have already described when we found her in the death-chamber of blind Alice; and while internally she hated the poor girl for the involuntary horror with which she saw she was regarded, she commenced her operations by endeavouring to efface or overcome those prejudices which, in her heart, she resented as mortal offences. This was easily done, for the hag's external ugliness was soon balanced by a show of kindness and interest, to which Lucy had of late been little accustomed; her attentive services and real skill gained her the ear, if not the confidence, of her patient; and under pretence of diverting the solitude of a sick room, she soon led her attention captive by the legends in which she was well skilled, and to which Lucy's habits of reading and reflection induced her to "lend an attentive ear." Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character —

Of fays that nightly dance upon the wold,
And lovers doom'd to wander and to weep,
And castles high, where wicked wizards keep
Their captive thralls.

Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as, told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny fore-finger, and the shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a less credulous imagination, in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised. Her legends began to relate to the fortunes of the Ravenswood family, whose ancient grandeur and portentous authority, credulity had graced with so many superstitious attributes. The story of the fatal fountain was narrated at full length, and with formidable additions, by the ancient sibyl.

The prophecy, quoted by Caleb, concerning the dead bride, who was to be won by the last of the Ravenswoods, had its own mysterious commentary; and the singular circumstance of the apparition, seen by the Master of Ravenswood in the forest, having partly transpired through his hasty inquiries in the cottage of old Alice, formed a theme for many exaggerations.

Lucy might have despised these tales, if they had been related concerning another family, or if her own situation had been less despondent. But circumstanced as she was, the idea that an evil fate hung over her attachment, became predominant over her other feelings; and the gloom of superstition darkened a mind, already sufficiently weakened by sorrow, distress, uncertainty, and an oppressive sense of desertion and desolation. Stories were told by her attendant so closely resembling her own in their circumstances, that she was gradually led to converse upon such tragic and mystical subjects with the beldam, and to repose a sort of confidence in the sibyl, whom she still regarded with involuntary shuddering. Dame Gourlay knew how to avail herself of this imperfect confidence. She directed Lucy's thoughts to the means of inquiring into futurity,—the surest mode, perhaps, of shaking the understanding and destroying the spirits. Omens were expounded, dreams were interpreted, and other tricks of jugglery perhaps resorted to, by which the pretended adepts of the period deceived and fascinated their deluded followers. I find it mentioned in the articles of dittay against Ailsie Gourlay,—(for it is some comfort to know that the old hag was tried, condemned, and burned on the top of North-Berwick Law, by sentence of a commission from the Privy Council,)—I find, I say, it was charged against her, among other offences, that she had, by the aid and delusions of Satan, shewn to a young person of quality, in a mirror glass, a gentleman then abroad, to whom the said young person was betrothed, and who appeared in the vision to be in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady. But this and some other parts of the record appear to have been studiously left imperfect in names and dates, probably out of regard to the honour of the families concerned. If Dame Gourlay was able actually to play off such a piece of jugglery, it is clear she must have had better assistance to practise the deception, than her own skill or funds could supply. Meanwhile, this mysterious visionary traffic had its usual effect, in unsettling Miss Ashton's mind. Her temper became unequal, her health decayed daily, her manners grew moping, melancholy, and uncertain. Her father, guessing partly at the cause of these appearances, and exerting a degree of authority unusual with him, made a point of banishing Dame Gourlay from the castle; but the arrow was shot, and was rankling barb-deep in the side of the wounded deer.

It was shortly after the departure of this woman, that Lucy Ashton, urged by her parents, announced to them, with a vivacity by which they were startled, "that she was conscious heaven and earth and hell had set themselves against her union with Ravenswood; still her contract," she said, "was a binding contract, and she neither would nor could resign it without the consent of Ravenswood. Let me be assured," she concluded, "that he will free me from my engagement, and dispose of me as you please, I care not how. When the diamonds are gone, what signifies the casket?"

The tone of obstinacy with which this was said, her eyes flashing with unnatural light, and her hands firmly clenched, precluded the possibility of dispute; and the utmost length which Lady Ashton's art could attain, only got her the privilege of dictating the letter, by which her daughter required to know of Ravenswood whether he intended to abide by, or to surrender, what she termed, "their unfortunate engagement." Of this advantage Lady Ashton so far and so ingeniously availed herself, that, according to the wording of the letter, the reader would have supposed Lucy was calling upon her lover to renounce a contract which was contrary to the interests and inclinations of both. Not trusting even to this point of deception, Lady Ashton finally determined to suppress the letter altogether, in hopes that Lucy's impatience would induce her to condemn Ravenswood unheard and in absence. In this she was disappointed. The time, indeed, had long elapsed, when an answer should have been received from the Continent. The faint ray of hope which still glimmered in Lucy's mind was well-nigh extinguished. But the idea never forsook her, that her letter might not have been duly forwarded. One of her mother's new machinations unexpectedly furnished her with the means of ascertaining what she most desired to know.

The female agent of hell having been dismissed from the castle, Lady Ashton, who wrought by all variety of means, resolved to employ, for working the same end on Lucy's mind, an agent of a very different character. This was no other than the Reverend Mr Bide-the-bent, a Presbyterian clergyman, formerly mentioned, of the very strictest order, and the most rigid orthodoxy, whose aid she called in, upon the principle of the tyrant in the tragedy:—

> "I 'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,
> And make it sin not to renounce that vow,
> Which I 'd have broken."

But Lady Ashton was mistaken in the agent she had selected. His prejudices, indeed, were easily enlisted on her side, and it was no difficult matter to make him regard with horror the prospect of a union betwixt the daughter of a God-fearing, professing, and Presbyterian family of distinction, with the heir of a bloodthirsty prelatist and persecutor, the hands of whose fathers had been dyed to the wrists in the blood of God's saints. This resembled, in the divine's opinion, the union of a Moabitish stranger with the daughter of Zion. But with all the more severe prejudices and principles of his sect, Bide-the-bent possessed a sound judgment, and had learned sympathy even in that very school of persecution, where the heart is so frequently hardened. In a private interview with Miss Ashton, he was deeply moved by her distress, and could not but admit the justice of her request to be permitted a direct communication with Ravenswood, upon the subject of their solemn contract. When she urged to him the great uncertainty under which she laboured, whether her letter had been ever forwarded, the old man paced the room with long steps, shook his grey head, rested repeatedly for a space on his ivory-headed staff, and, after much hesitation, confessed that he thought

her doubts so reasonable, that he would himself aid in the removal of them.

"I cannot but opine, Miss Lucy," he said, "that your worshipful lady mother hath in this matter an eagerness, whilk, although it ariseth doubtless from love to your best interests here and hereafter,—for the man is of persecuting blood, and himself a persecutor, a cavalier or malignant, and a scoffer, who hath no inheritance in Jesse,—nevertheless, we are commanded to do justice unto all, and to fulfil our bond and covenant, as well to the stranger, as to him who is in brotherhood with us. Wherefore myself, even I myself, will be aiding unto the delivery of your letter to the man Edgar Ravenswood, trusting that the issue thereof may be your deliverance from the nets in which he hath sinfully engaged you. And that I may do in this neither more nor less than hath been warranted by your honourable parents, I pray you to transcribe, without increment or subtraction, the letter formerly expeded under the dictation of your right honourable mother; and I shall put it into such sure course of being delivered, that if, honoured young madam, you shall receive no answer, it will be necessary that you conclude that the man meaneth in silence to abandon that naughty contract, which, peradventure, he may be unwilling directly to restore."

Lucy eagerly embraced the expedient of the worthy divine. A new letter was written in the precise terms of the former, and consigned by Mr Bide-the-bent to the charge of Saunders Moonshine, a zealous elder of the church when on shore, and, when on board his brig, as bold a smuggler as ever ran out a sliding bowsprit to the winds that blow betwixt Campvere and the east coast of Scotland. At the recommendation of his pastor, Saunders readily undertook that the letter should be securely conveyed to the Master of Ravenswood at the court where he now resided.

This retrospect became necessary to explain the conference betwixt Miss Ashton, her mother, and Bucklaw, which we have detailed in a preceding chapter.

Lucy was now like the sailor, who, while drifting through a tempestuous ocean, clings for safety to a single plank, his powers of grasping it becoming every moment more feeble, and the deep darkness of the night only checkered by the flashes of lightning, hissing as they shew the white tops of the billows, in which he is soon to be engulfed.

Week crept away after week, and day after day. St Jude's day arrived, the last and protracted term to which Lucy had limited herself, and there was neither letter nor news of Ravenswood.

CHAPTER XXXII.

> How fair these names, how much unlike they look
> To all the blurr'd subscriptions in my book!
> The bridegroom's letters stand in row above,
> Tapering, yet straight, like pine-trees in his grove;
> While free and fine the bride's appear below,
> As light and slender as her jessamines grow.
>
> CRABBE.

St Jude's day came, the term assigned by Lucy herself as the farthest date of expectation, and, as we have already said, there were neither letters from, nor news of, Ravenswood. But there were news of Bucklaw, and of his trusty associate Craigengelt, who arrived early in the morning for the completion of the proposed espousals, and for signing the necessary deeds.

These had been carefully prepared under the revisal of Sir William Ashton himself, it having been resolved, on account of the state of Miss Ashton's health, as it was said, that none save the parties immediately interested should be present when the parchments were subscribed. It was farther determined, that the marriage should be solemnized upon the fourth day after signing the articles, a measure adopted by Lady Ashton, in order that Lucy might have as little time as possible to recede, or relapse into intractability. There was no appearance, however, of her doing either. She heard the proposed arrangement with the calm indifference of despair, or rather with an apathy arising from the oppressed and stupified state of her feelings. To an eye so unobserving as that of Bucklaw, her demeanour had little more of reluctance than might suit the character of a bashful young lady, who, however, he could not disguise from himself, was complying with the choice of her friends, rather than exercising any personal predilection in his favour.

When the morning compliments of the bridegroom had been paid, Miss Ashton was left for some time to herself; her mother remarking, that the deeds must be signed before the hour of noon, in order that the marriage might be happy.

Lucy suffered herself to be attired for the occasion as the taste of her attendants suggested, and was of course splendidly arrayed. Her dress was composed of white satin and Brussels lace, and her hair arranged with a profusion of jewels, whose lustre made a strange contrast to the deadly paleness of her complexion, and to the trouble which dwelt in her unsettled eye.

Her toilette was hardly finished, ere Henry appeared, to conduct the passive bride to the state apartment, where all was prepared for signing the contract. "Do you know, sister," he said, "I am glad you are to have Bucklaw after all, instead of Ravenswood, who looked like a Spanish grandee come to cut our throats, and trample our bodies under foot. And I am glad the broad seas are between us this day, for I shall never forget how frightened I was when I took him for the picture of old Sir Malise walked out of the canvass. Tell me true, are you not glad to be fairly shot of him?"

"Ask me no questions, dear Henry," said his unfortunate sister; "there is little more can happen to make me either glad or sorry in this world."

"And that's what all young brides say," said Henry; "and so do not be cast down, Lucy, for you'll tell another tale a twelvemonth hence—and I am to be bride's-man, and ride before you to the kirk, and all our kith, kin, and allies, and all Bucklaw's, are to be mounted and in order—and I am to have a scarlet laced coat, and a feathered hat, and a sword-belt, double bordered with gold, and *point d'espagne*, and a dagger instead of a sword; and I should like a sword much better, but my father won't hear of it. All my things, and a hundred besides, are to come out from Edinburgh to-night with old Gilbert, and the sumpter mules—and I will bring them, and shew them to you the instant they come."

The boy's chatter was here interrupted by the arrival of Lady Ashton, somewhat alarmed at her

daughter's stay. With one of her sweetest smiles, she took Lucy's arm under her own, and led her to the apartment where her presence was expected.

There were only present, Sir William Ashton, and Colonel Douglas Ashton, the last in full regimentals—Bucklaw, in bridegroom trim—Craigengelt, freshly equipt from top to toe by the bounty of his patron, and bedizened with as much lace as might have become the dress of the Copper Captain—together with the Rev. Mr Bide-the-bent; the presence of a minister being, in strict Presbyterian families, an indispensable requisite upon all occasions of unusual solemnity.

Wines and refreshments were placed on a table, on which the writings were displayed, ready for signature.

But before proceeding either to business or refreshment, Mr Bide-the-bent, at a signal from Sir William Ashton, invited the company to join him in a short extemporary prayer, in which he implored a blessing upon the contract now to be solemnized between the honourable parties then present. With the simplicity of his times and profession, which permitted strong personal allusions, he petitioned, that the wounded mind of one of these noble parties might be healed, in reward of her compliance with the advice of her right honourable parents; and that, as she had proved herself a child after God's commandment, by honouring her father and mother, she and hers might enjoy the promised blessing—length of days in the land here, and a happy portion hereafter in a better country. He prayed farther, that the bridegroom might be weaned from those follies which seduce youth from the path of knowledge; that he might cease to take delight in vain and unprofitable company, scoffers, rioters, and those who sit late at the wine, (here Bucklaw winked to Craigengelt,) and cease from the society that causeth to err. A suitable supplication in behalf of Sir William and Lady Ashton, and their family, concluded this religious address, which thus embraced every individual present, excepting Craigengelt, whom the worthy divine probably considered as past all hopes of grace.

The business of the day now went forward; Sir William Ashton signed the contract with legal solemnity and precision; his son, with military *nonchalance;* and Bucklaw, having subscribed as rapidly as Craigengelt could manage to turn the leaves, concluded by wiping his pen on that worthy's new laced cravat.

It was now Miss Ashton's turn to sign the writings, and she was guided by her watchful mother to the table for that purpose. At her first attempt she began to write with a dry pen, and when the circumstance was pointed out, seemed unable, after several attempts, to dip it in the massive silver inkstandish, which stood full before her. Lady Ashton's vigilance hastened to supply the deficiency. I have myself seen the fatal deed, and in the distinct characters in which the name of Lucy Ashton is traced on each page, there is only a very slight tremulous irregularity, indicative of her state of mind at the time of the subscription. But the last signature is incomplete, defaced and blotted; for, while her hand was employed in tracing it, the hasty tramp of a horse was heard at the gate, succeeded by a step in the outer gallery, and a voice, which, in a commanding tone, bore down the opposition of the menials. The pen dropped from Lucy's fingers, as she exclaimed with a faint shriek—"He is come—he is come!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

> This by his tongue should be a Montague!
> Fetch me my rapier, boy;
> Now, by the faith and honour of my kin,
> To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.
> *Romeo and Juliet.*

Hardly had Miss Ashton dropped the pen, when the door of the apartment flew open, and the Master of Ravenswood entered the apartment.

Lockhard and another domestic, who had in vain attempted to oppose his passage through the gallery or antechamber, were seen standing on the threshold transfixed with surprise, which was instantly communicated to the whole party in the state-room. That of Colonel Douglas Ashton was mingled with resentment; that of Bucklaw, with haughty and affected indifference; the rest, even Lady Ashton herself, shewed signs of fear, and Lucy seemed stiffened to stone by this unexpected apparition. Apparition it might well be termed, for Ravenswood had more the appearance of one returned from the dead, than of a living visiter.

He planted himself full in the middle of the apartment, opposite to the table at which Lucy was seated, on whom, as if she had been alone in the chamber, he bent his eyes with a mingled expression of deep grief and deliberate indignation. His dark coloured riding cloak, displaced from one shoulder, hung around one side of his person in the ample folds of the Spanish mantle. The rest of his rich dress was travel-soil'd, and deranged by hard riding. He had a sword by his side, and pistols in his belt. His slouched hat, which he had not removed at entrance, gave an additional gloom to his dark features, which, wasted by sorrow, and marked by the ghastly look communicated by long illness, added to a countenance naturally somewhat stern and wild, a fierce and even savage expression. The matted and dishevelled locks of hair which escaped from under his hat, together with his fixed and unmoved posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than that of a living man. He said not a single word, and there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes.

It was broken by Lady Ashton, who in that space partly recovered her natural audacity. She demanded to know the cause of this unauthorized intrusion.

"That is a question, madam," said her son, "which I have the best right to ask—and I must request of the Master of Ravenswood to follow me, where he can answer it at leisure."

Bucklaw interposed, saying, "No man on earth should usurp his previous right in demanding an explanation from the Master.—Craigengelt," he added, in an under tone, "d—n ye, why do you stand staring as if ye saw a ghost? fetch me my sword from the gallery."

"I will relinquish to none," said Colonel Ashton, "my right of calling to account the man who has offered this unparalleled affront to my family."

"Be patient, gentlemen," said Ravenswood, turning sternly towards them, and waving his hand as

if to impose silence on their altercation. "If you are as weary of your lives as I am, I will find time and place to pledge mine against one or both; at present, I have no leisure for the disputes of triflers."

"Triflers!" echoed Colonel Ashton, half unsheathing his sword, while Bucklaw laid his hand on the hilt of that which Craigengelt had just reached him.

Sir William Ashton, alarmed for his son's safety, rushed between the young men and Ravenswood, exclaiming, "My son, I command you — Bucklaw, I entreat you — keep the peace, in the name of the Queen and of the law!"

"In the name of the law of God," said Bide-the-bent, advancing also with uplifted hands between Bucklaw, the Colonel, and the object of their resentment — "In the name of Him who brought peace on earth, and good-will to mankind, I implore — I beseech — I command you to forbear violence towards each other! God hateth the blood-thirsty man — he who striketh with the sword, shall perish with the sword."

"Do you take me for a dog, sir," said Colonel Ashton, turning fiercely upon him, "or something more brutally stupid, to endure this insult in my father's house? — Let me go, Bucklaw! He shall account to me, or, by Heaven, I will stab him where he stands!"

"You shall not touch him here," said Bucklaw; "he once gave me my life, and were he the devil come to fly away with the whole house and generation, he shall have nothing but fair play."

The passions of the two young men thus counteracting each other, gave Ravenswood leisure to exclaim, in a stern and steady voice, "Silence! — let him who really seeks danger, take the fitting time when it is to be found; my mission here will be shortly accomplished. — Is *that* your handwriting, madam?" he added in a softer tone, extending towards Miss Ashton her last letter.

A faltering "Yes," seemed rather to escape from her lips, than to be uttered as a voluntary answer.

"And is *this* also your handwriting!" extending towards her the mutual engagement.

Lucy remained silent. Terror, and a yet stronger and more confused feeling, so utterly disturbed her understanding, that she probably scarcely comprehended the question that was put to her.

"If you design," said Sir William Ashton, "to found any legal claim on that paper, sir, do not expect to receive any answer to an extrajudicial question."

"Sir William Ashton," said Ravenswood, "I pray you, and all who hear me, that you will not mistake my purpose. If this young lady, of her own free will, desires the restoration of this contract, as her letter would seem to imply — there is not a withered leaf which this autumn wind strews on the heath, that is more valueless in my eyes. But I must and will hear the truth from her own mouth — without this satisfaction I will not leave this spot. Murder me by numbers you possibly may; but I am an armed man — I am a desperate man — and I will not die without ample vengeance. This is my resolution, take it as you may. I WILL hear her determination from her own mouth; from her own mouth, alone, and without witnesses will I hear it. Now, choose," he said, drawing his sword with the right hand, and, with the left, by the same motion taking a pistol from his belt and cocking it, but turning the point of one weapon, and the muzzle of the other to the ground, — "Choose if you will have this hall floated with blood, or if you will grant me the decisive interview with my affianced bride, which the laws of God and the country alike entitle me to demand."

All recoiled at the sound of his voice, and the determined action by which it was accompanied; for the ecstasy of real desperation seldom fails to overpower the less energetic passions by which it may be opposed. The clergyman was the first to speak. "In the name of God," he said, "receive an overture of peace from the meanest of his servants. What this honourable person demands, albeit it is urged with over violence, hath yet in it something of reason. Let him hear from Miss Lucy's own lips that she hath dutifully acceded to the will of her parents, and repenteth her of her covenant with him; and when he is assured of this, he will depart in peace unto his own dwelling, and cumber us no more. Alas! the workings of the ancient Adam are strong even in the regenerate — surely we should have long-suffering with those who, being yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, are swept forward by the uncontrollable current of worldly passion. Let, then, the Master of Ravenswood have the interview on which he insisteth; it can but be as a passing pang to this honourable maiden, since her faith is now irrevocably pledged to the choice of her parents. Let it, I say, be thus: it belongeth to my functions to entreat your honours' compliance with this healing overture."

"Never!" answered Lady Ashton, whose rage had now overcome her first surprise and terror — "never shall this man speak in private with my daughter, the affianced bride of another! Pass from this room who will, I remain here. I fear neither his violence nor his weapons, though some," she said, glancing a look towards Colonel Ashton, "who bear my name, appear more moved by them."

"For God's sake, madam," answered the worthy divine, "add not fuel to firebrands. The Master of Ravenswood cannot, I am sure, object to your presence, the young lady's state of health being considered, and your maternal duty. I myself will also tarry; peradventure my grey hairs may turn away wrath."

"You are welcome to do so, sir," said Ravenswood; "and Lady Ashton is also welcome to remain, if she shall think proper; but let all others depart."

"Ravenswood," said Colonel Ashton, crossing him as he went out, "you shall account for this ere long."

"When you please," replied Ravenswood.

"But I," said Bucklaw, with a half smile, "have a prior demand on your leisure, a claim of some standing."

"Arrange it as you will," said Ravenswood; "leave me but this day in peace, and I will have no dearer employment on earth, to-morrow, than to give you all the satisfaction you can desire."

The other gentlemen left the apartment; but Sir William Ashton lingered.

"Master of Ravenswood," he said, in a conciliating tone, "I think I have not deserved that

you should make this scandal and outrage in my family. If you will sheathe your sword, and retire with me into my study, I will prove to you, by the most satisfactory arguments, the inutility of your present irregular procedure ——"

"To-morrow, sir—to-morrow—to-morrow, I will hear you at length," reiterated Ravenswood, interrupting him; "this day hath its own sacred and indispensable business."

He pointed to the door, and Sir William left the apartment.

Ravenswood sheathed his sword, uncocked and returned his pistol to his belt, walked deliberately to the door of the apartment, which he bolted—returned, raised his hat from his forehead, and, gazing upon Lucy with eyes in which an expression of sorrow overcame their late fierceness, spread his dishevelled locks back from his face, and said, "Do you know me, Miss Ashton?—I am still Edgar Ravenswood." She was silent, and he went on with increasing vehemence—"I am still that Edgar Ravenswood, who, for your affection, renounced the dear ties by which injured honour bound him to seek vengeance. I am that Ravenswood, who, for your sake, forgave, nay, clasped hands in friendship with the oppressor and pillager of his house—the traducer and murderer of his father."

"My daughter," answered Lady Ashton, interrupting him, "has no occasion to dispute the identity of your person; the venom of your present language is sufficient to remind her, that she speaks with the mortal enemy of her father."

"I pray you to be patient, madam," answered Ravenswood; "my answer must come from her own lips.—Once more, Miss Lucy Ashton, I am that Ravenswood to whom you granted the solemn engagement, which you now desire to retract and cancel."

Lucy's bloodless lips could only falter out the words, "It was my mother."

"She speaks truly," said Lady Ashton, "it *was* I, who, authorized alike by the laws of God and man, advised her, and concurred with her, to set aside an unhappy and precipitate engagement, and to annul it by the authority of Scripture itself."

"Scripture!" said Ravenswood, scornfully.

"Let him hear the text," said Lady Ashton, appealing to the divine, "on which you yourself, with cautious reluctance, declared the nullity of the pretended engagement insisted upon by this violent man."

The clergyman took his clasped Bible from his pocket, and read the following words: "*If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth; and her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every vow wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.*"

"And was it not even so with us?" interrupted Ravenswood.

"Control thy impatience, young man," answered the divine, "and hear what follows in the sacred text:—'*But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.*'"

"And was not," said Lady Ashton, fiercely and triumphantly breaking in,—"was not ours the case stated in the holy writ?—Will this person deny, that the instant her parents heard of the vow, or bond, by which our daughter had bound her soul, we disallowed the same in the most express terms, and informed him by writing of our determination?"

"And is this all?" said Ravenswood, looking at Lucy—"Are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will, and the feelings of mutual affection, to this wretched hypocritical sophistry?"

"Hear him!" said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman—"hear the blasphemer!"

"May God forgive him," said Bide-the-bent, "and enlighten his ignorance!"

"Hear what I have sacrificed for you," said Ravenswood, still addressing Lucy, "ere you sanction what has been done in your name. The honour of an ancient family, the urgent advice of my best friends, have been in vain used to sway my resolution; neither the arguments of reason, nor the portents of superstition, have shaken my fidelity. The very dead have arisen to warn me, and their warning has been despised. Are you prepared to pierce my heart for its fidelity, with the very weapon which my rash confidence intrusted to your grasp?"

"Master of Ravenswood," said Lady Ashton, "you have asked what questions you thought fit. You see the total incapacity of my daughter to answer you. But I will reply for her, and in a manner which you cannot dispute. You desire to know whether Lucy Ashton, of her own free will, desires to annul the engagement into which she has been trepanned. You have her letter under her own hand, demanding the surrender of it; and, in yet more full evidence of her purpose, here is the contract which she has this morning subscribed, in presence of this reverend gentleman, with Mr Hayston of Bucklaw."

Ravenswood gazed upon the deed, as if petrified. "And it was without fraud or compulsion," said he, looking towards the clergyman, "that Miss Ashton subscribed this parchment?"

"I vouch it upon my sacred character."

"This is indeed, madam, an undeniable piece of evidence," said Ravenswood, sternly; "and it will be equally unnecessary and dishonourable to waste another word in useless remonstrance or reproach. There, madam," he said, laying down before Lucy the signed paper and the broken piece of gold—"there are the evidences of your first engagement; may you be more faithful to that which you have just formed. I will trouble you to return the corresponding tokens of my ill-placed confidence—I ought rather to say, of my egregious folly."

Lucy returned the scornful glance of her lover with a gaze, from which perception seemed to have been banished; yet she seemed partly to have understood his meaning, for she raised her hands as if to undo a blue ribbon which she wore around her neck. She was unable to accomplish her purpose, but Lady Ashton cut the ribbon asunder, and detached the broken piece of gold, which Miss Ashton had till then worn concealed in her bosom; the written counterpart of the lovers' engagement she for some time had had in her own possession. With a haughty curtsy, she delivered both to Ra

venswood, who was much softened when he took the piece of gold.

"And she could wear it thus," he said—speaking to himself—"could wear it in her very bosom—could wear it next to her heart—even when—But complaint avails not," he said, dashing from his eye the tear which had gathered in it, and resuming the stern composure of his manner. He strode to the chimney, and threw into the fire the paper and piece of gold, stamping upon the coals with the heel of his boot, as if to insure their destruction. "I will be no longer," he then said, "an intruder here—Your evil wishes, and your worse offices, Lady Ashton, I will only return, by hoping these will be your last machinations against your daughter's honour and happiness.—And to you, madam," he said, addressing Lucy, "I have nothing farther to say, except to pray to God that you may not become a world's wonder for this act of wilful and deliberate perjury."—Having uttered these words, he turned on his heel, and left the apartment.

Sir William Ashton, by entreaty and authority, had detained his son and Bucklaw in a distant part of the castle, in order to prevent their again meeting with Ravenswood; but as the Master descended the great staircase, Lockhard delivered him a billet, signed Sholto Douglas Ashton, requesting to know where the Master of Ravenswood would be heard of four or five days from hence, as the writer had business of weight to settle with him, so soon as an important family event had taken place.

"Tell Colonel Ashton," said Ravenswood, composedly, "I shall be found at Wolf's Crag when his leisure serves him."

As he descended the outward stair which led from the terrace, he was interrupted a second time by Craigengelt, who, on the part of his principal, the Laird of Bucklaw, expressed a hope, that Ravenswood would not leave Scotland within ten days at least, as he had both former and recent civilities for which to express his gratitude.

"Tell your master," said Ravenswood, fiercely, "to choose his own time. He will find me at Wolf's Crag, if his purpose is not forestalled."

"*My* master?" replied Craigengelt, encouraged by seeing Colonel Ashton and Bucklaw at the bottom of the terrace; "give me leave to say, I know of no such person upon earth, nor will I permit such language to be used to me!"

"Seek your master, then, in hell!" exclaimed Ravenswood, giving way to the passion he had hitherto restrained, and throwing Craigengelt from him with such violence, that he rolled down the steps, and lay senseless at the foot of them.—"I am a fool," he instantly added, "to vent my passion upon a caitiff so worthless."

He then mounted his horse, which at his arrival he had secured to a balustrade in front of the castle, rode very slowly past Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, raising his hat as he passed each, and looking in their faces steadily while he offered this mute salutation, which was returned by both with the same stern gravity. Ravenswood walked on with equal deliberation until he reached the head of the avenue, as if to shew that he rather courted than avoided interruption. When he had passed the upper gate, he turned his horse, and looked at the castle with a fixed eye; then set spurs to his good steed, and departed with the speed of a demon dismissed by the exorcist.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Who comes from the bridal chamber?
It is Azrael, the angel of death.

Thalaba.

After the dreadful scene that had taken place at the castle, Lucy was transported to her own chamber, where she remained for some time in a state of absolute stupor. Yet afterwards, in the course of the ensuing day, she seemed to have recovered, not merely her spirits and resolution, but a sort of flighty levity, that was foreign to her character and situation, and which was at times chequered by fits of deep silence and melancholy, and of capricious pettishness. Lady Ashton became much alarmed, and consulted the family physicians. But as her pulse indicated no change, they could only say that the disease was on the spirits, and recommended gentle exercise and amusement. Miss Ashton never alluded to what had passed in the state-room. It seemed doubtful even if she was conscious of it, for she was often observed to raise her hands to her neck, as if in search of the ribbon that had been taken from it, and mutter, in surprise and discontent, when she could not find it, "It was the link that bound me to life."

Notwithstanding all these remarkable symptoms, Lady Ashton was too deeply pledged, to delay her daughter's marriage even in her present state of health. It cost her much trouble to keep up the fair side of appearances towards Bucklaw. She was well aware, that if he once saw any reluctance on her daughter's part, he would break off the treaty, to her great personal shame and dishonour. She therefore resolved, that, if Lucy continued passive, the marriage should take place upon the day that had been previously fixed, trusting that a change of place, of situation, and of character, would operate a more speedy and effectual cure upon the unsettled spirits of her daughter, than could be attained by the slow measures which the medical men recommended. Sir William Ashton's views of family aggrandisement, and his desire to strengthen himself against the measures of the Marquis of A——, readily induced him to acquiesce in what he could not have perhaps resisted if willing to do so. As for the young men, Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, they protested, that after what had happened, it would be most dishonourable to postpone for a single hour the time appointed for the marriage, as it would be generally ascribed to their being intimidated by the intrusive visit and threats of Ravenswood.

Bucklaw would indeed have been incapable of such precipitation, had he been aware of the state of Miss Ashton's health, or rather of her mind. But custom, upon these occasions, permitted only brief and sparing intercourse between the bridegroom and the betrothed; a circumstance so well improved by Lady Ashton, that Bucklaw neither saw nor suspected the real state of the health and feelings of his unhappy bride.

On the eve of the bridal day, Lucy appeared to have one of her fits of levity, and surveyed with a degree of girlish interest the various preparations of dress, &c. &c., which the different members of the family had prepared for the occasion.

The morning dawned bright and cheerily. The

bridal guests assembled in gallant troops from distant quarters. Not only the relations of Sir William Ashton, and the still more dignified connections of his lady, together with the numerous kinsmen and allies of the bridegroom, were present upon this joyful ceremony, gallantly mounted, arrayed, and caparisoned, but almost every Presbyterian family of distinction, within fifty miles, made a point of attendance upon an occasion which was considered as giving a sort of triumph over the Marquis of A——, in the person of his kinsman. Splendid refreshments awaited the guests on their arrival, and after these were finished, the cry was to horse. The bride was led forth betwixt her brother Henry and her mother. Her gaiety of the preceding day had given rise to a deep shade of melancholy, which, however, did not misbecome an occasion so momentous. There was a light in her eyes, and a colour in her cheek, which had not been kindled for many a day, and which, joined to her great beauty, and the splendour of her dress, occasioned her entrance to be greeted with an universal murmur of applause, in which even the ladies could not refrain from joining. While the cavalcade were getting to horse, Sir William Ashton, a man of peace and of form, censured his son Henry for having begirt himself with a military sword of preposterous length, belonging to his brother, Colonel Ashton.

"If you must have a weapon," he said, "upon such a peaceful occasion, why did you not use the short poniard sent from Edinburgh on purpose?"

The boy vindicated himself, by saying it was lost.

"You put it out of the way yourself, I suppose," said his father, "out of ambition to wear that preposterous thing, which might have served Sir William Wallace—But never mind, get to horse now, and take care of your sister."

The boy did so, and was placed in the centre of the gallant train. At the time, he was too full of his own appearance, his sword, his laced cloak, his feathered hat, and his managed horse, to pay much regard to any thing else; but he afterwards remembered to the hour of his death, that when the hand of his sister, by which she supported herself on the pillion behind him, touched his own, it felt as wet and cold as sepulchral marble.

Glancing wide over hill and dale, the fair bridal procession at last reached the parish church, which they nearly filled; for, besides domestics, above a hundred gentlemen and ladies were present upon the occasion. The marriage ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Presbyterian persuasion, to which Bucklaw of late had judged it proper to conform.

On the outside of the church, a liberal dole was distributed to the poor of the neighbouring parishes, under the direction of Johnny Mortsheugh, who had lately been promoted from his desolate quarters at the Hermitage, to fill the more eligible situation of sexton at the parish church of Ravenswood. Dame Gourlay, with two of her contemporaries, the same who assisted at Alice's late-wake, seated apart upon a flat monument or *through-stane*, sate enviously comparing the shares which had been allotted to them in dividing the dole.

"Johnny Mortsheugh," said Annie Winnie, "might hae minded auld lang syne, and thought of his auld kimmers, for as braw as he is with his new black coat. I hae gotten but five herring instead o' sax, and this disna look like a gude sax pennys, and I daresay this bit morsel o' beef is an unce lighter than ony that's been dealt round; and it's a bit o' the tenony hough, mair by token, that yours Maggie, is out o' the back sey."

"Mine, quo' she?" mumbled the paralytic hag, "mine is half banes, I trow. If grit folk gie poor bodies ony thing for coming to their weddings and burials, it suld be something that wad do them gude, I think."

"Their gifts," said Ailsie Gourlay, "are dealt for nae love of us—nor out of respect for whether we feed or starve. They wad gie us whinstanes for loaves, if it would serve their ain vanity, and yet they expect us to be as gratefu', as they ca' it, as if they served us for true love and liking."

"And that's truly said," answered her companion.

"But, Ailsie Gourlay, ye're the auldest o' us three, did ye ever see a mair grand bridal?"

"I winna say that I have," answered the hag; "but I think soon to see as braw a burial."

"And that wad please me as weel," said Annie Winnie; "for there's as large a dole, and folk are no obliged to girn and laugh, and mak murgeons, and wish joy to these hellicat quality, that lord it ower us like brute beasts. I like to pack the dead-dole in my lap, and rin ower my auld rhyme,—

'My loaf in my lap, my penny in my purse,
Thou art ne'er the better, and I 'm ne'er the worse.'"[1]

"That's right, Annie," said the paralytic woman; "God send us a green Yule and a fat kirkyard!"

"But I wad like to ken, Lucky Gourlay, for ye're the auldest and wisest amang us, whilk o' these revellers' turns it will be to be streekit first?"

"D'ye see you dandilly maiden," said Dame Gourlay, "a' glistenin' wi' goud and jewels, that they are lifting up on the white horse behind that harebrained callant in scarlet, wi' the lang sword at his side?"

"But that's the bride!" said her companion, her cold heart touched with some sort of compassion; "that's the very bride hersell! Eh, whow! sae young, sae braw, and sae bonny—and is her time sae short?"

"I tell ye," said the sibyl, "her winding sheet is up as high as her throat already, believe it wha list. Her sand has but few grains to rin out, and nae wonder—they've been weel shaken. The leaves are withering fast on the trees, but she'll never see the Martinmas wind gar them dance in swirls like the fairy rings."

"Ye waited on her for a quarter," said the paralytic woman, "and got twa red pieces, or I am far beguiled."

"Ay, ay," answered Ailsie, with a bitter grin; "and Sir William Ashton promised me a bonny red gown to the boot o' that—a stake, and a chain, and a tar barrel, lass!—what think ye o' that for a propine?—for being up early and doun late for fourscore nights and mair wi' his dwining daughter. But he may keep it for his ain leddy, cummers."

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[1] Reginald Scott tells of an old woman who performed so many cures by means of a charm, that she was suspected of witchcraft. Her mode of practice being inquired into, it was found, that the only fee which she would accept of, was a loaf of bread and a silver penny; and that the potent charm with which she wrought so many cures, was the doggerel couplet in the text.

"I hae heard a sough," said Annie Winnie, "as if Leddy Ashton was nae canny body."

"D' ye see her yonder," said Dame Gourlay, "as she prances on her grey gelding out at the kirkyard?—there 's mair o' utter deevilry in that woman, as brave and fair-fashioned as she rides yonder, than in a' the Scotch witches that ever flew by moonlight ower North-Berwick Law."

"What's that ye say about witches, ye damned hags!" said Johnny Mortsheugh; "are ye casting yer cantrips in the very kirkyard, to mischieve the bride and bridegroom? Get awa hame, for if I tak my souple t' ye, I 'll gar ye find the road faster than ye wad like."

"Hech, sirs!" answered Ailsie Gourlay; "how bra' are we wi' our new black coat and our weel-pouthered head, as if we had never kend hunger nor thirst oursells! and we 'll be screwing up our bit fiddle, doubtless, in the ha' the night, amang a' the other elbo'-jiggers for miles round. Let 's see if the pins haud, Johnny — that 's a', lad."

"I take ye a' to witness, gude people," said Mortsheugh, "that she threatens me wi' mischief, and forespeaks me. If ony thing but gude happens to me or my fiddle this night, I 'll make it the blackest night's job she ever stirred in. I 'll hae her before Presbytery and Synod—I 'm half a minister mysell, now that I 'm a bedral in an inhabited parish."

Although the mutual hatred betwixt these hags and the rest of mankind had steeled their hearts against all impressions of festivity, this was by no means the case with the multitude at large. The splendour of the bridal retinue—the gay dresses —the spirited horses—the blithesome appearance of the handsome women and gallant gentlemen assembled upon the occasion, had the usual effect upon the minds of the populace. The repeated shouts of "Ashton and Bucklaw for ever!"—the discharge of pistols, guns, and musketoons, to give what was called the bridal-shot, evinced the interest the people took in the occasion of the cavalcade, as they accompanied it upon their return to the castle. If there was here and there an elder peasant or his wife who sneered at the pomp of the upstart family, and remembered the days of the long-descended Ravenswoods, even they, attracted by the plentiful cheer which the castle that day afforded to rich and poor, held their way thither, and acknowledged, notwithstanding their prejudices, the influence of *l'Amphitrion où l'on dine*.

Thus accompanied with the attendance both of rich and poor, Lucy returned to her father's house. Bucklaw used his privilege of riding next to the bride, but, new to such a situation, rather endeavoured to attract attention by the display of his person and horsemanship, than by any attempt to address her in private. They reached the castle in safety, amid a thousand joyous acclamations.

It is well known, that the weddings of ancient days were celebrated with a festive publicity rejected by the delicacy of modern times. The marriage-guests, on the present occasion, were regaled with a banquet of unbounded profusion, the relics of which, after the domestics had feasted in their turn, were distributed among the shouting crowd, with as many barrels of ale as made the hilarity without, correspond to that within the castle. The gentlemen, according to the fashion of the times, indulged, for the most part, in deep draughts of the richest wines, while the ladies, prepared for the ball which always closed a bridal entertainment, impatiently expected their arrival in the state gallery. At length the social party broke up at a late hour, and the gentlemen crowded into the saloon, where, enlivened by wine and the joyful occasion, they laid aside their swords, and handed their impatient partners to the floor. The music already rung from the gallery, along the fretted roof of the ancient state apartment. According to strict etiquette, the bride ought to have opened the ball, but Lady Ashton, making an apology on account of her daughter's health, offered her own hand to Bucklaw as substitute for her daughter's.

But as Lady Ashton raised her head gracefully, expecting the strain at which she was to begin the dance, she was so much struck by an unexpected alteration in the ornaments of the apartment, that she was surprised into an exclamation,—"Who has dared to change the pictures?"

All looked up, and those who knew the usual state of the apartment, observed, with surprise, that the picture of Sir William Ashton's father was removed from its place, and in its stead that of old Sir Malise Ravenswood seemed to frown wrath and vengeance upon the party assembled below. The exchange must have been made while the apartments were empty, but had not been observed until the torches and lights in the sconces were kindled for the ball. The haughty and heated spirits of the gentlemen led them to demand an immediate inquiry into the cause of what they deemed an affront to their host and to themselves; but Lady Ashton, recovering herself, passed it over as the freak of a crazy wench who was maintained about the castle, and whose susceptible imagination had been observed to be much affected by the stories which Dame Gourlay delighted to tell concerning "the former family," so Lady Ashton named the Ravenswoods. The obnoxious picture was immediately removed, and the ball was opened by Lady Ashton, with a grace and dignity which supplied the charms of youth, and almost verified the extravagant encomiums of the elder part of the company, who extolled her performance as far exceeding the dancing of the rising generation.

When Lady Ashton sat down, she was not surprised to find that her daughter had left the apartment, and she herself followed, eager to obviate any impression which might have been made upon her nerves by an incident so likely to affect them as the mysterious transposition of the portraits. Apparently she found her apprehensions groundless, for she returned in about an hour, and whispered the bridegroom, who extricated himself from the dancers, and vanished from the apartment. The instruments now played their loudest strains—the dancers pursued their exercise with all the enthusiasm inspired by youth, mirth, and high spirits, when a cry was heard so shrill and piercing, as at once to arrest the dance and the music. All stood motionless; but when the yell was again repeated, Colonel Ashton snatched a torch from the sconce, and demanding the key of the bridal-chamber from Henry, to whom, as bride's-man, it had been intrusted, rushed thither, followed by Sir William and Lady Ashton, and one or two others, near relations of the family

The bridal guests waited their return in stupified amazement.

Arrived at the door of the apartment, Colonel Ashton knocked and called, but received no answer except stifled groans. He hesitated no longer to open the door of the apartment, in which he found opposition from something which lay against it. When he had succeeded in opening it, the body of the bridegroom was found lying on the threshold of the bridal chamber, and all around was flooded with blood. A cry of surprise and horror was raised by all present; and the company, excited by this new alarm, began to rush tumultuously towards the sleeping apartment. Colonel Ashton, first whispering to his mother, — "Search for her — she has murdered him!" drew his sword, planted himself in the passage, and declared he would suffer no man to pass excepting the clergyman, and a medical person present. By their assistance, Bucklaw, who still breathed, was raised from the ground, and transported to another apartment, where his friends, full of suspicion and murmuring, assembled round him to learn the opinion of the surgeon.

In the meanwhile, Lady Ashton, her husband, and their assistants, in vain sought Lucy in the bridal bed and in the chamber. There was no private passage from the room, and they began to think that she must have thrown herself from the window, when one of the company, holding his torch lower than the rest, discovered something white in the corner of the great old-fashioned chimney of the apartment. Here they found the unfortunate girl, seated, or rather couched like a hare upon its form — her head-gear dishevelled; her night-clothes torn and dabbled with blood, — her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. When she saw herself discovered, she gibbered, made mouths, and pointed at them with her bloody fingers, with the frantic gestures of an exulting demoniac.

Female assistance was now hastily summoned; the unhappy bride was overpowered, not without the use of some force. As they carried her over the threshold, she looked down, and uttered the only articulate words that she had yet spoken, saying, with a sort of grinning exultation, — "So, you have ta'en up your bonny bridegroom?" She was by the shuddering assistants conveyed to another and more retired apartment, where she was secured as her situation required, and closely watched. The unutterable agony of the parents — the horror and confusion of all who were in the castle — the fury of contending passions between the friends of the different parties, passions augmented by previous intemperance, surpass description.

The surgeon was the first who obtained something like a patient hearing; he pronounced that the wound of Bucklaw, though severe and dangerous, was by no means fatal, but might readily be rendered so by disturbance and hasty removal. This silenced the numerous party of Bucklaw's friends, who had previously insisted that he should, at all rates, be transported from the castle to the nearest of their houses. They still demanded, however, that, in consideration of what had happened, four of their number should remain to watch over the sick-bed of their friend, and that a suitable number of their domestics, well armed, should also remain in the castle. This condition being acceded to on the part of Colonel Ashton and his father, the rest of the bridegroom's friends left the castle, notwithstanding the hour and the darkness of the night. The cares of the medical man were next employed in behalf of Miss Ashton, whom he pronounced to be in a very dangerous state. Farther medical assistance was immediately summoned. All night she remained delirious. On the morning, she fell into a state of absolute insensibility. The next evening, the physicians said, would be the crisis of her malady. It proved so; for although she awoke from her trance with some appearance of calmness, and suffered her night-clothes to be changed, or put in order, yet so soon as she put her hand to her neck, as if to search for the fatal blue ribbon, a tide of recollections seemed to rush upon her, which her mind and body were alike incapable of bearing. Convulsion followed convulsion, till they closed in death, without her being able to utter a word explanatory of the fatal scene.

The provincial judge of the district arrived the day after the young lady had expired, and executed, though with all possible delicacy to the afflicted family, the painful duty of inquiring into this fatal transaction. But there occurred nothing to explain the general hypothesis, that the bride, in a sudden fit of insanity, had stabbed the bridegroom at the threshold of the apartment. The fatal weapon was found in the chamber, smeared with blood. It was the same poniard which Henry should have worn on the wedding-day, and which his unhappy sister had probably contrived to secrete on the preceding evening, when it had been shewn to her among other articles of preparation for the wedding.

The friends of Bucklaw expected that on his recovery he would throw some light upon this dark story, and eagerly pressed him with inquiries, which for some time he evaded under pretext of weakness. When, however, he had been transported to his own house, and was considered as in a state of convalescence, he assembled those persons, both male and female, who had considered themselves as entitled to press him on this subject, and returned them thanks for the interest they had exhibited in his behalf, and their offers of adherence and support. "I wish you all," he said, "my friends, to understand, however, that I have neither story to tell, nor injuries to avenge. If a lady shall question me henceforward upon the incidents of that unhappy night, I shall remain silent, and in future consider her as one who has shewn herself desirous to break off her friendship with me; in a word, I will never speak to her again. But if a gentleman shall ask me the same question, I shall regard the incivility as equivalent to an invitation to meet him in the Duke's Walk,[1] and I expect that he will rule himself accordingly."

A declaration so decisive admitted no commentary; and it was soon after seen that Bucklaw had arisen from the bed of sickness a sadder and a wiser man than he had hitherto shewn himself. He dismissed Craigengelt from his society, but not without such a provision as, if well employed, might secure him against indigence, and against temptation.

Bucklaw afterwards went abroad and never

[1] A walk in the vicinity of Holyrood-house, so called, because often frequented by the Duke of York, afterwards James II., during his residence in Scotland. It was for a long time the usual place of rendezvous for settling affairs of honour.

returned to Scotland; nor was he known ever to hint at the circumstances attending his fatal marriage. By many readers this may be deemed overstrained, romantic, and composed by the wild imagination of an author, desirous of gratifying the popular appetite for the horrible; but those who are read in the private family history of Scotland during the period in which the scene is laid, will readily discover, through the disguise of borrowed names and added incidents, the leading particulars of AN OWER TRUE TALE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Whose mind's so marbled, and his heart so hard,
That would not, when this huge mishap was heard,
To th' utmost note of sorrow set their song.
To see a gallant, with so great a grace,
So suddenly unthought on, so o'erthrown,
And so to perish, in so poor a place,
By too rash riding in a ground unknown!
Poem, in Nisbet's Heraldry, Vol. II.

WE have anticipated the course of time to mention Bucklaw's recovery and fate, that we might not interrupt the detail of events which succeeded the funeral of the unfortunate Lucy Ashton. This melancholy cèremony was performed in the misty dawn of an autumnal morning, with such moderate attendance and ceremony as could not possibly be dispensed with. A very few of the nearest relations attended her body to the same churchyard to which she had so lately been led as a bride, with as little free will, perhaps, as could be now testified by her lifeless and passive remains. An aisle adjacent to the church had been fitted up by Sir William Ashton as a family cemetery; and here, in a coffin bearing neither name nor date, were consigned to dust the remains of what was once lovely, beautiful, and innocent, though exasperated to frenzy by a long tract of unremitting persecution. While the mourners were busy in the vault, the three village hags, who, notwithstanding the unwonted earliness of the hour, had snuffed the carrion like vultures, were seated on the "throughstane," and engaged in their wonted unhallowed conference.

"Did not I say," said Dame Gourlay, "that the braw bridal would be followed by as braw a funeral?"

"I think," answered Dame Winnie, "there 's little bravery at it; neither meat nor drink, and just a wheen silver tippences to the poor folk; it was little worth while to come sae far road for sae sma' profit, and us sae frail."

"Out, wretch!" replied Dame Gourlay, "can a' the dainties they could gie us be half sae sweet as this hour's vengeance? There they are that were capering on their prancing nags four days since, and they are now ganging as dreigh and sober as oursells the day. They were a' glistening wi' gowd and silver—they 're now as black as the crook. And Miss Lucy Ashton, that grudged when an honest woman came near her, a taid may sit on her coffin the day, and she can never scunner when he croaks. And Lady Ashton has hell-fire burning in her breast by this time; and Sir William, wi' his gibbets, and his faggots, and his chains, how likes he the witcheries of his ain dwelling-house?"

"And is it true, then," mumbled the paralytic wretch, "that the bride was trailed out of her bed and up the chimley by evil spirits, and that the bridegroom's face was wrung round ahint him?"

"Ye needna care wha did it, or how it was done," said Ailsie Gourlay; "but I 'll uphaud it for nae stickit[1] job, and that the lairds and leddies ken weel this day."

"And was it true," said Annie Winnie, "sin ye ken sae muckle about it, that the picture of Auld Sir Malise Ravenswood came down on the ha' floor and led out the brawl before them a'?"

"Na," said Ailsie; "but into the ha' came the picture—and I ken weel how it came there—to gie them a warning that pride would get a fa'. But there's as queer a ploy, cummers, as ony o' thae, that's gaun on even now in the burial vault yonder—ye saw twall mourners, wi' crape and cloak, gang down the steps pair and pair?"

"What should ail us to see them?" said the one old woman.

"I counted them," said the other, with the eagerness of a person to whom the spectacle had afforded too much interest to be viewed with indifference.

"But ye did not see," said Ailsie, exulting in her superior observation, "that there 's a thirteenth amang them that they ken naething about; and, if auld freits say true, there 's ane o' that company that 'll no be lang for this warld. But come awa, cummers; if we bide here, I 'se warrant we get the wyte o' whatever ill comes of it, and that gude will come of it nane o' them need ever think to see."

And thus, croaking like the ravens when they anticipate pestilence, the ill-boding sibyls withdrew from the churchyard.

In fact, the mourners, when the service of interment was ended, discovered that there was among them one more than the invited number, and the remark was communicated in whispers to each other. The suspicion fell upon a figure, which, muffled in the same deep mourning with the others, was reclined, almost in a state of insensibility, against one of the pillars of the sepulchral vault. The relatives of the Ashton family were expressing in whispers their surprise and displeasure at the intrusion, when they were interrupted by Colonel Ashton, who, in his father's absence, acted as principal mourner. "I know," he said, in a whisper, "who this person is; he has, or shall soon have, as deep cause of mourning as ourselves—leave me to deal with him, and do not disturb the ceremony by unnecessary exposure." So saying, he separated himself from the group of his relations, and taking the unknown mourner by the cloak, he said to him, in a tone of suppressed emotion, "Follow me."

The stranger, as if starting from a trance at the sound of his voice, mechanically obeyed, and they ascended the broken ruinous stair which led from the sepulchre into the churchyard. The other mourners followed, but remained grouped together at the door of the vault, watching with anxiety the motions of Colonel Ashton and the stranger, who now appeared to be in close conference beneath the shade of a yew-tree, in the most remote part of the burial-ground.

To this sequestered spot Colonel Ashton had guided the stranger, and then turning round, ad-

[1] *Stickit*, imperfect.

dressed him in a stern and composed tone. — "I cannot doubt that I speak to the Master of Ravenswood?" No answer was returned. "I cannot doubt," resumed the Colonel, trembling with rising passion, "that I speak to the murderer of my sister?"

"You have named me but too truly," said Ravenswood, in a hollow and tremulous voice.

"If you repent what you have done," said the Colonel, "may your penitence avail you before God; with me it shall serve you nothing. Here," he said, giving a paper, "is the measure of my sword, and a memorandum of the time and place of meeting. Sun-rise to-morrow morning, on the links to the east of Wolf's-hope."

The Master of Ravenswood held the paper in his hand, and seemed irresolute. At length he spoke — "Do not," he said, "urge to farther desperation a wretch who is already desperate. Enjoy your life while you can, and let me seek my death from another."

"That you never, never shall!" said Douglas Ashton. "You shall die by my hand, or you shall complete the ruin of my family by taking my life. If you refuse my open challenge, there is no advantage I will not take of you, no indignity with which I will not load you, until the very name of Ravenswood shall be the sign of every thing that is dishonourable, as it is already of all that is villainous."

"That it shall never be," said Ravenswood fiercely; "if I am the last who must bear it, I owe it to those who once owned it, that the name shall be extinguished without infamy. I accept your challenge, time, and place of meeting. We meet, I presume, alone?"

"Alone we meet," said Colonel Ashton, "and alone will the survivor of us return from that place of rendezvous."

"Then God have mercy on the soul of him who falls!" said Ravenswood.

"So be it!" said Colonel Ashton; "so far can my charity reach even for the man I hate most deadly, and with the deepest reason. Now, break off, for we shall be interrupted. The links by the sea-shore to the east of Wolf's-hope — the hour, sunrise — our swords our only weapons."

"Enough," said the Master, "I will not fail you."

They separated; Colonel Ashton joining the rest of the mourners, and the Master of Ravenswood taking his horse, which was tied to a tree behind the church. Colonel Ashton returned to the castle with the funeral guests, but found a pretext for detaching himself from them in the evening, when, changing his dress to a riding habit, he rode to Wolf's-hope that night, and took up his abode in the little inn, in order that he might be ready for his rendezvous in the morning.

It is not known how the Master of Ravenswood disposed of the rest of that unhappy day. Late at night, however, he arrived at Wolf's-Crag, and aroused his old domestic, Caleb Balderston, who had ceased to expect his return. Confused and flying rumours of the late tragical death of Miss Ashton, and of its mysterious cause, had already reached the old man, who was filled with the utmost anxiety, on account of the probable effect these events might produce upon the mind of his master.

The conduct of Ravenswood did not alleviate his apprehensions. To the butler's trembling entreaties, that he would take some refreshment, he at first returned no answer, and then suddenly and fiercely demanding wine, he drank, contrary to his habits, a very large draught. Seeing that his master would eat nothing, the old man affectionately entreated that he would permit him to light him to his chamber. It was not until the request was three or four times repeated, that Ravenswood made a mute sign of compliance. But when Balderston conducted him to an apartment which had been comfortably fitted up, and which, since his return, he had usually occupied, Ravenswood stopped short on the threshold.

"Not here," said he, sternly; "shew me the room in which my father died; the room in which SHE slept the night they were at the castle."

"Who, sir?" said Caleb, too terrified to preserve his presence of mind.

"*She*, Lucy Ashton!— would you kill me, old man, by forcing me to repeat her name?"

Caleb would have said something of the disrepair of the chamber, but was silenced by the irritable impatience which was expressed in his master's countenance; he lighted the way trembling and in silence, placed the lamp on the table of the deserted room, and was about to attempt some arrangement of the bed, when his master bid him begone in a tone that admitted of no delay. The old man retired, not to rest, but to prayer; and from time to time crept to the door of the apartment, in order to find out whether Ravenswood had gone to repose. His measured heavy step upon the floor was only interrupted by deep groans; and the repeated stamps of the heel of his heavy boot, intimated too clearly, that the wretched inmate was abandoning himself at such moments to paroxysms of uncontrolled agony. The old man thought that the morning for which he longed would never have dawned; but time, whose course rolls on with equal current, however it may seem more rapid or more slow to mortal apprehension, brought the dawn at last, and spread a ruddy light on the broad verge of the glistening ocean. It was early in November, and the weather was serene for the season of the year. But an easterly wind had prevailed during the night, and the advancing tide rolled nearer than usual to the foot of the crags on which the castle was founded.

With the first peep of light, Caleb Balderston again resorted to the door of Ravenswood's sleeping apartment, through a chink of which he observed him engaged in measuring the length of two or three swords which lay in a closet adjoining to the apartment. He muttered to himself, as he selected one of these weapons, "It is shorter — let him have this advantage, as he has every other."

Caleb Balderston knew too well, from what he witnessed, upon what enterprise his master was bound, and how vain all interference on his part must necessarily prove. He had but time to retreat from the door, so nearly was he surprised by his master suddenly coming out and descending to the stables. The faithful domestic followed; and, from the dishevelled appearance of his master's dress, and his ghastly looks, was confirmed in his conjecture that he had passed the night without sleep or repose. He found him busily engaged in saddling his horse, a service from which Caleb,

though with faltering voice and trembling hands, offered to relieve him. Ravenswood rejected his assistance by a mute sign, and having led the animal into the court, was just about to mount him, when the old domestic's fear giving way to the strong attachment which was the principal passion of his mind, he flung himself suddenly at Ravenswood's feet, and clasped his knees, while he exclaimed, "Oh, sir! Oh, master! kill me if you will, but do not go out on this dreadful errand! Oh! my dear master, wait but this day—the Marquis of A—— comes to-morrow, and a' will be remedied."

"You have no longer a master, Caleb," said Ravenswood, endeavouring to extricate himself; "why, old man, would you cling to a falling tower?"

"But I *have* a master," cried Caleb, still holding him fast, "while the heir of Ravenswood breathes. I am but a servant; but I was born your father's—your grandfather's servant—I was born for the family—I have lived for them—I would die for them!—Stay but at home, and all will be well!"

"Well, fool! well!" said Ravenswood; "vain old man, nothing hereafter in life will be well with me, and happiest is the hour that shall soonest close it!"

So saying, he extricated himself from the old man's hold, threw himself on his horse, and rode out at the gate; but instantly turning back, he threw towards Caleb, who hastened to meet him, a heavy purse of gold.

"Caleb!" he said, with a ghastly smile, "I make you my executor;" and again turning his bridle, he resumed his course down the hill.

The gold fell unheeded on the pavement, for the old man ran to observe the course which was taken by his master, who turned to the left down a small and broken path, which gained the sea-shore through a cleft in the rock, and led to a sort of cove, where, in former times, the boats of the castle were wont to be moored. Observing him take this course, Caleb hastened to the eastern battlement, which commanded the prospect of the whole sands, very near as far as the village of Wolf's-hope. He could easily see his master riding in that direction, as fast as the horse could carry him. The prophecy at once rushed on Balderston's mind, that the Lord of Ravenswood should perish on the Kelpie's Flow, which lay half way betwixt the tower and the links, or sand knolls, to the northward of Wolf's-hope. He saw him accordingly reach the fatal spot, but he never saw him pass farther.

Colonel Ashton, frantic for revenge, was already in the field, pacing the turf with eagerness, and looking with impatience towards the tower for the arrival of his antagonist. The sun had now risen, and shewed its broad disk above the eastern sea, so that he could easily discern the horseman who rode towards him with speed which argued impatience equal to his own. At once the figure became invisible, as if it had melted into the air. He rubbed his eyes, as if he had witnessed an apparition, and then hastened to the spot, near which he was met by Balderston, who came from the opposite direction. No trace whatever of horse or rider could be discerned; it only appeared, that the late winds and high tides had greatly extended the usual bounds of the quicksand, and that the unfortunate horseman, as appeared from the hoof-tracks, in his precipitated haste, had not attended to keep on the firm sands on the foot of the rock, but had taken the shortest and most dangerous course. One only vestige of his fate appeared. A large sable feather had been detached from his hat, and the rippling waves of the rising tide wafted it to Caleb's feet.

The old man took it up, dried it, and placed it in his bosom.

The inhabitants of Wolf's-hope were now alarmed, and crowded to the place, some on shore, and some in boats, but their search availed nothing. The tenacious depths of the quicksand, as is usual in such cases, retained its prey.

Our tale draws to a conclusion. The Marquis of A——, alarmed at the frightful reports that were current, and anxious for his kinsman's safety, arrived on the subsequent day to mourn his loss; and, after renewing in vain a search for the body, returned to forget what had happened amid the bustle of politics and state affairs.

Not so Caleb Balderston. If worldly profit could have consoled the old man, his age was better provided for than his earlier life had ever been; but life had lost to him its salt and its savour. His whole course of ideas, his feelings, whether of pride or of apprehension, of pleasure or of pain, had all arisen from his close connection with the family which was now extinguished. He held up his head no longer—forsook all his usual haunts and occupations, and seemed only to find pleasure in moping about those apartments in the old castle, which the Master of Ravenswood had last inhabited. He ate without refreshment, and slumbered without repose; and, with a fidelity sometimes displayed by the canine race, but seldom by human beings, he pined and died within a year after the catastrophe which we have narrated.

The family of Ashton did not long survive that of Ravenswood. Sir William Ashton outlived his eldest son, the Colonel, who was slain in a duel in Flanders; and Henry, by whom he was succeeded, died unmarried. Lady Ashton lived to the verge of extreme old age, the only survivor of the group of unhappy persons, whose misfortunes were owing to her implacability. That she might internally feel compunction, and reconcile herself with Heaven whom she had offended, we will not, and we dare not, deny; but to those around her, she did not evince the slightest symptom either of repentance or remorse. In all external appearance, she bore the same bold, haughty, unbending character, which she had displayed before these unhappy events. A splendid marble monument records her name, titles, and virtues, while her victims remain undistinguished by tomb or epitaph.

END OF THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

NOTES

TO

The Bride of Lammermoor.

Note A. p. 21. Sir George Lockhart,

President of the Court of Session. He was pistolled in the High Street of Edinburgh, by John Chiesley of Dalry, in the year 1689. The revenge of this desperate man was stimulated, by an opinion that he had sustained injustice in a decreet-arbitral pronounced by the President, assigning an alimentary provision of about L.93 in favour of his wife and children. He is said at first to have designed to shoot the judge while attending upon divine worship, but was diverted by some feeling concerning the sanctity of the place. After the congregation was dismissed, he dogged his victim as far as the head of the close on the south side of the Lawnmarket, in which the President's house was situated, and shot him dead as he was about to enter it. This act was done in the presence of numerous spectators. The assassin made no attempt to fly, but boasted of the deed, saying, "I have taught the President how to do justice." He had at least given him fair warning, as Jack Cade says on a similar occasion. The murderer, after undergoing the torture, by a special act of the Estates of Parliament, was tried before the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, as high sheriff, and condemned to be dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution, to have his right hand struck off while he yet lived, and, finally, to be hung on the gallows with the pistol wherewith he shot the President tied round his neck. This execution took place on the 3d of April, 1689; and the incident was long remembered as a dreadful instance of what the law books call the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*.

Note B. p. 54. Raid of Caleb Balderston.

The raid of Caleb Balderston on the cooper's kitchen has been universally considered on the southern side of the Tweed as grotesquely and absurdly extravagant. The author can only say, that a similar anecdote was communicated to him, with date and names of the parties, by a noble Earl lately deceased, whose remembrances of former days, both in Scotland and England, while they were given with a felicity and power of humour never to be forgotten by those who had the happiness of meeting his lordship in familiar society, were especially invaluable from their extreme accuracy.

Speaking after my kind and lamented informer, with the omission of names only, the anecdote ran thus:—There was a certain bachelor gentleman in one of the midland counties of Scotland, second son of an ancient family, who lived on the fortune of a second son, *videlicet*, upon some miserably small annuity, which yet was so managed and stretched out by the expedients of his man John, that his master kept the front rank with all the young men of quality in the county, and hunted, dined, diced, and drank with them, upon apparently equal terms.

It is true, that as the master's society was extremely amusing, his friends contrived to reconcile his man John to accept assistance of various kinds under the rose, which they dared not to have directly offered to his master. Yet, very consistently with all this good inclination to John, and John's master, it was thought among the young fox-hunters, that it would be an excellent jest, if possible, to take John at fault.

With this intention, and, I think, in consequence of a bet, a party of four or five of these youngsters arrived at the bachelor's little mansion, which was adjacent to a considerable village. Here they alighted a short while before the dinner hour—for it was judged regular to give John's ingenuity a fair start—and, rushing past the astonished domestic, entered the little parlour; and, telling some concerted story of the cause of their invasion, the self-invited guests asked their landlord if he could let them have some dinner. Their friend gave them a hearty and unembarrassed reception, and, for the matter of dinner, referred them to John. He was summoned accordingly—received his master's orders to get dinner ready for the party who had thus unexpectedly arrived; and, without changing a muscle of his countenance, promised prompt obedience. Great was the speculation of the visiters, and probably of the landlord also, what was to be the issue of John's fair promises. Some of the more curious had taken a peep into the kitchen, and could see nothing there to realize the prospect held out by the *Major-Domo*. But punctual as the dinner hour struck on the village-clock, John placed before them a stately rump of boiled beef, with a proper accompaniment of greens, amply sufficient to dine the whole party, and to decide the bet against those among the visiters who expected to take John napping. The explanation was the same as in the case of Caleb Balderston. John had used the freedom to carry off the *kail-pot* of a rich old chuff in the village, and brought it to his master's house, leaving the proprietor and his friends to dine on bread and cheese; and as John said, "good enough for them." The fear of giving offence to so many persons of distinction, kept the poor man sufficiently quiet, and he was afterwards remunerated by some indirect patronage, so that the jest was admitted a good one on all sides. In England, at any period, or in some parts of Scotland at the present day, it might not have passed off so well.

Note C. p. 56. Ancient Hospitality.

It was once the universal custom to place ale, wine, or some strong liquor, in the chamber of an honoured guest, to assuage his thirst should he feel any on awaking in the night, which, considering that the hospitality of that period often reached excess, was by no means unlikely. The author has met some instances of it in former days, and in old-fashioned families. It was, perhaps, no poetic fiction that records how

> "My cummer and I lay down to sleep
> With two pint stoups at our bed-feet;
> And aye when we waken't we drank them dry:
> What think you o' my cummer and I?"

It is a current story in Teviotdale, that in the house of an ancient family of distinction, much addicted to the Presbyterian cause, a Bible was always put into the sleeping apartment of the guests, along with a bottle of strong ale. On some occasion there was a meeting of clergymen in the vicinity of the castle, all of whom were invited to dinner by the worthy Baronet, and several abode all night. According to the fashion of the times, seven of the reverend guests were allotted to one large barrack-room, which was used on such occasions of extended hospitality. The butler took care that the divines were presented, according to custom, each with a Bible and a bottle of ale. But after a little consultation among themselves, they are said to have recalled the domestic as he was leaving the apartment. "My friend," said one of the venerable guests, "you must know, when we meet together as brethren, the youngest minister reads aloud a portion of Scripture to the rest;—only one Bible, therefore, is necessary; take away the other six, and in their place bring six more bottles of ale."

This synod would have suited the "hermit sage" of Johnson, who answered a pupil who inquired for the real road to happiness, with the celebrated line,

> "Come, my lad, and drink some beer!"

Note D. p. 60. Appeal to Parliament.

The power of appeal from the Court of Session, the supreme Judges of Scotland, to the Scottish Parliament, in cases of civil right, was fiercely debated before the Union. It was a privilege highly desirable for the subject, as the examination and occasional reversal of their sentences in Parliament, might serve as a check upon the judges, which they greatly required at a time when they were much more distinguished for legal knowledge than for uprightness and integrity.

The members of the Faculty of Advocates, (so the Scottish barristers are termed,) in the year 1674, incurred the violent displeasure of the Court of Session, on account of their refusal to renounce the right of appeal to Parliament; and, by a very arbitrary procedure, the majority of the number were banished from Edinburgh, and consequently deprived of their professional practice for several sessions, or terms. But, by the articles of the Union, an appeal to the British House of Peers has

been secured to the Scottish subject, and that right has, no doubt, had its influence in forming the impartial and independent character which, much contrary to the practice of their predecessors, the Judges of the Court of Session have since displayed.

It is easy to conceive, that an old lawyer like the Lord Keeper in the text, should feel alarm at the judgments given in his favour, upon grounds of strict penal law, being brought to appeal under a new and dreaded procedure in a Court eminently impartial, and peculiarly moved by considerations of equity.

In earlier editions of this Work, this legal distinction was not sufficiently explained.

Note E. p. 69. POOR-MAN-OF-MUTTON.

The blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton is called in Scotland "a poor man," as in some parts of England it is termed "a poor knight of Windsor;" in contrast, it must be presumed, to the baronial Sir Loin. It is said, that in the last age an old Scottish peer, whose conditions (none of the most gentle) were marked by a strange and fierce-looking exaggeration of the Highland countenance, chanced to be indisposed while he was in London attending Parliament. The master of the hotel where he lodged, anxious to shew attention to his noble guest, waited on him to enumerate the contents of his well-stocked larder, so as to endeavour to hit on something which might suit his appetite. "I think, landlord," said his lordship, rising up from his couch, and throwing back the tartan plaid with which he had screened his grim and ferocious visage — "I think I could eat a morsel of a *poor man*." The landlord fled in terror, having no doubt that his guest was a cannibal, who might be in the habit of eating a slice of a tenant, as light food, when he was under regimen.

Note F. p. 80. MIDDLETON'S "*Mad World my Masters.*"

Hereupon I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, crave leave to remark, *primo*, which signifies, in the first place, that, having in vain inquired at the Circulating Library in Gandercleugh, albeit it aboundeth in similar vanities, for this samyn Middleton and his Mad World, it was at length shewn unto me amongst other ancient fooleries carefully compiled by one Dodsley, who, doubtless, hath his reward for neglect of precious time; and having misused so much of mine as was necessary for the purpose, I therein found that a play-man is brought in as a footman, whom a knight is made to greet facetiously with the epithet of "linen stocking, and three-score miles a-day."

Secundo, (which is secondly in the vernacular,) under Mr Pattieson's favour, some men not altogether so old as he would represent them, do remember this species of menial, or forerunner. In evidence of which, I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, though mine eyes yet do me good service, remember me to have seen one of this tribe clothed in white, and bearing a staff, who ran daily before the state-coach of the umquhile John, Earl of Hopeton, father of this Earl, Charles, that now is; unto whom it may be justly said, that Renown playeth the part of a running footman, or precursor: and, as the poet singeth —

> "Mars standing by asserts his quarrel,
> And Fame flies after with a laurel."

J. C.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.

IVANHOE.

A ROMANCE.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

With all his Illustrations and Notes.

Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,
And often took leave but seem'd loath to depart!—PRIOR.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLVIII.

Ivanhoe;

A ROMANCE.

Now fitted the halter, now traversed the cart,
And often took leave — but seem'd loath to depart![1]
PRIOR.

INTRODUCTION—(1830.)

THE Author of the Waverley Novels had hitherto proceeded in an unabated course of popularity, and might, in his peculiar district of literature, have been termed *L'Enfant Gâté* of success. It was plain, however, that frequent publication must finally wear out the public favour, unless some mode could be devised to give an appearance of novelty to subsequent productions. Scottish manners, Scottish dialect, and Scottish characters of note being those with which the author was most intimately and familiarly acquainted, were the groundwork upon which he had hitherto relied for giving effect to his narrative. It was, however, obvious, that this kind of interest must in the end occasion a degree of sameness and repetition, if exclusively resorted to, and that the reader was likely at length to adopt the language of Edwin, in Parnell's Tale:—

—— "'Reverse the spell,' he cries,
'And let it fairly now suffice,
The gambol has been shewn.'"

Nothing can be more dangerous for the fame of a professor of the fine arts than to permit (if he can possibly prevent it) the character of a mannerist to be attached to him, or that he should be supposed capable of success only in a particular and limited style. The public are, in general, very ready to adopt the opinion, that he who has pleased them in one peculiar mode of composition, is, by means of that very talent, rendered incapable of venturing upon other subjects. The effect of this disinclination, on the part of the public, towards the artificers of their pleasures, when they attempt to enlarge their means of amusing, may be seen in the censures usually passed by vulgar criticism upon actors or artists who venture to change the character of their efforts, that, in so doing, they may enlarge the scale of their art.

There is some justice in this opinion, as there always is in such as attain general currency. It may often happen on the stage, that an actor, by possessing in a pre-eminent degree the external qualities necessary to give effect to comedy, may be deprived of the right to aspire to tragic excellence; and in painting or literary composition, an artist or poet may be master exclusively of modes of thought, and powers of expression, which confine him to a single course of subjects. But much more frequently the same capacity which carries a man to popularity in one department will obtain for him success in another, and that must be more particularly the case in literary composition, than either in acting or painting, because the adventurer in that department is not impeded in his exertions by any peculiarity of features, or conformation of person, proper for particular parts, or, by any peculiar mechanical habits of using the pencil, limited to a particular class of subjects.

Whether this reasoning be correct or otherwise, the present author felt, that, in confining himself to subjects purely Scottish, he was not only likely to weary out the indulgence of his readers, but also greatly to limit his own power of affording them pleasure. In a highly polished country, where so much genius is monthly employed in catering for public amusement, a fresh topic, such as he had himself had the happiness to light upon, is the untasted spring of the desert;—

"Men bless their stars and call it luxury."

But when men and horses, cattle, camels, and dromedaries, have poached the spring into mud, it

[1] The motto alludes to the Author returning to the stage repeatedly after having taken leave.

becomes loathsome to those who at first drank of it with rapture; and he who had the merit of discovering it, if he would preserve his reputation with the tribe, must display his talents by a fresh discovery of untasted fountains.

If the author, who finds himself limited to a particular class of subjects, endeavours to sustain his reputation by striving to add a novelty of attraction to themes of the same character which have been formerly successful under his management, there are manifest reasons why, after a certain point, he is likely to fail. If the mine be not wrought out, the strength and capacity of the miner become necessarily exhausted. If he closely imitates the narratives which he has before rendered successful, he is doomed to "wonder that they please no more." If he struggles to take a different view of the same class of subjects, he speedily discovers that what is obvious, graceful, and natural, has been exhausted; and, in order to obtain the indispensable charm of novelty, he is forced upon caricature, and, to avoid being trite, must become extravagant.

It is not, perhaps, necessary to enumerate so many reasons why the author of the Scottish Novels, as they were then exclusively termed, should be desirous to make an experiment on a subject purely English. It was his purpose, at the same time, to have rendered the experiment as complete as possible, by bringing the intended work before the public as the effort of a new candidate for their favour, in order that no degree of prejudice, whether favourable or the reverse, might attach to it, as a new production of the Author of Waverley; but this intention was afterwards departed from, for reasons to be hereafter mentioned.

The period of the narrative adopted was the reign of Richard I., not only as abounding with characters whose very names were sure to attract general attention, but as affording a striking contrast betwixt the Saxons, by whom the soil was cultivated, and the Normans, who still reigned in it as conquerors, reluctant to mix with the vanquished, or acknowledge themselves of the same stock. The idea of this contrast was taken from the ingenious and unfortunate Logan's tragedy of Runnamede, in which, about the same period of history, the author had seen the Saxon and Norman barons opposed to each other on different sides of the stage. He does not recollect that there was any attempt to contrast the two races in their habits and sentiments; and indeed it was obvious, that history was violated by introducing the Saxons still existing as a high-minded and martial race of nobles.

They did, however, survive as a people, and some of the ancient Saxon families possessed wealth and power, although they were exceptions to the humble condition of the race in general. It seemed to the author, that the existence of the two races in the same country, the vanquished distinguished by their plain, homely, blunt manners, and the free spirit infused by their ancient institutions and laws; the victors, by the high spirit of military fame, personal adventure, and whatever could distinguish them as the Flower of Chivalry, might, intermixed with other characters belonging to the same time and country, interest the reader by the contrast, if the author should not fail on his part.

Scotland, however, had been of late used so exclusively as the scene of what is called Historical Romance, that the preliminary letter of Mr Laurence Templeton became in some measure necessary. To this, as to an Introduction, the reader is referred, as expressing the author's purpose and opinions in undertaking this species of composition, under the necessary reservation, that he is far from thinking he has attained the point at which he aimed.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that there was no idea or wish to pass off the supposed Mr Templeton as a real person. But a kind of continuation of the Tales of my Landlord had been recently attempted by a stranger, and it was supposed this Dedicatory Epistle might pass for some imitation of the same kind, and thus putting inquirers upon a false scent, induce them to believe they had before them the work of some new candidate for their favour.

After a considerable part of the work had been finished and printed, the Publishers, who pretended to discern in it a germ of popularity, remonstrated strenuously against its appearing as an absolutely anonymous production, and contended that it should have the advantage of being announced as by the Author of Waverley. The author did not make any obstinate opposition, for he began to be of opinion with Dr Wheeler, in Miss Edgeworth's excellent tale of "Manœuvring," that "Trick upon Trick" might be too much for the patience of an indulgent public, and might be reasonably considered as trifling with their favour.

The book, therefore, appeared as an avowed continuation of the Waverley Novels; and it would be ungrateful not to acknowledge, that it met with the same favourable reception as its predecessors.

Such annotations as may be useful to assist the reader in comprehending the characters of the Jew, the Templar, the Captain of the mercenaries, or Free Companions, as they were called, and others proper to the period, are added, but with a sparing hand, since sufficient information on these subjects is to be found in general history.

An incident in the tale, which had the good fortune to find favour in the eyes of many readers, is more directly borrowed from the stores of old romance. I mean the meeting of the King with Friar Tuck at the cell of that buxom hermit. The general tone of the story belongs to all ranks and all countries, which emulate each other in describing the rambles of a disguised sovereign, who, going in search of information or amusement, into the lower ranks of life, meets with adventures diverting to the reader or hearer, from the contrast betwixt

the monarch's outward appearance, and his real character. The Eastern tale-teller has for his theme the disguised expeditions of Haroun Alraschid with his faithful attendants, Mesrour and Giafar, through the midnight streets of Bagdad; and Scottish tradition dwells upon the similar exploits of James V., distinguished during such excursions by the travelling name of the Goodman of Ballengeigh, as the Commander of the Faithful, when he desired to be incognito, was known by that of Il Bondocani. The French minstrels are not silent on so popular a theme. There must have been a Norman original of the Scottish metrical romance of Rauf Colziar, in which Charlemagne is introduced as the unknown guest of a charcoalman.[1] It seems to have been the original of other poems of the kind.

In merry England there is no end of popular ballads on this theme. The poem of John the Reeve, or Steward, mentioned by Bishop Percy, in the Reliques of English Poetry,[2] is said to have turned on such an incident; and we have besides, the King and the Tanner of Tamworth, the King and the Miller of Mansfield, and others on the same topic. But the peculiar tale of this nature to which the author of Ivanhoe has to acknowledge an obligation, is more ancient by two centuries than any of these last mentioned.

It was first communicated to the public in that curious record of ancient literature, which has been accumulated by the combined exertions of Sir Egerton Brydges and Mr Hazlewood, in the periodical work entitled the British Bibliographer. From thence it has been transferred by the Reverend Charles Henry Hartshorne, M. A., editor of a very curious volume, entitled "Ancient Metrical Tales, printed chiefly from original sources, 1829." Mr Hartshorne gives no other authority for the present fragment, except the article in the Bibliographer, where it is entitled the Kyng and the Hermite. A short abstract of its contents will shew its similarity to the meeting of King Richard and Friar Tuck.

King Edward (we are not told which among the monarchs of that name, but, from his temper and habits, we may suppose Edward IV.) sets forth with his court to a gallant hunting-match in Sherwood Forest, in which, as is not unusual for princes in romance, he falls in with a deer of extraordinary size and swiftness, and pursues it closely, till he has outstripped his whole retinue, tired out hounds and horse, and finds himself alone under the gloom of an extensive forest, upon which night is descending. Under the apprehensions natural to a situation so uncomfortable, the king recollects that he has heard how poor men, when apprehensive of a bad night's lodging, pray to Saint Julian, who, in the Romish calendar, stands Quarter-Master-General to all forlorn travellers that render him due homage. Edward puts up his orisons accordingly, and by the guidance, doubtless, of the good Saint, reaches a small path, conducting him to a chapel in the forest, having a hermit's cell in its close vicinity. The King hears the reverend man, with a companion of his solitude, telling his beads within, and meekly requests of him quarters for the night. "I have no accommodation for such a lord as ye be," said the Hermit. "I live here in the wilderness upon roots and rinds, and may not receive into my dwelling even the poorest wretch that lives, unless it were to save his life." The King inquires the way to the next town, and, understanding it is by a road which he cannot find without difficulty, even if he had daylight to be friend him, he declares, that with or without the Hermit's consent, he was determined to be his guest that night. He is admitted accordingly, not without a hint from the Recluse, that were he himself out of his priestly weeds, he would care little for his threats of using violence, and that he gives way to him not out of intimidation, but simply to avoid scandal.

The King is admitted into the cell—two bundles of straw are shaken down for his accommodation, and he comforts himself that he is now under shelter, and that

> "A night will soon be gone."

Other wants, however, arise. The guest becomes clamorous for supper, observing,

> "For certainly, as I you say,
> I ne had never so sorry a day,
> That I ne had a merry night."

But this indication of his taste for good cheer, joined to the annunciation of his being a follower of the Court, who had lost himself at the great hunting-match, cannot induce the niggard Hermit to produce better fare than bread and cheese, for which his guest shewed little appetite; and "thin drink," which was even less acceptable. At length the King presses his host on a point to which he had more than once alluded, without obtaining a satisfactory reply:

> "Then said the King, 'by Godys grace,
> Thou wert in a merry place,
> To shoot should thou lere;
> When the foresters go to rest,
> Sometyme thou might have of the best,
> All of the wild deer;
> I wold hold it for no scathe,
> Though thou hadst bow and arrows baith,
> Althoff thou best a Frere.'"

The Hermit, in return, expresses his apprehension that his guest means to drag him into some confession of offence against the forest laws, which, being betrayed to the King, might cost him his life. Edward answers by fresh assurances of secrecy, and again urges on him the necessity of procuring

[1] This very curious poem, long a *desideratum* in Scottish literature, and given up as irrecoverably lost, was lately brought to light by the researches of Dr Irvine of the Advocates' Library, and has been reprinted by Mr David Laing, Edinburgh.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 167.

some venison. The Hermit replies, by once more insisting on the duties incumbent upon him as a churchman, and continues to affirm himself free from all such breaches of order: —

> " ' Many day I have here been,
> And flesh-meat I eat never,
> But milk of the kye;
> Warm thee well, and go to sleep,
> And I will lap thee with my cope,
> Softly to lye.' "

It would seem that the manuscript is here imperfect, for we do not find the reasons which finally induce the curtal Friar to amend the King's cheer. But acknowledging his guest to be such a "good fellow" as has seldom graced his board, the holy man at length produces the best his cell affords. Two candles are placed on a table, white bread and baked pasties are displayed by the light, besides choice of venison, both salt and fresh, from which they select collops. "I might have eaten my bread dry," said the King, "had I not pressed thee on the score of archery, but now have I dined like a prince — if we had but drink enow."

This too is afforded by the hospitable anchorite, who despatches an assistant to fetch a pot of four gallons from a secret corner near his bed, and the whole three set in to serious drinking. This amusement is superintended by the Friar, according to the recurrence of certain fustian words, to be repeated by every compotator in turn before he drank — a species of High Jinks, as it were, by which they regulated their potations, as toasts were given in latter times. The one toper says *fusty bandias*, to which the other is obliged to reply, *strike pantnere*, and the Friar passes many jests on the King's want of memory, who sometimes forgets the words of action. The night is spent in this jolly pastime. Before his departure in the morning, the King invites his reverend host to Court, promises, at least, to requite his hospitality, and expresses himself much pleased with his entertainment. The jolly Hermit at length agrees to venture thither, and to inquire for Jack Fletcher, which is the name assumed by the King. After the Hermit has shewn Edward some feats of archery, the joyous pair separate. The King rides home, and rejoins his retinue. As the romance is imperfect, we are not acquainted how the discovery takes place; but it is probably much in the same manner as in other narratives turning on the same subject, where the host, apprehensive of death for having trespassed on the respect due to his Sovereign, while incognito, is agreeably surprised by receiving honours and reward.

In Mr Hartshorne's collection, there is a romance on the same foundation, called King Edward and the Shepherd,[1] which, considered as illustrating manners, is still more curious than the King and the Hermit: but it is foreign to the present purpose. The reader has here the original legend from which the incident in the romance is derived, and the identifying the irregular Eremite with the Friar Tuck of Robin Hood's story, was an obvious expedient.

The name of Ivanhoe was suggested by an old rhyme. All novelists have had occasion at some time or other to wish with Falstaff, that they knew where a commodity of good names was to be had. On such an occasion the author chanced to call to memory a rhyme recording three names of the manors forfeited by the ancestor of the celebrated Hampden, for striking the Black Prince a blow with his racket, when they quarrelled at tennis;—

> " Tring, Wing, and Ivanhoe,
> For striking of a blow,
> Hampden did forego,
> And glad he could escape so."

The word suited the author's purpose in two material respects, — for, first, it had an ancient English sound; and, secondly, it conveyed no indication whatever of the nature of the story. He presumes to hold this last quality to be of no small importance. What is called a taking title, serves the direct interest of the bookseller or publisher, who by this means sometimes sells an edition while it is yet passing the press. But if the author permits an over degree of attention to be drawn to his work ere it has appeared, he places himself in the embarrassing condition of having excited a degree of expectation which, if he proves unable to satisfy, is an error fatal to his literary reputation. Besides, when we meet such a title as the Gunpowder Plot, or any other connected with general history, each reader, before he has seen the book, has formed to himself some particular idea of the sort of manner in which the story is to be conducted, and the nature of the amusement which he is to derive from it. In this he is probably disappointed, and in that case may be naturally disposed to visit upon the author or the work, the unpleasant feelings thus excited. In such a case the literary adventurer is censured, not for having missed the mark at which he himself aimed, but for not having shot off his shaft in a direction he never thought of.

On the footing of unreserved communication which the Author has established with the reader, he may here add the trifling circumstance, that a roll of Norman warriors, occurring in the Auchinleck Manusrcipt, gave him the formidable name of Front-de-Bœuf.

Ivanhoe was highly successful upon its appearance, and may be said to have procured for its author the freedom of the Rules, since he has ever

[1] Like the Hermit, the Shepherd makes havock amongst the King's game; but by means of a sling, not of a bow; like the Hermit, too, he has his peculiar phrases of compotation, the sign and countersign being Passelodion and Berafriend. One can scarce conceive what humour our ancestors found in this species of gibberish; but

> " I warrant it proved an excuse for the glass."

since been permitted to exercise his powers of fictitious composition in England, as well as Scotland.

The character of the fair Jewess found so much favour in the eyes of some fair readers, that the writer was censured, because, when arranging the fates of the characters of the drama, he had not assigned the hand of Wilfred to Rebecca, rather than the less interesting Rowena. But, not to mention that the prejudices of the age rendered such an union almost impossible, the author may, in passing, observe, that he thinks a character of a highly virtuous and lofty stamp, is degraded rather than exalted by an attempt to reward virtue with temporal prosperity. Such is not the recompense which Providence has deemed worthy of suffering merit, and it is a dangerous and fatal doctrine to teach young persons, the most common readers of romance, that rectitude of conduct and of principle are either naturally allied with, or adequately rewarded by, the gratification of our passions, or attainment of our wishes. In a word, if a virtuous and self-denied character is dismissed with temporal wealth, greatness, rank, or the indulgence of such a rashly formed or ill assorted passion as that of Rebecca for Ivanhoe, the reader will be apt to say, verily Virtue has had its reward. But a glance on the great picture of life will shew, that the duties of self-denial, and the sacrifice of passion to principle, are seldom thus remunerated; and that the internal consciousness of their high-minded discharge of duty, produces on their own reflections a more adequate recompense, in the form of that peace which the world cannot give or take away.

ABBOTSFORD,
1st September, 1830.

DEDICATORY EPISTLE

TO

THE REV. DR DRYASDUST, F.A.S.

Residing in the Castle-Gate, York.

MUCH ESTEEMED AND DEAR SIR,

It is scarcely necessary to mention the various and concurring reasons which induce me to place your name at the head of the following work. Yet the chief of these reasons may perhaps be refuted by the imperfections of the performance. Could I have hoped to render it worthy of your patronage, the public would at once have seen the propriety of inscribing a work designed to illustrate the domestic antiquities of England, and particularly of our Saxon forefathers, to the learned author of the Essays upon the Horn of King Ulphus, and on the Lands bestowed by him upon the patrimony of St Peter. I am conscious, however, that the slight, unsatisfactory, and trivial manner, in which the result of my antiquarian researches has been recorded in the following pages, takes the work from under that class which bears the proud motto, *Detur digniori*. On the contrary, I fear I shall incur the censure of presumption in placing the venerable name of Dr Jonas Dryasdust at the head of a publication, which the more grave antiquary will perhaps class with the idle novels and romances of the day. I am anxious to vindicate myself from such a charge; for although I might trust to your friendship for an apology in your eyes, yet I would not willingly stand convicted in those of the public of so grave a crime, as my fears lead me to anticipate my being charged with.

I must therefore remind you, that when we first talked over together that class of productions, in one of which the private and family affairs of your learned northern friend, Mr Oldbuck of Monkbarns, were so unjustifiably exposed to the public, some discussion occurred between us concerning the cause of the popularity these works have attained in this idle age, which, whatever other merit they possess, must be admitted to be hastily written, and in violation of every rule assigned to the epopeia. It seemed then to be your opinion, that the charm lay entirely in the art with which the unknown author had availed himself, like a second M'Pherson, of the antiquarian stores which lay scattered around him, supplying his own indolence or poverty of invention, by the incidents which had actually taken place in his country at no distant period, by introducing real characters, and scarcely suppressing real names. It was not above sixty or seventy years, you observed, since the whole north of Scotland was under a state of government nearly as simple and as patriarchal as those of our good allies the Mohawks and Iroquois. Admitting that the author cannot himself be supposed to have witnessed those times, he must have lived, you

observed, among persons who had acted and suffered in them; and even within these thirty years, such an infinite change has taken place in the manners of Scotland, that men look back upon the habits of society proper to their immediate ancestors, as we do on those of the reign of Queen Anne, or even the period of the Revolution. Having thus materials of every kind lying strewed around him, there was little, you observed, to embarrass the author, but the difficulty of choice. It was no wonder, therefore, that, having begun to work a mine so plentiful, he should have derived from his works fully more credit and profit than the facility of his labours merited.

Admitting (as I could not deny) the general truth of these conclusions, I cannot but think it strange that no attempt has been made to excite an interest for the traditions and manners of Old England, similar to that which has been obtained in behalf of those of our poorer and less celebrated neighbours. The Kendal green, though its date is more ancient, ought surely to be as dear to our feelings, as the variegated tartans of the north. The name of Robin Hood, if duly conjured with, should raise a spirit as soon as that of Rob Roy; and the patriots of England deserve no less their renown in our modern circles, than the Bruces and Wallaces of Caledonia. If the scenery of the south be less romantic and sublime than that of the northern mountains, it must be allowed to possess in the same proportion superior softness and beauty; and upon the whole, we feel ourselves entitled to exclaim with the patriotic Syrian — "Are not Pharpar and Abana, rivers of Damascus, better than all the rivers of Israel?"

Your objections to such an attempt, my dear Doctor, were, you may remember, two-fold. You insisted upon the advantages which the Scotsman possessed, from the very recent existence of that state of society in which his scene was to be laid. Many now alive, you remarked, well remembered persons who had not only seen the celebrated Roy M'Gregor, but had feasted, and even fought with him. All those minute circumstances belonging to private life and domestic character, all that gives verisimilitude to a narrative, and individuality to the persons introduced, is still known and remembered in Scotland; whereas in England, civilization has been so long complete, that our ideas of our ancestors are only to be gleaned from musty records and chronicles, the authors of which seem perversely to have conspired to suppress in their narratives all interesting details, in order to find room for flowers of monkish eloquence, or trite reflections upon morals. To match an English and a Scottish author in the rival task of embodying and reviving the traditions of their respective countries, would be, you alleged, in the highest degree unequal and unjust. The Scottish magician, you said, was, like Lucan's witch, at liberty to walk over the recent field of battle, and to select for the subject of resuscitation by his sorceries, a body whose limbs had recently quivered with existence, and whose throat had but just uttered the last note of agony. Such a subject even the powerful Erictho was compelled to select, as alone capable of being reanimated even by *her* potent magic —

> —— gelidas leto scrutata medullas,
> Pulmonis rigidi stantes sine vulnere fibras
> Invenit, et vocem defuncto in corpore quærit

The English author, on the other hand, without supposing him less of a conjuror than the Northern Warlock, can, you observed, only have the liberty of selecting his subject amidst the dust of antiquity, where nothing was to be found but dry, sapless, mouldering, and disjointed bones, such as those which filled the valley of Jehoshaphat. You expressed, besides, your apprehension, that the unpatriotic prejudices of my countrymen would not allow fair play to such a work as that of which I endeavoured to demonstrate the probable success. And this, you said, was not entirely owing to the more general prejudice in favour of that which is foreign, but that it rested partly upon improbabilities, arising out of the circumstances in which the English reader is placed. If you describe to him a set of wild manners, and a state of primitive society existing in the Highlands of Scotland, he is much disposed to acquiesce in the truth of what is asserted. And reason good. If he be of the ordinary class of readers, he has either never seen those remote districts at all, or he has wandered through those desolate regions in the course of a summer tour, eating bad dinners, sleeping on truckle beds, stalking from desolation to desolation, and fully prepared to believe the strangest things that could be told him of a people, wild and extravagant enough to be attached to scenery so extraordinary. But the same worthy person, when placed in his own snug parlour, and surrounded by all the comforts of an Englishman's fireside, is not half so much disposed to believe that his own ancestors led a very different life from himself; that the shattered tower, which now forms a vista from his window, once held a baron who would have hung him up at his own door without any form of trial; that the hinds, by whom his little pet-farm is managed, a few centuries ago would have been his slaves; and that the complete influence of feudal tyranny once extended over the neighbouring village, where the attorney is now a man of more importance than the lord of the manor.

While I own the force of these objections, I must confess, at the same time, that they do not appear to me to be altogeher insurmountable. The scantiness of materials is indeed a formidable difficulty; but no one knows better than Dr Dryasdust, that to those deeply read in antiquity, hints concerning the private life of our ancestors lie scattered through the pages of our various historians, bearing, indeed, a slender proportion to the other matters of which they treat, but still, when collected together, sufficient to throw considerable light upon the *vie privée* of our forefathers; indeed, I am convinced, that however I myself may fail in the ensuing attempt, yet, with more labour in collecting, or more skill in using, the materials within his reach, illustrated as they have been by the labours of Dr Henry, of the late Mr Strutt, and, above all, of Mr Sharon Turner, an abler hand would have been successful; and therefore I protest, beforehand, against any argument which may be founded on the failure of the present experiment.

On the other hand, I have already said, that if any thing like a true picture of old English manners could be drawn, I would trust to the good-nature and good sense of my countrymen for insuring its favourable reception.

Having thus replied, to the best of my power, to the first class of your objections, or at least having

shewn my resolution to overleap the barriers which your prudence has raised, I will be brief in noticing that which is more peculiar to myself. It seemed to be your opinion, that the very office of an antiquary, employed in grave, and, as the vulgar will sometimes allege, in toilsome and minute research, must be considered as incapacitating him from successfully compounding a tale of this sort. But permit me to say, my dear Doctor, that this objection is rather formal than substantial. It is true that such slight compositions might not suit the severer genius of our friend Mr Oldbuck. Yet Horace Walpole wrote a goblin tale which has thrilled through many a bosom; and George Ellis could transfer all the playful fascination of a humour, as delightful as it was uncommon, into his Abridgement of the Ancient Metrical Romances. So that, however I may have occasion to rue my present audacity, I have at least the most respectable precedents in my favour.

Still the severer antiquary may think, that, by thus intermingling fiction with truth, I am polluting the well of history with modern inventions, and impressing upon the rising generation false ideas of the age which I describe. I cannot but in some sense admit the force of this reasoning, which I yet hope to traverse by the following considerations.

It is true, that I neither can, nor do pretend, to the observation of complete accuracy, even in matters of outward costume, much less in the more important points of language and manners. But the same motive which prevents my writing the dialogue of the piece in Anglo-Saxon or in Norman-French, and which prohibits my sending forth to the public this essay printed with the types of Caxton or Wynken de Worde, prevents my attempting to confine myself within the limits of the period in which my story is laid. It is necessary, for exciting interest of any kind, that the subject assumed should be, as it were, translated into the manners, as well as the language, of the age we live in. No fascination has ever been attached to Oriental literature, equal to that produced by Mr Galland's first translation of the Arabian Tales; in which, retaining on the one hand the splendour of Eastern costume, and on the other the wildness of Eastern fiction, he mixed these with just so much ordinary feeling and expression, as rendered them interesting and intelligible, while he abridged the long-winded narratives, curtailed the monotonous reflections, and rejected the endless repetitions of the Arabian original. The tales, therefore, though less purely Oriental than in their first concoction, were eminently better fitted for the European market, and obtained an unrivalled degree of public favour, which they certainly would never have gained had not the manners and style been in some degree familiarized to the feelings and habits of the Western reader.

In point of justice, therefore, to the multitudes who will, I trust, devour this book with avidity, I have so far explained our ancient manners in modern language, and so far detailed the characters and sentiments of my persons, that the modern reader will not find himself, I should hope, much trammelled by the repulsive dryness of mere antiquity. In this, I respectfully contend, I have in no respect exceeded the fair licence due to the author of a fictitious composition. The late ingenious Mr Strutt, in his romance of Queen-Hoo-Hall,[1] acted upon another principle; and in distinguishing between what was ancient and modern, forgot, as it appears to me, that extensive neutral ground, the large proportion, that is, of manners and sentiments which are common to us and to our ancestors, having been handed down unaltered from them to us, or which, arising out of the principles of our common nature, must have existed alike in either state of society. In this manner a man of talent, and of great antiquarian erudition, limited the popularity of his work, by excluding from it every thing which was not sufficiently obsolete to be altogether forgotten and unintelligible.

The licence which I would here vindicate, is so necessary to the execution of my plan, that I will crave your patience while I illustrate my argument a little farther.

He who first opens Chaucer, or any other ancient poet, is so much struck with the obsolete spelling, multiplied consonants, and antiquated appearance of the language, that he is apt to lay the work down in despair, as encrusted too deep with the rust of antiquity, to permit his judging of its merits or tasting its beauties. But if some intelligent and accomplished friend points out to him, that the difficulties by which he is startled are more in appearance than reality, if, by reading aloud to him, or by reducing the ordinary words to the modern orthography, he satisfies his proselyte that only about one-tenth part of the words employed are in fact obsolete, the novice may be easily persuaded to approach the "well of English undefiled," with the certainty that a slender degree of patience will enable him to enjoy both the humour and the pathos with which old Geoffrey delighted the age of Cressy and of Poictiers.

To pursue this a little farther. If our neophyte, strong in the new-born love of antiquity, were to undertake to imitate what he had learnt to admire, it must be allowed he would act very injudiciously, if he were to select from the Glossary the obsolete words which it contains, and employ those exclusive of all phrases and vocables retained in modern days. This was the error of the unfortunate Chatterton. In order to give his language the appea rance of antiquity, he rejected every word that was modern, and produced a dialect entirely different from any that had ever been spoken in Great Britain. He who would imitate an ancient language with success, must attend rather to its grammatical character, turn of expression, and mode of arrangement, than labour to collect extraordinary and antiquated terms, which, as I have already averred, do not in ancient authors approach the number of words still in use, though perhaps somewhat altered in sense and spelling, in the proportion of one to ten.

What I have applied to language, is still more justly applicable to sentiments and manners. The passions, the sources from which these must spring in all their modifications, are generally the same in all ranks and conditions, all countries and ages; and it follows, as a matter of course, that the opinions, habits of thinking, and actions, however influenced by the peculiar state of society, must still, upon the whole, bear a strong resemblance to

[1] The author had revised this posthumous work of Mr Strutt. See General Preface to the present edition, Vol. I. p. 15.

each other. Our ancestors were not more distinct from us, surely, than Jews are from Christians; they had "eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions;" were "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer," as ourselves. The tenor, therefore, of their affections and feelings, must have borne the same general proportion to our own.

It follows, therefore, that of the materials which an author has to use in a romance, or fictitious composition, such as I have ventured to attempt, he will find that a great proportion, both of language and manners, is as proper to the present time as to those in which he has laid his time of action. The freedom of choice which this allows him, is therefore much greater, and the difficulty of his task much more diminished, than at first appears. To take an illustration from a sister art, the antiquarian details may be said to represent the peculiar features of a landscape under delineation of the pencil. His feudal tower must arise in due majesty; the figures which he introduces must have the costume and character of their age; the piece must represent the peculiar features of the scene which he has chosen for his subject, with all its appropriate elevation of rock, or precipitate descent of cataract. His general colouring, too, must be copied from nature: The sky must be clouded or serene, according to the climate, and the general tints must be those which prevail in a natural landscape. So far the painter is bound down by the rules of his art, to a precise imitation of the features of nature; but it is not required that he should descend to copy all her more minute features, or represent with absolute exactness the very herbs, flowers, and trees, with which the spot is decorated. These, as well as all the more minute points of light and shadow, are attributes proper to scenery in general, natural to each situation, and subject to the artist's disposal, as his taste or pleasure may dictate.

It is true, that this licence is confined in either case within legitimate bounds. The painter must introduce no ornament inconsistent with the climate or country of his landscape; he must not plant cypress trees upon Inch-Merrin, or Scots firs among the ruins of Persepolis; and the author lies under a corresponding restraint. However far he may venture in a more full detail of passions and feelings, than is to be found in the ancient compositions which he imitates, he must introduce nothing inconsistent with the manners of the age; his knights, squires, grooms, and yeomen, may be more fully drawn than in the hard, dry delineations of an ancient illuminated manuscript, but the character and costume of the age must remain inviolate; they must be the same figures, drawn by a better pencil, or, to speak more modestly, executed in an age when the principles of art were better understood. His language must not be exclusively obsolete and unintelligible; but he should admit, if possible, no word or turn of phraseology betraying an origin directly modern. It is one thing to make use of the language and sentiments which are common to ourselves and our forefathers, and it is another to invest them with the sentiments and dialect exclusively proper to their descendants.

This, my dear friend, I have found the most difficult part of my task; and, to speak frankly, I hardly expect to satisfy your less partial judgment, and more extensive knowledge of such subjects, since I have hardly been able to please my own.

I am conscious that I shall be found still more faulty in the tone of keeping and costume, by those who may be disposed rigidly to examine my Tale, with reference to the manners of the exact period in which my actors flourished: It may be, that I have introduced little which can positively be termed modern; but, on the other hand, it is extremely probable that I may have confused the manners of two or three centuries, and introduced, during the reign of Richard the First, circumstances appropriated to a period either considerably earlier, or a good deal later than that era. It is my comfort, that errors of this kind will escape the general class of readers, and that I may share in the ill-deserved applause of those architects, who, in their modern Gothic, do not hesitate to introduce, without rule or method, ornaments proper to different styles and to different periods of the art. Those whose extensive researches have given them the means of judging my backslidings with more severity, will probably be lenient in proportion to their knowledge of the difficulty of my task. My honest and neglected friend, Ingulphus, has furnished me with many a valuable hint; but the light afforded by the Monk of Croydon, and Geoffrey de Vinsauff, is dimmed by such a conglomeration of uninteresting and unintelligible matter, that we gladly fly for relief to the delightful pages of the gallant Froissart, although he flourished at a period so much more remote from the date of my history. If, therefore, my dear friend, you have generosity enough to pardon the presumptuous attempt to frame for myself a minstrel coronet, partly out of the pearls of pure antiquity, and partly from the Bristol stones and paste, with which I have endeavoured to imitate them, I am convinced your opinion of the difficulty of the task will reconcile you to the imperfect manner of its execution.

Of my materials I have but little to say: They may be chiefly found in the singular Anglo-Norman MS. which Sir Arthur Wardour preserves with such jealous care in the third drawer of his oaken cabinet, scarcely allowing any one to touch it, and being himself not able to read one syllable of its contents. I should never have got his consent, on my visit to Scotland, to read in those precious pages for so many hours, had I not promised to designate it by some emphatic mode of printing, as The Wardour Manuscript; giving it, thereby, an individuality as important as the Bannatyne MS., the Auchinleck MS., and any other monument of the patience of a Gothic scrivener. I have sent, for your private consideration, a list of the contents of this curious piece, which I shall perhaps subjoin, with your approbation, to the third volume of my Tale, in case the printer's devil should continue impatient for copy, when the whole of my narrative has been imposed.

Adieu, my dear friend; I have said enough to explain, if not to vindicate, the attempt which I have made, and which, in spite of your doubts, and my own incapacity, I am still willing to believe has not been altogether made in vain.

I hope you are now well recovered from your spring fit of the gout, and shall be happy if the

advice of your learned physician should recommend a tour to these parts. Several curiosities have been lately dug up near the wall, as well as at the ancient station of Habitancum. Talking of the latter, I suppose you have long since heard the news, that a sulky churlish boor has destroyed the ancient statue, or rather bas-relief, popularly called Robin of Redesdale. It seems Robin's fame attracted more visitants than was consistent with the growth of the heather, upon a moor worth a shilling an acre. Reverend as you write yourself, be revengeful for once, and pray with me that he may be visited with such a fit of the stone, as if he had all the fragments of poor Robin in that region of his viscera where the disease holds its seat. Tell this not in Gath, lest the Scots rejoice that they have at length found a parallel instance among their neighbours, to that barbarous deed which demolished Arthur's Oven. But there is no end to lamentation, when we betake ourselves to such subjects. My respectful compliments attend Miss Dryasdust; I endeavoured to match the spectacles agreeable to her commission, during my late journey to London, and hope she has received them safe, and found them satisfactory. I send this by the blind carrier, so that probably it may be some time upon its journey.[1] The last news which I hear from Edinburgh is, that the gentleman who fills the situation of Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,[2] is the best amateur draftsman in that kingdom, and that much is expected from his skill and zeal in delineating those specimens of national antiquity, which are either mouldering under the slow touch of time, or swept away by modern taste, with the same besom of destruction which John Knox used at the Reformation. Once more adieu; *vale tandem, non immemor mei.* Believe me to be,

Reverend, and very dear Sir,

Your most faithful humble Servant,

LAURENCE TEMPLETON.

TOPPINGWOLD, NEAR EGREMONT, CUMBERLAND, Nov. 17, 1817.

[1] This anticipation proved but too true, as my learned correspondent did not receive my letter until a twelvemonth after it was written. I mention this circumstance, that a gentleman attached to the cause of learning, who now holds the principal control of the post-office, may consider whether by some mitigation of the present enormous rates, some favour might not be shewn to the correspondents of the principal Literary and Antiquarian Societies. I understand, indeed, that this experiment was once tried, but that the mail-coach having broke down under the weight of packages addressed to members of the Society of Antiquaries, it was relinquished as a hazardous experiment. Surely, however, it would be possible to build these vehicles in a form more substantial, stronger in the perch, and broader in the wheels, so as to support the weight of Antiquarian learning; when, if they should be found to travel more slowly, they would be not the less agreeable to quiet travellers like myself.—L. T.

[2] Mr Skene of Rubislaw is here intimated, to whose taste and skill the author is indebted for a series of etchings, exhibiting the various localities alluded to in these novels. [1829.]

Ivanhoe.

CHAPTER I.

Thus communed these; while to their lowly dome,
The full-fed swine return'd with evening home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to the several sties,
With din obstreperous, and ungrateful cries.
POPE'S *Odyssey.*

In that pleasant district of merry England which is watered by the river Don, there extended in ancient times a large forest, covering the greater part of the beautiful hills and valleys which lie between Sheffield and the pleasant town of Doncaster. The remains of this extensive wood are still to be seen at the noble seats of Wentworth, of Wharncliffe Park, and around Rotherham. Here haunted of yore the fabulous Dragon of Wantley; here were fought many of the most desperate battles during the Civil Wars of the Roses; and here also flourished in ancient times those bands of gallant outlaws, whose deeds have been rendered so popular in English song.

Such being our chief scene, the date of our story refers to a period towards the end of the reign of Richard I. when his return from his long captivity had become an event rather wished than hoped for by his despairing subjects, who were in the meantime subjected to every species of subordinate oppression. The nobles, whose power had become exorbitant during the reign of Stephen, and whom the prudence of Henry the Second had scarce reduced into some degree of subjection to the crown, had now resumed their ancient licence in its utmost extent; despising the feeble interference of the English Council of State, fortifying their castles, increasing the number of their dependants, reducing all around them to a state of vassalage, and striving by every means in their power, to place themselves each at the head of such forces as might enable him to make a figure in the national convulsions which appeared to be impending.

The situation of the inferior gentry, or Franklins, as they were called, who, by the law and spirit of the English constitution, were entitled to hold themselves independent of feudal tyranny, became now unusually precarious. If, as was most generally the case, they placed themselves under the protection of any of the petty kings in their vicinity, accepted of feudal offices in his household, or bound themselves, by mutual treaties of alliance and protection, to support him in his enterprizes, they might indeed purchase temporary repose; but it must be with the sacrifice of that independence which was so dear to every English bosom, and at the certain hazard of being involved as a party in whatever rash expedition the ambition of their protector might lead him to undertake. On the other hand, such and so multiplied were the means of vexation and oppression possessed by the great Barons, that they never wanted the pretext, and seldom the will, to harass and pursue, even to the very edge of destruction, any of their less powerful neighbours, who attempted to separate themselves from their authority, and to trust for their protection, during the dangers of the times, to their own inoffensive conduct, and to the laws of the land.

A circumstance which greatly tended to enhance the tyranny of the nobility, and the sufferings of the inferior classes, arose from the consequences of the Conquest by Duke William of Normandy. Four generations had not sufficed to blend the hostile blood of the Normans and Anglo-Saxons, or to unite, by common language and mutual interests, two hostile races, one of which still felt the elation of triumph, while the other groaned under all the consequences of defeat. The power had been completely placed in the hands of the Norman nobility, by the event of the battle of Hastings, and it had been used, as our histories assure us, with no moderate hand. The whole race of Saxon princes and nobles had been extirpated or disinherited, with few or no exceptions; nor were the numbers great who possessed land in the country of their fathers, even as proprietors of the second, or of yet inferior classes. The royal policy had long been to weaken, by every means, legal or illegal, the strength of a part of the population which was justly considered as nourishing the most inveterate antipathy to their victor. All the monarchs of the Norman race had shewn the most marked predilection for their Norman subjects; the laws of the chase, and many others equally unknown to the milder and more free spirit of the Saxon constitution, had been fixed upon the necks of the subjugated inhabitants, to add weight, as it were, to the feudal chains with which they were loaded. At court, and in the castles of the great nobles, where the pomp and state of a court was emulated, Norman-French was the only language employed; in courts of law, the pleadings and judgments were delivered in the same tongue. In short, French was the language of honour, of chivalry, and even of justice, while the far more manly and expressive Anglo-Saxon was abandoned to the use of rustics and hinds, who knew no other. Still, however, the necessary intercourse between the lords of the soil, and those oppressed inferior beings by whom that soil was cultivated, occasioned the gradual formation of a dialect, compounded betwixt the French and the Anglo-Saxon, in which

they could render themselves mutually intelligible to each other; and from this necessity arose by degrees the structure of our present English language, in which the speech of the victors and the vanquished have been so happily blended together; and which has since been so richly improved by importations from the classical languages, and from those spoken by the southern nations of Europe.

This state of things I have thought it necessary to premise for the information of the general reader, who might be apt to forget, that, although no great historical events, such as war or insurrection, mark the existence of the Anglo-Saxons as a separate people subsequent to the reign of William the Second; yet the great national distinctions betwixt them and their conquerors, the recollection of what they had formerly been, and to what they were now reduced, continued down to the reign of Edward the Third, to keep open the wounds which the Conquest had inflicted, and to maintain a line of separation betwixt the descendants of the victor Normans and the vanquished Saxons.

The sun was setting upon one of the rich grassy glades of that forest, which we have mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. Hundreds of broad-headed, short-stemmed, wide-branched oaks, which had witnessed perhaps the stately march of the Roman soldiery, flung their gnarled arms over a thick carpet of the most delicious greensward; in some places they were intermingled with beeches, hollies, and copsewood of various descriptions, so closely as totally to intercept the level beams of the sinking sun; in others they receded from each other, forming those long sweeping vistas, in the intricacy of which the eye delights to lose itself, while imagination considers them as the paths to yet wilder scenes of silvan solitude. Here the red rays of the sun shot a broken and discoloured light, that partially hung upon the shattered boughs and mossy trunks of the trees, and there they illuminated in brilliant patches the portions of turf to which they made their way. A considerable open space, in the midst of this glade, seemed formerly to have been dedicated to the rites of Druidical superstition; for, on the summit of a hillock, so regular as to seem artificial, there still remained part of a circle of rough unhewn stones, of large dimensions. Seven stood upright; the rest had been dislodged from their places, probably by the zeal of some convert to Christianity, and lay, some prostrate near their former site, and others on the side of the hill. One large stone only had found its way to the bottom, and in stopping the course of a small brook, which glided smoothly round the foot of the eminence, gave, by its opposition, a feeble voice of murmur to the placid and elsewhere silent streamlet.

The human figures which completed this landscape, were in number two, partaking, in their dress and appearance, of that wild and rustic character, which belonged to the woodlands of the West-Riding of Yorkshire at that early period. The eldest of these men had a stern, savage, and wild aspect. His garment was of the simplest form imaginable, being a close jacket with sleeves, composed of the tanned skin of some animal, on which the hair had been originally left, but which had been worn off in so many places, that it would have been difficult to distinguish from the patches that remained, to what creature the fur had belonged. This primeval vestment reached from the throat to the knees, and served at once all the usual purposes of body-clothing; there was no wider opening at the collar, than was necessary to admit the passage of the head, from which it may be inferred, that it was put on by slipping it over the head and shoulders, in the manner of a modern shirt, or ancient hauberk. Sandals, bound with thongs made of boars' hide, protected the feet, and a roll of thin leather was twined artificially around the legs, and, ascending above the calf, left the knees bare, like those of a Scottish Highlander. To make the jacket sit yet more close to the body, it was gathered at the middle by a broad leathern belt, secured by a brass buckle; to one side of which was attached a sort of scrip, and to the other a ram's horn, accoutred with a mouthpiece, for the purpose of blowing. In the same belt was stuck one of those long, broad, sharp-pointed, and two-edged knives, with a buck's-horn handle, which were fabricated in the neighbourhood, and bore even at this early period the name of a Sheffield whittle. The man had no covering upon his head, which was only defended by his own thick hair, matted and twisted together, and scorched by the influence of the sun into a rusty dark-red colour, forming a contrast with the overgrown beard upon his cheeks, which was rather of a yellow or amber hue. One part of his dress only remains, but it is too remarkable to be suppressed; it was a brass ring, resembling a dog's collar, but without any opening, and soldered fast round his neck, so loose as to form no impediment to his breathing, yet so tight as to be incapable of being removed, excepting by the use of the file. On this singular gorget was engraved, in Saxon characters, an inscription of the following purport:—"Gurth, the son of Beowulph, is the born thrall of Cedric of Rotherwood."

Beside the swine-herd, for such was Gurth's occupation, was seated, upon one of the fallen Druidical monuments, a person about ten years younger in appearance, and whose dress, though resembling his companion's in form, was of better materials, and of a more fantastic appearance. His jacket had been stained of a bright purple hue, upon which there had been some attempt to paint grotesque ornaments in different colours. To the jacket he added a short cloak, which scarcely reached half way down his thigh; it was of crimson cloth, though a good deal soiled, lined with bright yellow; and as he could transfer it from one shoulder to the other, or at his pleasure draw it all around him, its width, contrasted with its want of longitude, formed a fantastic piece of drapery. He had thin silver bracelets upon his arms, and on his neck a collar of the same metal, bearing the inscription, "Wamba, the son of Witless, is the thrall of Cedric of Rotherwood." This personage had the same sort of sandals with his companion, but instead of the roll of leather thong, his legs were cased in a sort of gaiters, of which one was red and the other yellow. He was provided also with a cap, having around it more than one bell, about the size of those attached to hawks, which jingled as he turned his head to one side or other; and as he seldom remained a minute in the same posture, the sound might be considered as incessant. Around the edge of this cap was a

stiff bandeau of leather, cut at the top into open work, resembling a coronet, while a prolonged bag arose from within it, and fell down on one shoulder like an old-fashioned nightcap, or a jelly-bag, or the head-gear of a modern hussar. It was to this part of the cap that the bells were attached; which circumstance, as well as the shape of his head-dress, and his own half-crazed, half-cunning expression of countenance, sufficiently pointed him out as belonging to the race of domestic clowns or jesters, maintained in the houses of the wealthy, to help away the tedium of those lingering hours which they were obliged to spend within doors. He bore, like his companion, a scrip, attached to his belt, but had neither horn nor knife, being probably considered as belonging to a class whom it is esteemed dangerous to intrust with edge-tools. In place of these, he was equipped with a sword of lath, resembling that with which Harlequin operates his wonders upon the modern stage.

The outward appearance of these two men formed scarce a stronger contrast than their look and demeanour. That of the serf, or bondsman, was sad and sullen; his aspect was bent on the ground with an appearance of deep dejection, which might be almost construed into apathy, had not the fire which occasionally sparkled in his red eye manifested that there slumbered, under the appearance of sullen despondency, a sense of oppression, and a disposition to resistance. The looks of Wamba, on the other hand, indicated, as usual with his class, a sort of vacant curiosity, and fidgetty impatience of any posture of repose, together with the utmost self-satisfaction respecting his own situation, and the appearance which he made. The dialogue which they maintained between them, was carried on in Anglo-Saxon, which, as we said before, was universally spoken by the inferior classes, excepting the Norman soldiers, and the immediate personal dependants of the great feudal nobles. But to give their conversation in the original would convey but little information to the modern reader, for whose benefit we beg to offer the following translation:

"The curse of St Withold upon these infernal porkers!" said the swine-herd, after blowing his horn obstreperously, to collect together the scattered herd of swine, which, answering his call with notes equally melodious, made, however, no haste to remove themselves from the luxurious banquet of beech-mast and acorns on which they had fattened, or to forsake the marshy banks of the rivulet, where several of them, half plunged in mud, lay stretched at their ease, altogether regardless of the voice of their keeper. "The curse of St Withold upon them and upon me!" said Gurth; "if the two-legged wolf snap not up some of them ere nightfall, I am no true man. Here, Fangs! Fangs!" he ejaculated at the top of his voice to a ragged wolfish-looking dog, a sort of lurcher, half mastiff, half greyhound, which ran limping about as if with the purpose of seconding his master in collecting the refractory grunters; but which, in fact, from misapprehension of the swine-herd's signals, ignorance of his own duty, or malice prepense, only drove them hither and thither, and increased the evil which he seemed to design to remedy. "A devil draw the teeth of him," said Gurth, "and the mother of mischief confound the Ranger of the forest, that cuts the foreclaws off our dogs, and makes them unfit for their trade![1] Wamba, up and help me an thou beest a man; take a turn round the back o' the hill to gain the wind on them; and when thou'st got the weather-gage, thou mayst drive them before thee as gently as so many innocent lambs."

"Truly," said Wamba, without stirring from the spot, "I have consulted my legs upon this matter, and they are altogether of opinion, that to carry my gay garments through these sloughs, would be an act of unfriendship to my sovereign person and royal wardrobe; wherefore, Gurth, I advise thee to call off Fangs, and leave the herd to their destiny, which, whether they meet with bands of travelling soldiers, or of outlaws, or of wandering pilgrims, can be little else than to be converted into Normans before morning, to thy no small ease and comfort."

"The swine turned Normans to my comfort!" quoth Gurth; "expound that to me, Wamba, for my brain is too dull, and my mind too vexed, to read riddles."

"Why, how call you those grunting brutes running about on their four legs?" demanded Wamba.

"Swine, fool, swine," said the herd, "every fool knows that."

"And swine is good Saxon," said the Jester; "but how call you the sow when she is flayed, and drawn, and quartered, and hung up by the heels, like a traitor?"

"Pork," answered the swine-herd.

"I am very glad every fool knows that too," said Wamba, "and pork, I think, is good Norman-French; and so when the brute lives, and is in the charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name; but becomes a Norman, and is called pork, when she is carried to the Castle-hall to feast among the nobles; what dost thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha?"

"It is but too true doctrine, friend Wamba, however it got into thy fool's pate."

"Nay, I can tell you more," said Wamba, in the same tone; "there is old Alderman Ox continues to hold his Saxon epithet, while he is under the charge of serfs and bondsmen such as thou, but becomes Beef, a fiery French gallant, when he arrives before the worshipful jaws that are destined to consume him. Mynheer Calf, too, becomes Monsieur de Veau in the like manner; he is Saxon when he requires tendance, and takes a Norman name when he becomes matter of enjoyment."

"By St Dunstan," answered Gurth, "thou speakest but sad truths; little is left to us but the air we breathe, and that appears to have been reserved with much hesitation, solely for the purpose of enabling us to endure the tasks they lay upon our shoulders. The finest and the fattest is for their board; the loveliest is for their couch; the best and bravest supply their foreign masters with soldiers, and whiten distant lands with their bones, leaving few here who have either will or the power to protect the unfortunate Saxon. God's blessing on our master Cedric, he hath done the work of a man in standing in the gap; but Reginald Front-de-Bœuf is coming down to this country in person, and we shall soon see how little Cedric's trouble will avail him. — Here, here," he exclaimed again, raising his voice, "So ho! so ho! well done, Fangs!

[1] See Note A. *The Ranger of the Forest, that cuts the foreclaws off our dogs.*

thou hast them all before thee now, and bring'st them on bravely, lad."

"Gurth," said the Jester, "I know thou thinkest me a fool, or thou wouldst not be so rash in putting thy head into my mouth. One word to Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, or Philip de Malvoisin, that thou hast spoken treason against the Norman,—and thou art but a cast-away swineherd,—thou wouldst waver on one of these trees as a terror to all evil speakers against dignities."

"Dog, thou wouldst not betray me," said Gurth, "after having led me on to speak so much at disadvantage?"

"Betray thee!" answered the Jester; "no, that were the trick of a wise man; a fool cannot half so well help himself—but soft, whom have we here?" he said, listening to the trampling of several horses which became then audible.

"Never mind whom," answered Gurth, who had now got his herd before him, and, with the aid of Fangs, was driving them down one of the long dim vistas which we have endeavoured to describe.

"Nay, but I must see the riders," answered Wamba; "perhaps they are come from Fairy-land with a message from King Oberon."

"A murrain take thee," rejoined the swineherd; "wilt thou talk of such things, while a terrible storm of thunder and lightning is raging within a few miles of us? Hark, how the thunder rumbles! and for summer rain, I never saw such broad downright flat drops fall out of the clouds; the oaks, too, notwithstanding the calm weather, sob and creak with their great boughs as if announcing a tempest. Thou canst play the rational if thou wilt; credit me for once, and let us home ere the storm begins to rage, for the night will be fearful."

Wamba seemed to feel the force of this appeal, and accompanied his companion, who began his journey after catching up a long quarter-staff which lay upon the grass beside him. This second Eumæus strode hastily down the forest glade, driving before him, with the assistance of Fangs, the whole herd of his inharmonious charge.

CHAPTER II.

A Monk there was, a fayre for the maistrie,
An outrider that loved venerie;
A manly man, to be an Abbot able,
Full many a daintie horse had he in stable:
And whan he rode, men might his bridle hear
Gingeling in a whistling wind as clear,
And eke as loud, as doth the chapell bell,
There as this lord was keeper of the cell.

CHAUCER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the occasional exhortation and chiding of his companion, the noise of the horsemen's feet continuing to approach, Wamba could not be prevented from lingering occasionally on the road, upon every pretence which occurred; now catching from the hazel a cluster of half-ripe nuts, and now turning his head to leer after a cottage maiden who crossed their path. The horsemen, therefore, soon overtook them on the road.

Their numbers amounted to ten men, of whom the two who rode foremost seemed to be persons of considerable importance, and the others their attendants. It was not difficult to ascertain the condition and character of one of these personages. He was obviously an ecclesiastic of high rank; his dress was that of a Cistercian Monk, but composed of materials much finer than those which the rule of that order admitted. His mantle and hood were of the best Flanders cloth, and fell in ample, and not ungraceful folds, around a handsome, though somewhat corpulent person. His countenance bore as little the marks of self-denial, as his habit indicated contempt of worldly splendour. His features might have been called good, had there not lurked under the pent-house of his eye, that sly epicurean twinkle which indicates the cautious voluptuary. In other respects, his profession and situation had taught him a ready command over his countenance, which he could contract at pleasure into solemnity, although its natural expression was that of good-humoured social indulgence. In defiance of conventual rules, and the edicts of popes and councils, the sleeves of this dignitary were lined and turned up with rich furs, his mantle secured at the throat with a golden clasp, and the whole dress proper to his order as much refined upon and ornamented, as that of a quaker beauty of the present day, who, while she retains the garb and costume of her sect, continues to give to its simplicity, by the choice of materials and the mode of disposing them, a certain air of coquettish attraction, savouring but too much of the vanities of the world.

This worthy churchman rode upon a well-fed ambling mule, whose furniture was highly decorated, and whose bridle, according to the fashion of the day, was ornamented with silver bells. In his seat he had nothing of the awkwardness of the convent, but displayed the easy and habitual grace of a well-trained horseman. Indeed, it seemed that so humble a conveyance as a mule, in however good case, and however well broken to a pleasant and accommodating amble, was only used by the gallant monk for travelling on the road. A lay brother, one of those who followed in the train, had, for his use on other occasions, one of the most handsome Spanish jennets ever bred in Andalusia, which merchants used at that time to import, with great trouble and risk, for the use of persons of wealth and distinction. The saddle and housings of this superb palfrey were covered by a long foot-cloth, which reached nearly to the ground, and on which were richly embroidered, mitres, crosses, and other ecclesiastical emblems. Another lay brother led a sumpter mule, loaded probably with his superior's baggage; and two monks of his own order, of inferior station, rode together in the rear, laughing and conversing with each other, without taking much notice of the other members of the cavalcade.

The companion of the church dignitary was a man past forty, thin, strong, tall, and muscular; an athletic figure, which long fatigue and constant exercise seemed to have left none of the softer part of the human form, having reduced the whole to brawn, bones, and sinews, which had sustained a thousand toils, and were ready to dare a thousand more. His head was covered with a scarlet cap, faced with fur—of that kind which the French call *mortier*, from its resemblance to the shape of an inverted mortar. His countenance was therefore fully displayed, and its expression was calculated to impress a degree of awe, if not of fear, upon strangers. High features, naturally strong and

powerfully expressive, had been burnt almost into Negro blackness by constant exposure to the tropical sun, and might, in their ordinary state, be said to slumber after the storm of passion had passed away; but the projection of the veins of the forehead, the readiness with which the upper lip and its thick black moustaches quivered upon the slightest emotion, plainly intimated that the tempest might be again and easily awakened. His keen, piercing, dark eyes, told in every glance a history of difficulties subdued, and dangers dared, and seemed to challenge opposition to his wishes, for the pleasure of sweeping it from his road by a determined exertion of courage and of will; a deep scar on his brow gave additional sternness to his countenance, and a sinister expression to one of his eyes, which had been slightly injured on the same occasion, and of which the vision, though perfect, was in a slight and partial degree distorted.

The upper dress of this personage resembled that of his companion in shape, being a long monastic mantle; but the colour, being scarlet, shewed that he did not belong to any of the four regular orders of monks. On the right shoulder of the mantle there was cut, in white cloth, a cross of a peculiar form. This upper robe concealed what at first view seemed rather inconsistent with its form, a shirt, namely, of linked mail, with sleeves and gloves of the same, curiously plaited and interwoven, as flexible to the body as those which are now wrought in the stocking-loom, out of less obdurate materials. The fore-part of his thighs, where the folds of his mantle permitted them to be seen, were also covered with linked mail; the knees and feet were defended by splints, or thin plates of steel, ingeniously jointed upon each other; and mail hose, reaching from the ankle to the knee, effectually protected the legs, and completed the rider's defensive armour. In his girdle he wore a long and double-edged dagger, which was the only offensive weapon about his person.

He rode, not a mule, like his companion, but a strong hackney for the road, to save his gallant war-horse, which a squire led behind, fully accoutred for battle, with a chamfron or plaited head-piece upon his head, having a short spike projecting from the front. On one side of the saddle hung a short battle-axe, richly inlaid with Damascene carving; on the other the rider's plumed head-piece and hood of mail, with a long two-handed sword, used by the chivalry of the period. A second squire held aloft his master's lance, from the extremity of which fluttered a small banderole, or streamer, bearing a cross of the same form with that embroidered upon his cloak. He also carried his small triangular shield, broad enough at the top to protect the breast, and from thence diminishing to a point. It was covered with a scarlet cloth, which prevented the device from being seen.

These two squires were followed by two attendants, whose dark visages, white turbans, and the Oriental form of their garments, shewed them to be natives of some distant Eastern country.[1] The whole appearance of this warrior and his retinue was wild and outlandish; the dress of his squires was gorgeous, and his Eastern attendants wore silver collars round their throats, and bracelets of the same metal upon their swarthy legs and arms, of which the former were naked from the elbow, and the latter from mid-leg to ankle. Silk and embroidery distinguished their dresses, and marked the wealth and importance of their master; forming, at the same time, a striking contrast with the martial simplicity of his own attire. They were armed with crooked sabres, having the hilt and baldric inlaid with gold, and matched with Turkish daggers of yet more costly workmanship. Each of them bore at his saddle-bow a bundle of darts or javelins, about four feet in length, having sharp steel heads, a weapon much in use among the Saracens, and of which the memory is yet preserved in the martial exercise called *El Jerrid*, still practised in the Eastern countries.

The steeds of these attendants were in appearance as foreign as their riders. They were of Saracen origin, and consequently of Arabian descent; and their fine slender limbs, small fetlocks, thin manes, and easy springy motion, formed a marked contrast with the large-jointed heavy horses, of which the race was cultivated in Flanders and in Normandy, for mounting the men-at-arms of the period in all the panoply of plate and mail; and which, placed by the side of those Eastern coursers, might have passed for a personification of substance and of shadow.

The singular appearance of this cavalcade not only attracted the curiosity of Wamba, but excited even that of his less volatile companion. The monk he instantly knew to be the Prior of Jorvaulx Abbey, well known for many miles around as a lover of the chase, of the banquet, and, if fame did him not wrong, of other worldly pleasures still more inconsistent with his monastic vows.

Yet so loose were the ideas of the times respecting the conduct of the clergy, whether secular or regular, that the Prior Aymer maintained a fair character in the neighbourhood of his abbey. His free and jovial temper, and the readiness with which he granted absolution from all ordinary delinquencies, rendered him a favourite among the nobility and principal gentry, to several of whom he was allied by birth, being of a distinguished Norman family. The ladies, in particular, were not disposed to scan too nicely the morals of a man who was a professed admirer of their sex, and who possessed many means of dispelling the ennui which was too apt to intrude upon the halls and bowers of an ancient feudal castle. The Prior mingled in the sports of the field with more than due eagerness, and was allowed to possess the best trained hawks, and the fleetest greyhounds in the North Riding; circumstances which strongly recommended him to the youthful gentry. With the old, he had another part to play, which, when needful, he could sustain with great decorum. His knowledge of books, however superficial, was sufficient to impress upon their ignorance respect for his supposed learning; and the gravity of his deportment and language, with the high tone which he exerted in setting forth the authority of the church and of the priesthood, impressed them no less with an opinion of his sanctity. Even the common people, the severest critics of the conduct of their betters, had commiseration with the follies of Prior Aymer. He was generous; and charity, as it is well known, covereth a multitude of sins, in another sense than that in which it is said to do so in Scripture. The

[1] See Note B *Negro Slaves.*

revenues of the monastery, of which a large part was at his disposal, while they gave him the means of supplying his own very considerable expenses, afforded also those largesses which he bestowed among the peasantry, and with which he frequently relieved the distresses of the oppressed. If Prior Aymer rode hard in the chase, or remained long at the banquet,—if Prior Aymer was seen, at the early peep of dawn, to enter the postern of the abbey, as he glided home from some rendezvous which had occupied the hours of darkness, men only shrugged up their shoulders, and reconciled themselves to his irregularities, by recollecting that the same were practised by many of his brethren who had no redeeming qualities whatsoever to atone for them. Prior Aymer, therefore, and his character, were well known to our Saxon serfs, who made their rude obeisance, and received his "*benedicite, mes filz,*" in return.

But the singular appearance of his companion and his attendants, arrested their attention and excited their wonder, and they could scarcely attend to the Prior of Jorvaulx' question, when he demanded if they knew of any place of harbourage in the vicinity; so much were they surprised at the half monastic, half military appearance of the swarthy stranger, and at the uncouth dress and arms of his Eastern attendants. It is probable, too, that the language in which the benediction was conferred, and the information asked, sounded ungracious, though not probably unintelligible, in the ears of the Saxon peasants.

"I asked you, my children," said the Prior, raising his voice, and using the lingua Franca, or mixed language, in which the Norman and Saxon races conversed with each other, "if there be in this neighbourhood any good man, who for the love of God, and devotion to Mother Church, will give two of her humblest servants, with their train, a night's hospitality and refreshment?"

This he spoke with a tone of conscious importance, which formed a strong contrast to the modest terms which he thought it proper to employ.

"Two of the humblest servants of Mother Church!" repeated Wamba to himself,—but, fool as he was, taking care not to make his observation audible; "I should like to see her seneschals, her chief butlers, and her other principal domestics?"

After this internal commentary on the Prior's speech, he raised his eyes, and replied to the question which had been put.

"If the reverend fathers," he said, "loved good cheer and soft lodging, few miles of riding would carry them to the Priory of Brinxworth, where their quality could not but secure them the most honourable reception; or if they preferred spending a penitential evening, they might turn down yonder wild glade, which would bring them to the hermitage of Copmanhurst, where a pious anchoret would make them sharers for the night of the shelter of his roof and the benefit of his prayers."

The Prior shook his head at both proposals.

"Mine honest friend," said he, "if the jangling of thy bells had not dizzied thine understanding, thou mightest have known *Clericus clericum non decimat;* that is to say, we churchmen do not exhaust each other's hospitality, but rather require that of the laity, giving them thus an opportunity to serve God in honouring and relieving his appointed servants."

"It is true," replied Wamba, "that I, being but an ass, am, nevertheless, honoured to bear the bells as well as your reverence's mule; notwithstanding, I did conceive that the charity of Mother Church and her servants might be said, with other charity, to begin at home."

"A truce to thine insolence, fellow," said the armed rider, breaking in on his prattle with a high and stern voice, "and tell us, if thou canst, the road to——How called you your Franklin, Prior Aymer?"

"Cedric," answered the Prior; "Cedric the Saxon.—Tell me, good fellow, are we near his dwelling, and can you shew us the road?"

"The road will be uneasy to find," answered Gurth, who broke silence for the first time, "and the family of Cedric retire early to rest."

"Tush, tell not me, fellow," said the military rider; "'tis easy for them to arise and supply the wants of travellers such as we are, who will not stoop to beg the hospitality which we have a right to command."

"I know not," said Gurth, sullenly, "if I should shew the way to my master's house, to those who demand as a right, the shelter which most are fain to ask as a favour."

"Do you dispute with me, slave!" said the soldier; and, setting spurs to his horse, he caused him make a demivolte across the path, raising at the same time the riding rod which he held in his hand, with a purpose of chastising what he considered as the insolence of the peasant.

Gurth darted at him a savage and revengeful scowl, and with a fierce, yet hesitating motion, laid his hand on the haft of his knife; but the interference of Prior Aymer, who pushed his mule betwixt his companion and the swineherd, prevented the meditated violence.

"Nay, by St Mary, brother Brian, you must not think you are now in Palestine, predominating over heathen Turks and infidel Saracens; we islanders love not blows, save those of holy Church, who chasteneth whom she loveth.—Tell me, good fellow," said he to Wamba, and seconded his speech by a small piece of silver coin, "the way to Cedric the Saxon's; you cannot be ignorant of it, and it is your duty to direct the wanderer even when his character is less sanctified than ours."

"In truth, venerable father," answered the Jester, "the Saracen head of your right reverend companion has frightened out of mine the way home—I am not sure I shall get there to-night myself."

"Tush," said the Abbot, "thou canst tell us if thou wilt. This reverend brother has been all his life engaged in fighting among the Saracens for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre; he is of the order of Knights Templars, whom you may have heard of; he is half a monk, half a soldier."

"If he is but half a monk," said the Jester, "he should not be wholly unreasonable with those whom he meets upon the road, even if they should be in no hurry to answer questions that no way concern them."

"I forgive thy wit," replied the Abbot, "on condition thou wilt shew me the way to Cedric's mansion."

"Well, then," answered Wamba, "your reverences must hold on this path till you come to a sunken cross, of which scarce a cubit's length remains above ground; then take the path to the

left, for there are four which meet at Sunken Cross, and I trust your reverences will obtain shelter before the storm comes on."

The Abbot thanked his sage adviser; and the cavalcade, setting spurs to their horses, rode on as men do who wish to reach their inn before the bursting of a night-storm. As their horses' hoofs died away, Gurth said to his companion, "If they follow thy wise direction, the reverend fathers will hardly reach Rotherwood this night."

"No," said the Jester, grinning, "but they may reach Sheffield if they have good luck, and that is as fit a place for them. I am not so bad a woodsman as to shew the dog where the deer lies, if I have no mind he should chase him."

"Thou art right," said Gurth; "it were ill that Aymer saw the Lady Rowena; and it were worse, it may be, for Cedric to quarrel, as is most likely he would, with this military monk. But, like good servants, let us hear and see, and say nothing."

We return to the riders, who had soon left the bondsmen far behind them, and who maintained the following conversation in the Norman-French language, usually employed by the superior classes, with the exception of the few who were still inclined to boast their Saxon descent.

"What mean these fellows by their capricious insolence?" said the Templar to the Benedictine, "and why did you prevent me from chastising it?"

"Marry, brother Brian," replied the Prior, "touching the one of them, it were hard for me to render a reason for a fool speaking according to his folly; and the other churl is of that savage, fierce, intractable race, some of whom, as I have often told you, are still to be found among the descendants of the conquered Saxons, and whose supreme pleasure it is to testify, by all means in their power, their aversion to their conquerors."

"I would soon have beat him into courtesy," observed Brian; "I am accustomed to deal with such spirits. Our Turkish captives are as fierce and intractable as Odin himself could have been; yet two months in my household, under the management of my master of the slaves, has made them humble, submissive, serviceable, and observant of your will. Marry, sir, you must beware of the poison and the dagger; for they use either with free will when you give them the slightest opportunity."

"Ay, but," answered Prior Aymer, "every land has its own manners and fashions; and, besides that beating this fellow could procure us no information respecting the road to Cedric's house, it would have been sure to have established a quarrel betwixt you and him had we found our way thither. Remember what I told you; this wealthy Franklin is proud, fierce, jealous, and irritable; a withstander of the nobility, and even of his neighbours, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, and Philip Malvoisin, who are no babes to strive with. He stands up so sternly for the privileges of his race, and is so proud of his uninterrupted descent from Hereward, a renowned champion of the Heptarchy, that he is universally called Cedric the Saxon; and makes a boast of his belonging to a people from whom many others endeavour to hide their descent, lest they should encounter a share of the *vae victis*, or severities imposed upon the vanquished."

"Prior Aymer," said the Templar, "you are a man of gallantry, learned in the study of beauty, and as expert as a troubadour in all matters concerning the arrets of love; but I shall expect much beauty in this celebrated Rowena, to counterbalance the self-denial and forbearance which I must exert, if I am to court the favour of such a seditious churl as you have described her father Cedric."

"Cedric is not her father," replied the Prior, "and is but of remote relation; she is descended from higher blood than even he pretends to, and is but distantly connected with him by birth. Her guardian, however, he is, self-constituted as I believe; but his ward is as dear to him as if she were his own child. Of her beauty you shall soon be judge; and if the purity of her complexion, and the majestic, yet soft expression of a mild blue eye, do not chase from your memory the black-tressed girls of Palestine, ay, or the houris of old Mahound's paradise, I am an infidel, and no true son of the church."

"Should your boasted beauty," said the Templar, "be weighed in the balance and found wanting, you know our wager?"

"My good collar," answered the Prior, "against ten buts of Chian wine;—they are mine as securely as if they were already in the convent vaults, under the key of old Dennis the cellarer."

"And I am myself to be judge," said the Templar, "and am only to be convicted on my own admission, that I have seen no maiden so beautiful since Pentecost was a twelvemonth. Ran it not so?—Prior, your collar is in danger; I will wear it over my gorget in the lists of Ashby-de-la-Zouche."

"Win it fairly," said the Prior, "and wear it as ye will; I will trust your giving true response, on your word as a knight and as a churchman. Yet, brother, take my advice, and file your tongue to a little more courtesy than your habits of predominating over infidel captives and Eastern bondsmen have accustomed you. Cedric the Saxon, if offended,—and he is no way slack in taking offence,—is a man who, without respect to your knighthood, my high office, or the sanctity of either, would clear his house of us, and send us to lodge with the larks, though the hour were midnight. And be careful how you look on Rowena, whom he cherishes with the most jealous care; an he take the least alarm in that quarter, we are but lost men. It is said he banished his only son from his family for lifting his eyes in the way of affection towards this beauty, who may be worshipped, it seems, at a distance, but is not to be approached with other thoughts than such as we bring to the shrine of the Blessed Virgin."

"Well, you have said enough," answered the Templar; "I will for a night put on the needful restraint, and deport me as meekly as a maiden; but as for the fear of his expelling us by violence, myself and squires, with Hamet and Abdalla, will warrant you against that disgrace. Doubt not that we shall be strong enough to make good our quarters."

"We must not let it come so far," answered the Prior; "but here is the clown's sunken cross, and the night is so dark that we can hardly see which of the roads we are to follow. He bid us turn, I think, to the left."

"To the right," said Brian, "to the best of my remembrance."

"To the left, certainly, the left; I remember his pointing with his wooden sword."

"Ay, but he held his sword in his left hand, and so pointed across his body with it," said the Templar.

Each maintained his opinion with sufficient obstinacy, as is usual in all such cases; the attendants were appealed to, but they had not been near enough to hear Wamba's directions. At length Brian remarked, what had at first escaped him in the twilight; "Here is some one either asleep, or lying dead at the foot of this cross—Hugo, stir him with the but-end of thy lance."

This was no sooner done than the figure arose, exclaiming in good French, "Whosoever thou art, it is discourteous in you to disturb my thoughts."

"We did but wish to ask you," said the Prior, "the road to Rotherwood, the abode of Cedric the Saxon."

"I myself am bound thither," replied the stranger; "and if I had a horse, I would be your guide, for the way is somewhat intricate, though perfectly well known to me."

"Thou shalt have both thanks and reward, my friend," said the Prior, "if thou wilt bring us to Cedric's in safety."

And he caused one of his attendants to mount his own led horse, and give that upon which he had hitherto ridden to the stranger, who was to serve for a guide.

Their conductor pursued an opposite road from that which Wamba had recommended, for the purpose of misleading them. The path soon led deeper into the woodland, and crossed more than one brook, the approach to which was rendered perilous by the marshes through which it flowed; but the stranger seemed to know, as if by instinct, the soundest ground and the safest points of passage; and by dint of caution and attention, brought the party safely into a wilder avenue than any they had yet seen; and, pointing to a large low irregular building at the upper extremity, he said to the Prior, "Yonder is Rotherwood, the dwelling of Cedric the Saxon."

This was a joyful intimation to Aymer, whose nerves were none of the strongest, and who had suffered such agitation and alarm in the course of passing through the dangerous bogs, that he had not yet had the curiosity to ask his guide a single question. Finding himself now at his ease and near shelter, his curiosity began to awake, and he demanded of the guide who and what he was.

"A Palmer, just returned from the Holy Land," was the answer.

"You had better have tarried there to fight for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre," said the Templar.

"True, Reverend Sir Knight," answered the Palmer, to whom the appearance of the Templar seemed perfectly familiar, "but when those who are under oath to recover the holy city, are found travelling at such a distance from the scene of their duties, can you wonder that a peaceful peasant like me should decline the task which they have abandoned?"

The Templar would have made an angry reply, but was interrupted by the Prior, who again expressed his astonishment, that their guide, after such long absence, should be so perfectly acquainted with the passes of the forest.

"I was born a native of these parts," answered their guide, and as he made the reply they stood before the mansion of Cedric,—a low irregular building, containing several courtyards or enclosures, extending over a considerable space of ground, and which, though its size argued the inhabitant to be a person of wealth, differed entirely from the tall, turreted, and castellated buildings in which the Norman nobility resided, and which had become the universal style of architecture throughout England.

Rotherwood was not, however, without defences; no habitation, in that disturbed period, could have been so, without the risk of being plundered and burnt before the next morning. A deep fosse, or ditch, was drawn round the whole building and filled with water from a neighbouring stream. A double stockade, or palisade, composed of pointed beams, which the adjacent forest supplied, defended the outer and inner bank of the trench. There was an entrance from the west through the outer stockade, which communicated by a drawbridge, with a similar opening in the interior defences. Some precautions had been taken to place those entrances under the protection of projecting angles, by which they might be flanked in case of need by archers or slingers.

Before this entrance the Templar wound his horn loudly; for the rain, which had long threatened, began now to descend with great violence.

CHAPTER III.

> Then (sad relief!) from the bleak coast that hears
> The German Ocean roar, deep-blooming, strong,
> And yellow hair'd, the blue-eyed Saxon came.
>
> THOMSON'S *Liberty*.

In a hall, the height of which was greatly disproportioned to its extreme length and width, a long oaken table, formed of planks rough-hewn from the forest, and which had scarcely received any polish, stood ready prepared for the evening meal of Cedric the Saxon. The roof, composed of beams and rafters, had nothing to divide the apartment from the sky excepting the planking and thatch; there was a huge fireplace at either end of the hall, but as the chimneys were constructed in a very clumsy manner, at least as much of the smoke found its way into the apartment as escaped by the proper vent. The constant vapour which this occasioned, had polished the rafters and beams of the low-browed hall, by encrusting them with a black varnish of soot. On the sides of the apartment hung implements of war and of the chase, and there were at each corner folding doors, which gave access to other parts of the extensive building.

The other appointments of the mansion partook of the rude simplicity of the Saxon period, which Cedric piqued himself upon maintaining. The floor was composed of earth mixed with lime, trodden into a hard substance, such as is often employed in flooring our modern barns. For about one quarter of the length of the apartment, the floor was raised by a step, and this space, which was called the dais, was occupied only by the principal members of the family, and visiters of distinction. For this purpose, a table richly covered with scarlet cloth was placed transversely across the platform, from

the middle of which ran the longer and lower board, at which the domestics and inferior persons fed, down towards the bottom of the hall. The whole resembled the form of the letter T, or some of those ancient dinner-tables, which, arranged on the same principles, may be still seen in the antique Colleges of Oxford or Cambridge. Massive chairs and settles of carved oak were placed upon the dais, and over these seats and the more elevated table was fastened a canopy of cloth, which served in some degree to protect the dignitaries who occupied that distinguished station from the weather, and especially from the rain, which in some places found its way through the ill-constructed roof.

The walls of this upper end of the hall, as far as the dais extended, were covered with hangings or curtains, and upon the floor there was a carpet, both of which were adorned with some attempts at tapestry, or embroidery, executed with brilliant or rather gaudy colouring. Over the lower range of table, the roof, as we have noticed, had no covering; the rough plastered walls were left bare, and the rude earthen floor was uncarpeted; the board was uncovered by a cloth, and rude massive benches supplied the place of chairs.

In the centre of the upper table, were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family, who presided over the scene of hospitality, and from doing so derived their Saxon title of honour, which signifies "the Dividers of Bread."

To each of these chairs was added a footstool, curiously carved and inlaid with ivory, which mark of distinction was peculiar to them. One of these seats was at present occupied by Cedric the Saxon, who, though but in rank a thane, or, as the Normans called him, a Franklin, felt, at the delay of his evening meal, an irritable impatience, which might have become an alderman, whether of ancient or of modern times.

It appeared, indeed, from the countenance of this proprietor, that he was of a frank, but hasty and choleric temper. He was not above the middle stature, but broad-shouldered, long-armed, and powerfully made, like one accustomed to endure the fatigue of war or of the chase; his face was broad, with large blue eyes, open and frank features, fine teeth, and a well formed head, altogether expressive of that sort of good-humour which often lodges with a sudden and hasty temper. Pride and jealousy there was in his eye, for his life had been spent in asserting rights which were constantly liable to invasion; and the prompt, fiery, and resolute disposition of the man, had been kept constantly upon the alert by the circumstances of his situation. His long yellow hair was equally divided on the top of his head and upon his brow, and combed down on each side to the length of his shoulders: it had but little tendency to grey, although Cedric was approaching to his sixtieth year.

His dress was a tunic of forest green, furred at the throat and cuffs with what was called minever; a kind of fur inferior in quality to ermine, and formed, it is believed, of the skin of the grey squirrel. This doublet hung unbuttoned over a close dress of scarlet which sate tight to his body; he had breeches of the same, but they did not reach below the lower part of the thigh, leaving the knee exposed. His feet had sandals of the same fashion with the peasants, but of finer materials, and secured in the front with golden clasps. He had bracelets of gold upon his arms, and a broad collar of the same precious metal around his neck. About his waist he wore a richly-studded belt, in which was stuck a short straight two-edged sword, with a sharp point, so disposed as to hang almost perpendicularly by his side. Behind his seat was hung a scarlet cloth cloak lined with fur, and a cap of the same materials richly embroidered, which completed the dress of the opulent landholder when he chose to go forth. A short boar-spear, with a broad and bright steel head, also reclined against the back of his chair, which served him, when he walked abroad, for the purposes of a staff or of a weapon, as chance might require.

Several domestics, whose dress held various proportions betwixt the richness of their master's, and the coarse and simple attire of Gurth the swineherd, watched the looks and waited the commands of the Saxon dignitary. Two or three servants of a superior order stood behind their master upon the dais; the rest occupied the lower part of the hall. Other attendants there were of a different description; two or three large and shaggy greyhounds, such as were then employed in hunting the stag and wolf; as many slow-hounds of a large bony breed, with thick necks, large heads, and long ears; and one or two of the smaller dogs, now called terriers, which waited with impatience the arrival of the supper; but with the sagacious knowledge of physiognomy peculiar to their race, forbore to intrude upon the moody silence of their master, apprehensive probably of a small white truncheon which lay by Cedric's trencher, for the purpose of repelling the advances of his four-legged dependants. One grisly old wolf-dog alone, with the liberty of an indulged favourite, had planted himself close by the chair of state, and occasionally ventured to solicit notice by putting his large hairy head upon his master's knee, or pushing his nose into his hand. Even he was repelled by the stern command, "Down, Balder, down! I am not in the humour for foolery."

In fact, Cedric, as we have observed, was in no very placid state of mind. The Lady Rowena, who had been absent to attend an evening mass at a distant church, had but just returned, and was changing her garments, which had been wetted by the storm. There were as yet no tidings of Gurth and his charge, which should long since have been driven home from the forest; and such was the insecurity of the period, as to render it probable that the delay might be explained by some depredation of the outlaws, with whom the adjacent forest abounded, or by the violence of some neighbouring baron, whose consciousness of strength made him equally negligent of the laws of property. The matter was of consequence, for great part of the domestic wealth of the Saxon proprietors consisted in numerous herds of swine, especially in forest-land, where those animals easily found their food.

Besides these subjects of anxiety, the Saxon thane was impatient for the presence of his favourite clown Wamba, whose jests, such as they were, served for a sort of seasoning to his evening meal, and to the deep draughts of ale and wine with which he was in the habit of accompanying it. Add to all this, Cedric had fasted since noon, and

his usual supper hour was long past, a cause of irritation common to country squires, both in ancient and modern times. His displeasure was expressed in broken sentences, partly muttered to himself, partly addressed to the domestics who stood around; and particularly to his cupbearer, who offered him from time to time, as a sedative, a silver goblet filled with wine — "Why tarries the Lady Rowena?"

"She is but changing her head-gear," replied a female attendant, with as much confidence as the favourite lady's-maid usually answers the master of a modern family; "you would not wish her to sit down to the banquet in her hood and kirtle? and no lady within the shire can be quicker in arraying herself than my mistress."

This undeniable argument produced a sort of acquiescent umph! on the part of the Saxon, with the addition, "I wish her devotion may choose fair weather for the next visit to St John's Kirk;—but what, in the name of ten devlis," continued he, turning to the cupbearer, and raising his voice as if happy to have found a channel into which he might divert his indignation without fear or control — "what, in the name of ten devils, keeps Gurth so long a-field? I suppose we shall have an evil account of the herd; he was wont to be a faithful and cautious drudge, and I had destined him for something better; perchance I might even have made him one of my warders."[1]

Oswald the cupbearer modestly suggested, "that it was scarce an hour since the tolling of the curfew;" an ill-chosen apology, since it turned upon a topic so harsh to Saxon ears.

"The foul fiend," exclaimed Cedric, "take the curfew-bell, and the tyrannical bastard by whom it was devised, and the heartless slave who names it with a Saxon tongue to a Saxon ear! The curfew!" he added, pausing, "ay, the curfew; which compels true men to extinguish their lights, that thieves and robbers may work their deeds in darkness!—Ay, the curfew;—Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Philip de Malvoisin know the use of the curfew as well as William the Bastard himself, or e'er a Norman adventurer that fought at Hastings. I shall hear, I guess, that my property has been swept off to save from starving the hungry banditti, whom they cannot support but by theft and robbery. My faithful slave is murdered, and my goods are taken for a prey — and Wamba — where is Wamba? Said not some one he had gone forth with Gurth?"

Oswald replied in the affirmative.

"Ay! why this is better and better! he is carried off too, the Saxon fool, to serve the Norman lord. Fools are we all indeed that serve them, and fitter subjects for their scorn and laughter, than if we were born with but half our wits. But I will be avenged," he added, starting from his chair in impatience at the supposed injury, and catching hold of his boar-spear; "I will go with my complaint to the great council; I have friends, I have followers — man to man will I appeal the Norman to the lists; let him come in his plate and his mail, and all that can render cowardice bold; I have sent such a javelin as this through a stronger fence than three of their war shields! — Haply they think me old; but they shall find, alone and childless as I am, the blood of Hereward is in the veins of Cedric.—Ah, Wilfred, Wilfred!" he exclaimed in a lower tone, "couldst thou have ruled thine unreasonable passion, thy father had not been left in his age like the solitary oak that throws out its shattered and unprotected branches against the full sweep of the tempest!" The reflection seemed to conjure into sadness his irritated feelings. Replacing his javelin, he resumed his seat, bent his looks downward, and appeared to be absorbed in melancholy reflection.

From his musing, Cedric was suddenly awakened by the blast of a horn, which was replied to by the clamorous yells and barking of all the dogs in the hall, and some twenty or thirty which were quartered in other parts of the building. It cost some exercise of the white truncheon, well seconded by the exertions of the domestics, to silence this canine clamour.

"To the gate, knaves!" said the Saxon, hastily, as soon as the tumult was so much appeased that the dependants could hear his voice. "See what tidings that horn tells us of — to announce, I ween, some hership[2] and robbery which has been done upon my lands."

Returning in less than three minutes, a warder announced, "that the Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx, and the good knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, commander of the valiant and venerable order of Knights Templars, with a small retinue, requested hospitality and lodging for the night, being on their way to a tournament which was to be held not far from Ashby-de-la-Zouche, on the second day from the present."

"Aymer, the Prior Aymer! Brian de Bois-Guilbert!"—muttered Cedric; "Normans both;—but Norman or Saxon, the hospitality of Rotherwood must not be impeached; they are welcome, since they have chosen to halt—more welcome would they have been to have ridden farther on their way — But it were unworthy to murmur for a night's lodgings and a night's food; in the quality of guests, at least even Normans must suppress their insolence. — Go, Hundebert," he added, to a sort of major-domo who stood behind him with a white wand; "take six of the attendants, and introduce the strangers to the guests' lodging. Look after their horses and mules, and see their train lack nothing. Let them have change of vestments if they require it, and fire, and water to wash, and wine and ale; and bid the cooks add what they hastily can to our evening meal; and let it be put on the board when those strangers are ready to share it. Say to them, Hundebert, that Cedric would himself bid them welcome, but he is under a vow never to step more than three steps from the dais of his own hall to meet any who shares not the blood of Saxon royalty. Begone! see them carefully tended; let them not say in their pride, the Saxon churl has shewn at once his poverty and his avarice."

The major-domo departed with several attendants, to execute his master's commands. "The Prior Aymer!" repeated Cedric, looking to Oswald, "the

1 The original has *Cnichts*, by which the Saxons seem to have designated a class of military attendants, sometimes free, sometimes bondsmen, but always ranking above an ordinary domestic, whether in the royal household or in those of the aldermen and thanes. But the term *cnicht*, now spelt *knight*, having been received into the English language as equivalent to the Norman word *chevalier*, I have avoided using it in its more ancient sense, to prevent confusion. — L. T.

2 Pillage.

brother, if I mistake not, of Giles de Mauleverer, now lord of Middleham?"

Oswald made a respectful sign of assent. "His brother sits in the seat, and usurps the patrimony, of a better race, the race of Ulfgar of Middleham; but what Norman lord doth not the same? This Prior is, they say, a free and jovial priest, who loves the wine-cup and the bugle-horn better than bell and book: Good; let him come, he shall be welcome. How named ye the Templar?"

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"Bois-Guilbert!" said Cedric, still in the musing, half-arguing tone, which the habit of living among dependents had accustomed him to employ, and which resembled a man who talks to himself rather than to those around him—"Bois-Guilbert! that name has been spread wide both for good and evil. They say he is valiant as the bravest of his order; but stained with their usual vices, pride, arrogance, cruelty, and voluptuousness; a hard-hearted man, who knows neither fear of earth, nor awe of heaven. So say the few warriors who have returned from Palestine.—Well; it is but for one night; he shall be welcome too.—Oswald, broach the oldest wine-cask; place the best mead, the mightiest ale, the richest morat, the most sparkling cider, the most odoriferous pigments, upon the board; fill the largest horns[1]—Templars and Abbots love good wines and good measure.—Elgitha, let thy Lady Rowena know we shall not this night expect her in the hall, unless such be her especial pleasure."

"But it will be her especial pleasure," answered Elgitha, with great readiness, "for she is ever desirous to hear the latest news from Palestine."

Cedric darted at the forward damsel a glance of hasty resentment; but Rowena, and whatever belonged to her, were privileged and secure from his anger. He only replied, "Silence, maiden; thy tongue outruns thy discretion. Say my message to thy mistress, and let her do her pleasure. Here, at least, the descendant of Alfred still reigns a princess." Elgitha left the apartment.

"Palestine!" repeated the Saxon; "Palestine! how many ears are turned to the tales which dissolute crusaders, or hypocritical pilgrims, bring from that fatal land! I too might ask—I too might inquire—I too might listen with a beating heart to fables which the wily strollers devise to cheat us into hospitality—but no—The son who has disobeyed me is no longer mine; nor will I concern myself more for his fate than for that of the most worthless among the millions that ever shaped the cross on their shoulder, rushed into excess and blood-guiltiness, and called it an accomplishment of the will of God."

He knit his brows, and fixed his eyes for an instant on the ground; as he raised them, the folding doors at the bottom of the hall were cast wide, and, preceded by the major-domo with his wand, and four domestics bearing blazing torches, the guests of the evening entered the apartment.

[1] These were drinks used by the Saxons, as we are informed by Mr Turner: Morat was made of honey flavoured with the juice of mulberries; Pigment was a sweet and rich liquor, composed of wine highly spiced, and sweetened also with honey; the other liquors need no explanation.—L. T.

CHAPTER IV.

With sheep and shaggy goats the porkers bled,
And the proud steer was on the marble spread;
With fire prepared, they deal the morsels round,
Wine rosy bright the brimming goblets crown'd.
\- - - - - - -
Disposed apart, Ulysses shares the treat·
A trivet table and ignobler seat,
The Prince assigns——

Odyssey, Book 21.

The Prior Aymer had taken the opportunity afforded him, of changing his riding robe for one of yet more costly materials, over which he wore a cope curiously embroidered. Besides the massive golden signet ring, which marked his ecclesiastical dignity, his fingers, though contrary to the canon, were loaded with precious gems; his sandals were of the finest leather which was imported from Spain; his beard trimmed to as small dimensions as his order would possibly permit, and his shaven crown concealed by a scarlet cap richly embroidered.

The appearance of the Knight Templar was also changed; and, though less studiously bedecked with ornament, his dress was as rich, and his appearance far more commanding, than that of his companion. He had exchanged his shirt of mail for an under tunic of dark purple silk, garnished with furs, over which flowed his long robe of spotless white, in ample folds. The eight-pointed cross of his order was cut on the shoulder of his mantle in black velvet. The high cap no longer invested his brows, which were only shaded by short and thick curled hair of a raven blackness, corresponding to his unusually swart complexion. Nothing could be more gracefully majestic than his step and manner, had they not been marked by a predominant air of haughtiness, easily acquired by the exercise of unresisted authority.

These two dignified persons were followed by their respective attendants, and at a more humble distance by their guide, whose figure had nothing more remarkable than it derived from the usual weeds of a pilgrim. A cloak or mantle of coarse black serge, enveloped his whole body. It was in shape something like the cloak of a modern hussar, having similar flaps for covering the arms, and was called a *Sclaveyn*, or *Sclavonian*. Coarse sandals, bound with thongs, on his bare feet; a broad and shadowy hat, with cockle-shells stitched on its brim, and a long staff shod with iron, to the upper end of which was attached a branch of palm, completed the palmer's attire. He followed modestly the last of the train which entered the hall, and observing that the lower table scarce afforded room sufficient for the domestics of Cedric and the retinue of his guests, he withdrew to a settle placed beside and almost under one of the large chimneys, and seemed to employ himself in drying his garments, until the retreat of some one should make room at the board, or the hospitality of the steward should supply him with refreshments in the place he had chosen apart.

Cedric rose to receive his guests with an air of dignified hospitality, and, descending from the dais, or elevated part of his hall, made three steps towards them, and then awaited their approach.

"I grieve," he said, "reverend Prior, that my vow binds me to advance no farther upon this

floor of my fathers, even to receive such guests as you, and this valiant Knight of the Holy Temple. But my steward has expounded to you the cause of my seeming discourtesy. Let me also pray, that you will excuse my speaking to you in my native language, and that you will reply in the same if your knowledge of it permits; if not, I sufficiently understand Norman to follow your meaning."

"Vows," said the Abbot, "must be unloosed, worthy Franklin, or permit me rather to say, worthy Thane, though the title is antiquated. Vows are the knots which tie us to Heaven — they are the cords which bind the sacrifice to the horns of the altar, — and are therefore, — as I said before, — to be unloosened and discharged, unless our holy Mother Church shall pronounce the contrary. And respecting language, I willingly hold communication in that spoken by my respected grandmother, Hilda of Middleham, who died in odour of sanctity, little short, if we may presume to say so, of her glorious namesake, the blessed Saint Hilda of Whitby, God be gracious to her soul!"

When the Prior had ceased what he meant as a conciliatory harangue, his companion said briefly and emphatically, "I speak ever French, the language of King Richard and his nobles; but I understand English sufficiently to communicate with the natives of the country."

Cedric darted at the speaker one of those hasty and impatient glances, which comparisons between the two rival nations seldom failed to call forth; but, recollecting the duties of hospitality, he suppressed farther show of resentment, and, motioning with his hand, caused his guests to assume two seats a little lower than his own, but placed close beside him, and gave a signal that the evening meal should be placed upon the board.

While the attendants hastened to obey Cedric's commands, his eye distinguished Gurth the swineherd, who, with his companion Wamba, had just entered the hall. "Send these loitering knaves up hither," said the Saxon, impatiently. And when the culprits came before the dais, — "How comes it, villains! that you have loitered abroad so late as this? Hast thou brought home thy charge, sirrah Gurth, or hast thou left them to robbers and marauders?"

"The herd is safe, so please ye," said Gurth.

"But it does not please me, thou knave," said Cedric, "that I should be made to suppose otherwise for two hours, and sit here devising vengeance against my neighbours for wrongs they have not done me. I tell thee, shackles and the prison-house shall punish the next offence of this kind."

Gurth, knowing his master's irritable temper, attempted no exculpation; but the Jester, who could presume upon Cedric's tolerance, by virtue of his privileges as a fool, replied for them both: "In troth, uncle Cedric, you are neither wise nor reasonable to-night."

"How, sir?" said his master; "you shall to the porter's lodge, and taste of the discipline there, if you give your foolery such licence."

"First let your wisdom tell me," said Wamba, "is it just and reasonable to punish one person for the fault of another?"

"Certainly not, fool," answered Cedric.

"Then why should you shackle poor Gurth, uncle, for the fault of his dog Fangs? for I dare be sworn we lost not a minute by the way, when we had got our herd together, which Fangs did not manage until we heard the vesper-bell."

"Then hang up Fangs," said Cedric, turning hastily towards the swineherd, "if the fault is his, and get thee another dog."

"Under favour, uncle," said the Jester, "that were still somewhat on the bow-hand of fair justice; for it was no fault of Fangs that he was lame and could not gather the herd, but the fault of those that struck off two of his fore-claws, an operation for which, if the poor fellow had been consulted, he would scarce have given his voice."

"And who dared to lame an animal which belonged to my bondsman!" said the Saxon, kindling in wrath.

"Marry, that did old Hubert," said Wamba, "Sir Philip de Malvoisin's keeper of the chase. He caught Fangs strolling in the forest, and said he chased the deer contrary to his master's right, as warden of the walk."

"The foul fiend take Malvoisin," answered the Saxon, "and his keeper both! I will teach them that the wood was disforested in terms of the great Forest Charter. But enough of this. Go to, knave, go to thy place — and thou, Gurth, get thee another dog, and should the keeper dare to touch it, I will mar his archery; the curse of a coward on my head, if I strike not off the forefinger of his right hand! — he shall draw bowstring no more. — I crave your pardon, my worthy guests. I am beset here with neighbours that match your infidels, Sir Knight, in Holy Land. But your homely fare is before you; feed, and let welcome make amends for hard fare."

The feast, however, which was spread upon the board, needed no apologies from the lord of the mansion. Swine's flesh, dressed in several modes, appeared on the lower part of the board, as also that of fowls, deer, goats, and hares, and various kinds of fish, together with huge loaves and cakes of bread, and sundry confections made of fruits and honey. The smaller sorts of wild-fowl, of which there was abundance, were not served up in platters, but brought in upon small wooden spits or broaches, and offered by the pages and domestics who bore them, to each guest in succession, who cut from them such a portion as he pleased. Beside each person of rank was placed a goblet of silver; the lower board was accommodated with large drinking horns.

When the repast was about to commence, the major-domo, or steward, suddenly raising his wand, said aloud, — "Forbear! — Place for the Lady Rowena." A side-door at the upper end of the hall now opened behind the banquet table, and Rowena, followed by four female attendants, entered the apartment. Cedric, though surprised, and perhaps not altogether agreeably so, at his ward appearing in public on this occasion, hastened to meet her, and to conduct her, with respectful ceremony, to the elevated seat at his own right hand, appropriated to the lady of the mansion. All stood up to receive her; and, replying to their courtesy by a mute gesture of salutation, she moved gracefully forward to assume her place at the board. Ere she had time to do so, the Templar whispered to the Prior, "I shall wear no collar of gold of yours at the tournament. The Chian wine is your own."

"Said I not so?" answered the Prior; "but check your raptures, the Franklin observes you."

Unheeding this remonstrance, and accustomed

only to act upon the immediate impulse of his own wishes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert kept his eyes riveted on the Saxon beauty, more striking perhaps to his imagination, because differing widely from those of the Eastern sultanas.

Formed in the best proportions of her sex, Rowena was tall in stature, yet not so much so as to attract observation on account of superior height. Her complexion was exquisitely fair, but the noble cast of her head and features prevented the insipidity which sometimes attaches to fair beauties. Her clear blue eye, which sate enshrined beneath a graceful eyebrow of brown sufficiently marked to give expression to the forehead, seemed capable to kindle as well as melt, to command as well as to beseech. If mildness were the more natural expression of such a combination of features, it was plain, that in the present instance, the exercise of habitual superiority, and the reception of general homage, had given to the Saxon lady a loftier character, which mingled with and qualified that bestowed by nature. Her profuse hair, of a colour betwixt brown and flaxen, was arranged in a fanciful and graceful manner in numerous ringlets, to form which art had probably aided nature. These locks were braided with gems, and, being worn at full length, intimated the noble birth and free-born condition of the maiden. A golden chain, to which was attached a small reliquary of the same metal, hung round her neck. She wore bracelets on her arms, which were bare. Her dress was an under-gown and kirtle of pale sea-green silk, over which hung a long loose robe, which reached to the ground, having very wide sleeves, which came down, however, very little below the elbow. This robe was crimson, and manufactured out of the very finest wool. A veil of silk, interwoven with gold, was attached to the upper part of it, which could be, at the wearer's pleasure, either drawn over the face and bosom after the Spanish fashion, or disposed as a sort of drapery round the shoulders.

When Rowena perceived the Knight Templar's eyes bent on her with an ardour, that, compared with the dark caverns under which they moved, gave them the effect of lighted charcoal, she drew with dignity the veil around her face, as an intimation that the determined freedom of his glance was disagreeable. Cedric saw the motion and its cause. 'Sir Templar," said he, "the cheeks of our Saxon maidens have seen too little of the sun to enable them to bear the fixed glance of a crusader."

"If I have offended," replied Sir Brian, "I crave your pardon, — that is, I crave the Lady Rowena's pardon, — for my humility will carry me no lower."

"The Lady Rowena," said the Prior, "has punished us all, in chastising the boldness of my friend. Let me hope she will be less cruel to the splendid train which are to meet at the tournament."

"Our going thither," said Cedric, "is uncertain. I love not these vanities, which were unknown to my fathers when England was free."

"Let us hope, nevertheless," said the Prior, "our company may determine you to travel thitherward; when the roads are so unsafe, the escort of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is not to be despised."

"Sir Prior," answered the Saxon, "wheresoever I have travelled in this land, I have hitherto found myself, with the assistance of my good sword and faithful followers, in no respect needful of other aid. At present, if we indeed journey to Ashby-de-la-Zouche, we do so with my noble neighbour and countryman Athelstane of Coningsburgh, and with such a train as would set outlaws and feudal enemies at defiance. —— I drink to you, Sir Prior, in this cup of wine, which I trust your taste will approve, and I thank you for your courtesy. Should you be so rigid in adhering to monastic rule," he added, "as to prefer your acid preparation of milk, I hope you will not strain courtesy to do me reason."

"Nay," said the Priest, laughing, "it is only in our abbey that we confine ourselves to the *lac dulce* or the *lac acidum* either. Conversing with the world, we use the world's fashions, and therefore I answer your pledge in this honest wine, and leave the weaker liquor to my lay-brother."

"And I," said the Templar, filling his goblet, "drink wassail to the fair Rowena; for since her namesake introduced the word into England, has never been one more worthy of such a tribute. By my faith, I could pardon the unhappy Vortigern, had he half the cause that we now witness, for making shipwreck of his honour and his kingdom."

"I will spare your courtesy, Sir Knight," said Rowena with dignity, and without unveiling herself; "or rather I will tax it so far as to require of you the latest news from Palestine, a theme more agreeable to our English ears than the compliments which your French breeding teaches."

"I have little of importance to say, lady," answered Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "excepting the confirmed tidings of a truce with Saladin."

He was interrupted by Wamba, who had taken his appropriated seat upon a chair, the back of which was decorated with two ass's ears, and which was placed about two steps behind that of his master, who, from time to time, supplied him with victuals from his own trencher; a favour, however, which the Jester shared with the favourite dogs, of whom, as we have already noticed, there were several in attendance. Here sat Wamba, with a small table before him, his heels tucked up against the bar of the chair, his cheeks sucked up so as to make his jaws resemble a pair of nut-crackers, and his eyes half-shut, yet watching with alertness every opportunity to exercise his licensed foolery.

"These truces with the infidels," he exclaimed, without caring how suddenly he interrupted the stately Templar, "make an old man of me!"

"Go to, knave, how so?" said Cedric, his features prepared to receive favourably the expected jest.

"Because," answered Wamba, "I remember three of them in my day, each of which was to endure for the course of fifty years; so that, by computation, I must be at least a hundred and fifty years old."

"I will warrant you against dying of old age, however," said the Templar, who now recognized his friend of the forest; "I will assure you from all deaths but a violent one, if you give such directions to wayfarers, as you did this night to the Prior and me."

"How, sirrah!" said Cedric, "misdirect travellers? We must have you whipt; you are at least as much rogue as fool.'

"I pray thee, uncle," answered the Jester, "let my folly, for once, protect my roguery. I did but make a mistake between my right hand and my

left; and he might have pardoned a greater, who took a fool for his counsellor and guide."

Conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the porter's page, who announced that there was a stranger at the gate, imploring admittance and hospitality.

"Admit him," said Cedric, "be he who or what he may;—a night like that which roars without, compels even wild animals to herd with tame, and to seek the protection of man, their mortal foe, rather than perish by the elements. Let his wants be ministered to with all care—look to it, Oswald."

And the steward left the banqueting hall to see the commands of his patron obeyed.

CHAPTER V.

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?

Merchant of Venice.

Oswald, returning, whispered into the ear of his master, "It is a Jew, who calls himself Isaac of York; is it fit I should marshal him into the hall!"

"Let Gurth do thine office, Oswald," said Wamba with his usual effrontery; "the swineherd will be a fit usher to the Jew."

"Saint Mary!" said the Abbot, crossing himself, "an unbelieving Jew, and admitted into this presence!"

"A dog Jew," echoed the Templar, "to approach a defender of the Holy Sepulchre!"

"By my faith," said Wamba, "it would seem the Templars love the Jews' inheritance better than they do their company."

"Peace, my worthy guests," said Cedric; "my hospitality must not be bounded by your dislikes. If Heaven bore with the whole nation of stiff-necked unbelievers for more years than a layman can number, we may endure the presence of one Jew for a few hours. But I constrain no man to converse or to feed with him. Let him have a board and a morsel apart,—unless," he said smiling, "these turban'd strangers will admit his society."

"Sir Franklin," answered the Templar, "my Saracen slaves are true Moslems, and scorn as much as any Christian to hold intercourse with a Jew."

"Now, in faith," said Wamba, "I cannot see that the worshippers of Mahound and Termagaunt have so greatly the advantage over the people once chosen of Heaven."

"He shall sit with thee, Wamba," said Cedric; "the fool and the knave will be well met."

"The fool," answered Wamba, raising the relics of a gammon of bacon, "will take care to erect a bulwark against the knave."

"Hush," said Cedric, "for here he comes."

Introduced with little ceremony, and advancing with fear and hesitation, and many a bow of deep humility, a tall thin old man, who, however, had lost by the habit of stooping much of his actual height, approached the lower end of the board. His features, keen and regular, with an aquiline nose, and piercing black eyes; his high and wrinkled forehead, and long grey hair and beard, would have been considered as handsome, had they not been the marks of a physiognomy peculiar to a race, which, during those dark ages, was alike detested by the credulous and prejudiced vulgar, and persecuted by the greedy and rapacious nobility, and who, perhaps, owing to that very hatred and persecution, had adopted a national character, in which there was much, to say the least, mean and unamiable.

The Jew's dress, which appeared to have suffered considerably from the storm, was a plain russet cloak of many folds, covering a dark purple tunic. He had large boots lined with fur, and a belt around his waist, which sustained a small knife, together with a case for writing materials, but no weapon. He wore a high square yellow cap of a peculiar fashion, assigned to his nation to distinguish them from Christians, and which he doffed with great humility at the door of the hall.

The reception of this person in the hall of Cedric the Saxon, was such as might have satisfied the most prejudiced enemy of the tribes of Israel. Cedric himself coldly nodded in answer to the Jew's repeated salutations, and signed to him to take place at the lower end of the table, where, however, no one offered to make room for him. On the contrary, as he passed along the file, casting a timid supplicating glance, and turning towards each of those who occupied the lower end of the board, the Saxon domestics squared their shoulders, and continued to devour their supper with great perseverance, paying not the least attention to the wants of the new guest. The attendants of the Abbot crossed themselves, with looks of pious horror, and the very heathen Saracens, as Isaac drew near them, curled up their whiskers with indignation, and laid their hands on their poniards, as if ready to rid themselves by the most desperate means from the apprehended contamination of his nearer approach.

Probably the same motives which induced Cedric to open his hall to this son of a rejected people, would have made him insist on his attendants receiving Isaac with more courtesy. But the Abbot had, at this moment, engaged him in a most interesting discussion on the breed and character of his favourite hounds, which he would not have interrupted for matters of much greater importance than that of a Jew going to bed supperless. While Isaac thus stood an outcast in the present society, like his people among the nations, looking in vain for welcome or resting place, the pilgrim who sat by the chimney took compassion upon him, and resigned his seat, saying briefly, "Old man, my garments are dried, my hunger is appeased, thou art both wet and fasting." So saying, he gathered together, and brought to a flame, the decaying brands which lay scattered on the ample hearth; took from the larger board a mess of pottage and seethed kid, placed it upon the small table at which he had himself supped, and, without waiting the Jew's thanks, went to the other side of the hall;—whether from unwillingness to hold more close communication with the object of his benevolence, or from a wish to draw near to the upper end of the table, seemed uncertain.

Had there been painters in those days capable to execute such a subject, the Jew, as he bent his

withered form, and expanded his chilled and trembling hands over the fire, would have formed no bad emblematical personification of the Winter season. Having dispelled the cold, he turned eagerly to the smoking mess which was placed before him, and ate with a haste and an apparent relish, that seemed to betoken long abstinence from food.

Meanwhile the Abbot and Cedric continued their discourse upon hunting; the Lady Rowena seemed engaged in conversation with one of her attendant females; and the haughty Templar, whose eye wandered from the Jew to the Saxon beauty, revolved in his mind thoughts which appeared deeply to interest him.

"I marvel, worthy Cedric," said the Abbot, as their discourse proceeded, "that, great as your predilection is for your own manly language, you do not receive the Norman-French into your favour, so far at least as the mystery of woodcraft and hunting is concerned. Surely no tongue is so rich in the various phrases which the field-sports demand, or furnishes means to the experienced woodman so well to express his jovial art."

"Good Father Aymer," said the Saxon, "be it known to you, I care not for those over-sea refinements, without which I can well enough take my pleasure in the woods. I can wind my horn, though I call not the blast either a *recheate* or a *morte*—I can cheer my dogs on the prey, and I can flay and quarter the animal when it is brought down, without using the new-fangled jargon of *curee, arbor, nombles*, and all the babble of the fabulous Sir Tristrem."[1]

"The French," said the Templar, raising his voice with the presumptuous and authoritative tone which he used upon all occasions, "is not only the natural language of the chase, but that of love and war, in which ladies should be won and enemies defied."

"Pledge me in a cup of wine, Sir Templar," said Cedric, "and fill another to the Abbot, while I look back some thirty years to tell you another tale. As Cedric the Saxon then was, his plain English tale needed no garnish from French troubadours, when it was told in the ear of beauty; and the field of Northallerton, upon the day of the Holy Standard, could tell whether the Saxon war-cry was not heard as far within the ranks of the Scottish host as the *cri de guerre* of the boldest Norman baron. To the memory of the brave who fought there!—Pledge me, my guests." He drank deep, and went on with increasing warmth. "Ay, that was a day of cleaving of shields, when a hundred banners were bent forwards over the heads of the valiant, and blood flowed round like water, and death was held better than flight. A Saxon bard had called it a feast of the swords—a gathering of the eagles to the prey—the clashing of bills upon shield and helmet, the shouting of battle more joyful than the clamour of a bridal. But our bards are no more," he said; "our deeds are lost in those of another race—our language—our very name—is hastening to decay, and none mourns for it save one solitary old man—Cup-bearer! knave, fill the goblets—To the strong in arms, Sir Templar, be their race or language what it will, who now bear them best in Palestine among the champions of the Cross!"

"It becomes not one wearing this badge to answer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert; "yet to whom, besides the sworn Champions of the Holy Sepulchre, can the palm be assigned among the champions of the Cross?"

"To the Knights Hospitallers," said the Abbot; "I have a brother of their order."

"I impeach not their fame," said the Templar; "nevertheless——"

"I think, friend Cedric," said Wamba, interfering, "that had Richard of the Lion's Heart been wise enough to have taken a fool's advice, he might have staid at home with his merry Englishmen, and left the recovery of Jerusalem to those same Knights who had most to do with the loss of it."

"Were there, then, none in the English army," said the Lady Rowena, "whose names are worthy to be mentioned with the Knights of the Temple, and of St John?"

"Forgive me, lady," replied De Bois-Guilbert; "the English monarch did, indeed, bring to Palestine a host of gallant warriors, second only to those whose breasts have been the unceasing bulwark of that blessed land."

"Second to NONE," said the Pilgrim, who had stood near enough to hear, and had listened to this conversation with marked impatience. All turned toward the spot from whence this unexpected asseveration was heard. "I say," repeated the Pilgrim in a firm and strong voice, "that the English chivalry were second to NONE who ever drew sword in defence of the Holy Land. I say besides, for I saw it, that King Richard himself, and five of his knights, held a tournament after the taking of St John-de-Acre, as challengers against all comers. I say, that, on that day, each knight ran three courses, and cast to the ground three antagonists. I add, that seven of these assailants were Knights of the Temple—and Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert well knows the truth of what I tell you."

It is impossible for language to describe the bitter scowl of rage which rendered yet darker the swarthy countenance of the Templar. In the extremity of his resentment and confusion his quivering fingers griped towards the handle of his sword, and perhaps only withdrew, from the consciousness that no act of violence could be safely executed in that place and presence. Cedric, whose feelings were all of a right onward and simple kind, and were seldom occupied by more than one object at once, omitted, in the joyous glee with which he heard of the glory of his countrymen, to remark the angry confusion of his guest; "I would give thee this golden bracelet, Pilgrim," he said, "couldst thou tell me the names of those knights who upheld so gallantly the renown of merry England."

"That will I do blithely," replied the Pilgrim, "and without guerdon; my oath, for a time, pro hibits me from touching gold."

"I will wear the bracelet for you, if you will, friend Palmer," said Wamba.

"The first in honour as in arms, in renown as in place," said the Pilgrim, "was the brave Richard, King of England."

"I forgive him," said Cedric; "I forgive him his descent from the tyrant Duke William."

"The Earl of Leicester was the second," continued the Pilgrim; "Sir Thomas Multon of Gilsland was the third."

[1] See Note C. *Language of the Chase.*

"Of Saxon descent, he at least," said Cedric, with exultation.

"Sir Foulk Doilly the fourth," proceeded the Pilgrim.

"Saxon also, at least by the mother's side," continued Cedric, who listened with the utmost eagerness, and forgot, in part at least, his hatred to the Normans, in the common triumph of the King of England and his islanders. "And who was the fifth?" he demanded.

"The fifth was Sir Edwin Turneham."

"Genuine Saxon, by the soul of Hengist!" shouted Cedric—"And the sixth?" he continued with eagerness—"how name you the sixth?"

"The sixth," said the Palmer, after a pause, in which he seemed to recollect himself, "was a young knight of lesser renown and lower rank, assumed into that honourable company, less to aid their enterprise than to make up their number—his name dwells not in my memory."

"Sir Palmer," said Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert scornfully, "this assumed forgetfulness, after so much has been remembered, comes too late to serve your purpose. I will myself tell the name of the knight before whose lance fortune and my horse's fault occasioned my falling—it was the Knight of Ivanhoe; nor was there one of the six that, for his years, had more renown in arms.—Yet this will I say, and loudly—that were he in England, and durst repeat, in this week's tournament, the challenge of St John-de-Acre, I, mounted and armed as I now am, would give him every advantage of weapons, and abide the result."

"Your challenge would be soon answered," replied the Palmer, "were your antagonist near you. As the matter is, disturb not the peaceful hall with vaunts of the issue of a conflict, which you well know cannot take place. If Ivanhoe ever returns from Palestine, I will be his surety that he meets you."

"A goodly security!" said the Knight Templar; "and what do you proffer as a pledge?"

"This reliquary," said the Palmer, taking a small ivory box from his bosom, and crossing himself, "containing a portion of the true cross, brought from the Monastery of Mount Carmel."

The Prior of Jorvaulx crossed himself, and repeated a pater noster, in which all devoutly joined, excepting the Jew, the Mahomedans, and the Templar; the latter of whom, without vailing his bonnet, or testifying any reverence for the alleged sanctity of the relic, took from his neck a gold chain, which he flung on the board, saying—"Let Prior Aymer hold my pledge and that of this nameless vagrant, in token that when the Knight of Ivanhoe comes within the four seas of Britain, he underlies the challenge of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, which, if he answer not, I will proclaim him as a coward on the walls of every Temple Court in Europe."

"It will not need," said the Lady Rowena, breaking silence; "My voice shall be heard, if no other in this hall is raised in behalf of the absent Ivanhoe. I affirm he will meet fairly every honourable challenge. Could my weak warrant add security to the inestimable pledge of this holy pilgrim, I would pledge name and fame that Ivanhoe gives this proud knight the meeting he desires."

A crowd of conflicting emotions seemed to have occupied Cedric, and kept him silent during this discussion. Gratified pride, resentment, embarrassment, chased each other over his broad and open brow, like the shadow of clouds drifting over a harvest-field; while his attendants, on whom the name of the sixth knight seemed to produce an effect almost electrical, hung in suspense upon their master's looks. But when Rowena spoke, the sound of her voice seemed to startle him from his silence.

"Lady," said Cedric, "this beseems not; were farther pledge necessary, I myself, offended, and justly offended, as I am, would yet gage my honour for the honour of Ivanhoe. But the wager of battle is complete, even according to the fantastic fashions of Norman chivalry—Is it not, Father Aymer?"

"It is," replied the Prior; "and the blessed relic and rich chain will I bestow safely in the treasury of our convent, until the decision of this warlike challenge."

Having thus spoken, he crossed himself again and again, and after many genuflections and muttered prayers, he delivered the reliquary to Brother Ambrose, his attendant monk, while he himself swept up with less ceremony, but perhaps with no less internal satisfaction, the golden chain, and bestowed it in a pouch lined with perfumed leather, which opened under his arm. "And now, Sir Cedric," he said, "my ears are chiming vespers with the strength of your good wine—permit us another pledge to the welfare of the Lady Rowena, and indulge us with liberty to pass to our repose."

"By the rood of Bromholme," said the Saxon, "you do but small credit to your fame, Sir Prior! Report speaks you a bonny monk, that would hear the matin chime ere he quitted his bowl; and, old as I am, I feared to have shame in encountering you. But, by my faith, a Saxon boy of twelve, in my time, would not so soon have relinquished his goblet."

The Prior had his own reasons, however, for persevering in the course of temperance which he had adopted. He was not only a professional peace-maker, but from practice a hater of all feuds and brawls. It was not altogether from a love to his neighbour, or to himself, or from a mixture of both. On the present occasion, he had an instinctive apprehension of the fiery temper of the Saxon, and saw the danger that the reckless and presumptuous spirit, of which his companion had already given so many proofs, might at length produce some disagreeable explosion. He therefore gently insinuated the incapacity of the native of any other country to engage in the genial conflict of the bowl with the hardy and strong-headed Saxons; something he mentioned, but slightly, about his own holy character, and ended by pressing his proposal to depart to repose.

The grace-cup was accordingly served round, and the guests, after making deep obeisance to their landlord and to the Lady Rowena, arose and mingled in the hall, while the heads of the family, by separate doors, retired with their attendants.

"Unbelieving dog," said the Templar to Isaac the Jew, as he passed him in the throng, "dost thou bend thy course to the tournament?"

"I do so propose," replied Isaac, bowing in all humility, "if it please your reverend valour."

"Ay," said the Knight, "to gnaw the bowels of our nobles with usury, and to gull women and

boys with gauds and toys — I warrant thee store of shekels in thy Jewish scrip."

"Not a shekel, not a silver penny, not a halfling — so help me the God of Abraham!" said the Jew, clasping his hands; "I go but to seek the assistance of some brethren of my tribe to aid me to pay the fine which the Exchequer of the Jews[1] have imposed upon me — Father Jacob be my speed! I am an impoverished wretch — the very gaberdine I wear is borrowed from Reuben of Tadcaster."

The Templar smiled sourly as he replied, "Beshrew thee for a false-hearted liar!" and passing onward, as if disdaining farther conference, he communed with his Moslem slaves in a language unknown to the bystanders. The poor Israelite seemed so staggered by the address of the military monk, that the Templar had passed on to the extremity of the hall ere he raised his head from the humble posture which he had assumed, so far as to be sensible of his departure. And when he did look around, it was with the astonished air of one at whose feet a thunderbolt has just burst, and who hears still the astounding report ringing in his ears.

The Templar and Prior were shortly after marshalled to their sleeping apartments by the steward and the cupbearer, each attended by two torch-bearers and two servants carrying refreshments, while servants of inferior condition indicated to their retinue and to the other guests their respective places of repose.

CHAPTER VII.

> To buy his favour I extend this friendship:
> If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
> And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.
> *Merchant of Venice.*

As the Palmer, lighted by a domestic with a torch, passed through the intricate combination of apartments of this large and irregular mansion, the cupbearer coming behind him whispered in his ear, that if he had no objection to a cup of good mead in his apartment, there were many domestics in that family who would gladly hear the news he had brought from the Holy Land, and particularly that which concerned the Knight of Ivanhoe. Wamba presently appeared to urge the same request, observing that a cup after midnight was worth three after curfew. Without disputing a maxim urged by such grave authority, the Palmer thanked them for their courtesy, but observed that he had included in his religious vow, an obligation never to speak in the kitchen on matters which were prohibited in the hall. "That vow," said Wamba to the cupbearer, "would scarce suit a serving-man."

The cupbearer shrugged up his shoulders in displeasure. "I thought to have lodged him in the solere chamber," said he; "but since he is so unsocial to Christians, e'en let him take the next stall to Isaac the Jew's.—Anwold," said he to the torch-bearer, "carry the Pilgrim to the southern cell. — I give you good-night," he added, "Sir Palmer, with small thanks for short courtesy."

"Good-night, and Our Lady's benison," said the Palmer, with composure; and his guide moved forward.

In a small antechamber, into which several doors opened, and which was lighted by a small iron lamp, they met a second interruption from the waiting-maid of Rowena, who, saying in a tone of authority, that her mistress desired to speak with the Palmer, took the torch from the hand of Anwold, and, bidding him await her return, made a sign to the Palmer to follow. Apparently he did not think it proper to decline this invitation as he had done the former; for, though his gesture indicated some surprise at the summons, he obeyed it without answer or remonstrance.

A short passage, and an ascent of seven steps, each of which was composed of a solid beam of oak, led him to the apartment of the Lady Rowena, the rude magnificence of which corresponded to the respect which was paid to her by the lord of the mansion. The walls were covered with embroidered hangings, on which different-coloured silks, interwoven with gold and silver threads, had been employed with all the art of which the age was capable, to represent the sports of hunting and hawking. The bed was adorned with the same rich tapestry, and surrounded with curtains dyed with purple. The seats had also their stained coverings, and one, which was higher than the rest, was accommodated with a footstool of ivory, curiously carved.

No fewer than four silver candelabras, holding great waxen torches, served to illuminate this apartment. Yet let not modern beauty envy the magnificence of a Saxon princess. The walls of the apartment were so ill finished and so full of crevices, that the rich hangings shook to the night blast, and, in despite of a sort of screen intended to protect them from the wind, the flame of the torches streamed sideways into the air, like the unfurled pennon of a chieftain. Magnificence there was, with some rude attempt at taste; but of comfort there was little, and, being unknown, it was unmissed.

The Lady Rowena, with three of her attendants standing at her back, and arranging her hair ere she lay down to rest, was seated in the sort of throne already mentioned, and looked as if born to exact general homage. The Pilgrim acknowledged her claim to it by a low genuflection.

"Rise, Palmer," said she graciously. "The defender of the absent has a right to favourable reception from all who value truth, and honour manhood." She then said to her train, "Retire, excepting only Elgitha; I would speak with this holy Pilgrim."

The maidens, without leaving the apartment, retired to its farther extremity, and sat down on a small bench against the wall, where they remained mute as statues, though at such a distance that their whispers could not have interrupted the conversation of their mistress.

"Pilgrim," said the lady, after a moment's pause, during which she seemed uncertain how to address him, "you this night mentioned a name — I mean," she said, with a degree of effort, "the name of Ivanhoe, in the halls where by nature and kindred it should have sounded most acceptably; and yet, such is the perverse course of fate, that of many whose hearts must have throbbed at the

[1] In those days the Jews were subjected to an Exchequer, specially dedicated to that purpose, and which laid them under the most exorbitant impositions. — L. T.

sound, I only dare ask you where, and in what condition, you left him of whom you spoke?—We heard, that, having remained in Palestine, on account of his impaired health, after the departure of the English army, he had experienced the persecution of the French faction, to whom the Templars are known to be attached."

"I know little of the Knight of Ivanhoe," answered the Palmer, with a troubled voice. "I would I knew him better, since you, lady, are interested in his fate. He hath, I believe, surmounted the persecution of his enemies in Palestine, and is on the eve of returning to England, where you, lady, must know better than I, what is his chance of happiness."

The Lady Rowena sighed deeply, and asked more particularly when the Knight of Ivanhoe might be expected in his native country, and whether he would not be exposed to great dangers by the road. On the first point, the Palmer professed ignorance; on the second, he said that the voyage might be safely made by the way of Venice and Genoa, and from thence through France to England. "Ivanhoe," he said, "was so well acquainted with the language and manners of the French, that there was no fear of his incurring any hazard during that part of his travels."

"Would to God," said the Lady Rowena, "he were here safely arrived, and able to bear arms in the approaching tournay, in which the chivalry of this land are expected to display their address and valour. Should Athelstane of Coningsburgh obtain the prize, Ivanhoe is like to hear evil tidings when he reaches England.—How looked he, stranger, when you last saw him? Had disease laid her hand heavy upon his strength and comeliness?"

"He was darker," said the Palmer, "and thinner, than when he came from Cyprus in the train of Cœur-de-Lion, and care seemed to sit heavy on his brow; but I approached not his presence, because he is unknown to me."

"He will," said the lady, "I fear, find little in his native land to clear those clouds from his countenance. Thanks, good Pilgrim, for your information concerning the companion of my childhood.—Maidens," she said, "draw near—offer the sleeping cup to this holy man, whom I will no longer detain from repose."

One of the maidens presented a silver cup, containing a rich mixture of wine and spice, which Rowena barely put to her lips. It was then offered to the Palmer, who, after a low obeisance, tasted a few drops.

"Accept this alms, friend," continued the lady, offering a piece of gold, "in acknowledgment of thy painful travail, and of the shrines thou hast visited."

The Palmer received the boon with another low reverence, and followed Edwina out of the apartment.

In the anteroom he found his attendant Anwold, who, taking the torch from the hand of the waiting-maid, conducted him with more haste than ceremony to an exterior and ignoble part of the building, where a number of small apartments, or rather cells, served for sleeping places to the lower order of domestics, and to strangers of mean degree.

"In which of these sleeps the Jew?" said the Pilgrim.

"The unbelieving dog," answered Anwold, "kennels in the cell next your holiness.—St Dunstan, how it must be scraped and cleansed ere it be again fit for a Christian!"

"And where sleeps Gurth the swineherd?" said the stranger.

"Gurth," replied the bondsman, "sleeps in the cell on your right, as the Jew on that to your left; you serve to keep the child of circumcision separate from the abomination of his tribe. You might have occupied a more honourable place had you accepted of Oswald's invitation."

"It is as well as it is," said the Palmer; "the company, even of a Jew, can hardly spread contamination through an oaken partition."

So saying, he entered the cabin allotted to him, and taking the torch from the domestic's hand, thanked him, and wished him good-night. Having shut the door of his cell, he placed the torch in a candlestick made of wood, and looked around his sleeping apartment, the furniture of which was of the most simple kind. It consisted of a rude wooden stool, and still ruder hutch or bed-frame, stuffed with clean straw, and accommodated with two or three sheepskins by way of bed-clothes.

The Palmer, having extinguished his torch, threw himself, without taking off any part of his clothes, on this rude couch, and slept, or at least retained his recumbent posture, till the earliest sunbeams found their way through the little grated window, which served at once to admit both air and light to his uncomfortable cell. He then started up, and after repeating his matins, and adjusting his dress, he left it, and entered that of Isaac the Jew, lifting the latch as gently as he could.

The inmate was lying in troubled slumber upon a couch similar to that on which the Palmer himself had passed the night. Such parts of his dress as the Jew had laid aside on the preceding evening, were disposed carefully around his person, as if to prevent the hazard of their being carried off during his slumbers. There was a trouble on his brow amounting almost to agony. His hands and arms moved convulsively, as if struggling with the nightmare; and besides several ejaculations in Hebrew, the following were distinctly heard in the Norman-English, or mixed language of the country: "For the sake of the God of Abraham, spare an unhappy old man! I am poor, I am penniless—should your irons wrench my limbs asunder, I could not gratify you!"

The Palmer awaited not the end of the Jew's vision, but stirred him with his pilgrim's staff. The touch probably associated, as is usual, with some of the apprehensions excited by his dream; for the old man started up, his grey hair standing almost erect upon his head, and huddling some part of his garments about him, while he held the detached pieces with the tenacious grasp of a falcon, he fixed upon the Palmer his keen black eyes, expressive of wild surprise and of bodily apprehension.

"Fear nothing from me, Isaac," said the Palmer, "I come as your friend."

"The God of Israel requite you," said the Jew, greatly relieved; "I dreamed—But Father Abraham be praised, it was but a dream." Then, collecting himself, he added in his usual tone, "And what may it be your pleasure to want at so early an hour with the poor Jew?"

"It is to tell you," said the Palmer, "that if you leave not this mansion instantly, and travel not with some haste, your journey may prove a dangerous one."

"Holy father!" said the Jew, "whom could it interest to endanger so poor a wretch as I am?"

"The purpose you can best guess," said the Pilgrim; "but rely on this, that when the Templar crossed the hall yesternight, he spoke to his Mussulman slaves in the Saracen language, which I well understand, and charged them this morning to watch the journey of the Jew, to seize upon him when at a convenient distance from the mansion, and to conduct him to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin, or to that of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

It is impossible to describe the extremity of terror which seized upon the Jew at this information, and seemed at once to overpower his whole faculties. His arms fell down to his sides, and his head drooped on his breast, his knees bent under his weight, every nerve and muscle of his frame seemed to collapse and lose its energy, and he sunk at the foot of the Palmer, not in the fashion of one who intentionally stoops, kneels, or prostrates himself to excite compassion, but like a man borne down on all sides by the pressure of some invisible force, which crushes him to the earth without the power of resistance.

"Holy God of Abraham!" was his first exclamation, folding and elevating his wrinkled hands, but without raising his grey head from the pavement; "O, holy Moses! O blessed Aaron! the dream is not dreamed for nought, and the vision cometh not in vain! I feel their irons already tear my sinews! I feel the rack pass over my body like the saws, and harrows, and axes of iron over the men of Rabbah, and of the cities of the children of Ammon!"

"Stand up, Isaac, and hearken to me," said the Palmer, who viewed the extremity of his distress with a compassion in which contempt was largely mingled; "you have cause for your terror, considering how your brethren have been used, in order to extort from them their hoards, both by princes and nobles; but stand up, I say, and I will point out to you the means of escape. Leave this mansion instantly, while its inmates sleep sound after the last night's revel. I will guide you by the secret paths of the forest, known as well to me as to any forester that ranges it, and I will not leave you till you are under safe conduct of some chief or baron going to the tournament, whose good-will you have probably the means of securing."

As the ears of Isaac received the hopes of escape which this speech intimated, he began gradually, and inch by inch, as it were, to raise himself up from the ground, until he fairly rested upon his knees, throwing back his long grey hair and beard, and fixing his keen black eyes upon the Palmer's face, with a look expressive at once of hope and fear, not unmingled with suspicion. But when he heard the concluding part of the sentence, his original terror appeared to revive in full force, and he dropt once more on his face, exclaiming, "*I* possess the means of securing good-will! alas! there is but one road to the favour of a Christian, and how can the poor Jew find it, whom extortions have already reduced to the misery of Lazarus?" Then, as if suspicion had overpowered his other feelings, he suddenly exclaimed, "For the love of God, young man, betray me not — for the sake of the Great Father who made us all, Jew as well as Gentile, Israelite and Ishmaelite — do me no treason! I have not means to secure the good-will of a Christian beggar, were he rating it at a single penny." As he spoke these last words, he raised himself, and grasped the Palmer's mantle with a look of the most earnest entreaty. The pilgrim extricated himself, as if there were contamination in the touch.

"Wert thou loaded with all the wealth of thy tribe," he said, "what interest have I to injure thee! — In this dress I am vowed to poverty, nor do I change it for aught save a horse and a coat of mail. Yet think not that I care for thy company, or propose myself advantage by it; remain here if thou wilt — Cedric the Saxon may protect thee."

"Alas!" said the Jew, "he will not let me travel in his train — Saxon or Norman will be equally ashamed of the poor Israelite; and to travel by myself through the domains of Philip de Malvoisin and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf — Good youth, I will go with you! — Let us haste — let us gird up our loins — let us flee! — Here is thy staff, why wilt thou tarry?"

"I tarry not," said the Pilgrim, giving way to the urgency of his companion; "but I must secure the means of leaving this place — follow me."

He led the way to the adjoining cell, which, as the reader is apprised, was occupied by Gurth the swineherd. — "Arise, Gurth," said the Pilgrim, "arise quickly. Undo the postern gate, and let out the Jew and me."

Gurth, whose occupation, though now held so mean, gave him as much consequence in Saxon England as that of Eumæus in Ithaca, was offended at the familiar and commanding tone assumed by the Palmer. "The Jew leaving Rotherwood," said he, raising himself on his elbow, and looking superciliously at him without quitting his pallet, "and travelling in company with the Palmer to boot ——"

"I should as soon have dreamt," said Wamba, who entered the apartment at the instant, "of his stealing away with a gammon of bacon."

"Nevertheless," said Gurth, again laying down his head on the wooden log which served him for a pillow, "both Jew and Gentile must be content to abide the opening of the great gate — we suffer no visiters to depart by stealth at these unseasonable hours."

"Nevertheless," said the Pilgrim, in a commanding tone, "you will not, I think, refuse me that favour."

So saying, he stooped over the bed of the recumbent swineherd, and whispered something in his ear in Saxon. Gurth started up as if electrified. The Pilgrim, raising his finger in an attitude as if to express caution, added, "Gurth, beware — thou art wont to be prudent. I say, undo the postern — thou shalt know more anon."

With hasty alacrity Gurth obeyed him, while Wamba and the Jew followed, both wondering at the sudden change in the swineherd's demeanour.

"My mule, my mule!" said the Jew, as soon as they stood without the postern.

"Fetch him his mule," said the Pilgrim; "and, hearest thou, — let me have another, that I may

bear him company till he is beyond these parts — I will return it safely to some of Cedric's train at Ashby. And do thou" — he whispered the rest in Gurth's ear.

"Willingly, most willingly shall it be done," said Gurth, and instantly departed to execute the commission.

"I wish I knew," said Wamba, when his comrade's back was turned, "what you Palmers learn in the Holy Land."

"To say our orisons, fool," answered the Pilgrim, "to repent our sins, and to mortify ourselves with fastings, vigils, and long prayers."

"Something more potent than that," answered the Jester; "for when would repentance or prayer make Gurth do a courtesy, or fasting or vigil persuade him to lend you a mule! — I trow you might as well have told his favourite black boar of thy vigils and penance, and wouldst have gotten as civil an answer."

"Go to," said the Pilgrim, "thou art but a Saxon fool."

"Thou sayest well," said the Jester; "had I been born a Norman, as I think thou art, I would have had luck on my side, and been next door to a wise man."

At this moment Gurth appeared on the opposite side of the moat with the mules. The travellers crossed the ditch upon a drawbridge of only two planks breadth, the narrowness of which was matched with the straitness of the postern, and with a little wicket in the exterior palisade, which gave access to the forest. No sooner had they reached the mules, than the Jew, with hasty and trembling hands, secured behind the saddle a small bag of blue buckram, which he took from under his cloak, containing, as he muttered, "a change of raiment — only a change of raiment." Then getting upon the animal with more alacrity and haste than could have been anticipated from his years, he lost no time in so disposing of the skirts of his gaberdine as to conceal completely from observation the burden which he had thus deposited *en croupe*.

The Pilgrim mounted with more deliberation, reaching, as he departed, his hand to Gurth, who kissed it with the utmost possible veneration. The swineherd stood gazing after the travellers until they were lost under the boughs of the forest path, when he was disturbed from his reverie by the voice of Wamba.

"Knowest thou," said the Jester, "my good friend Gurth, that thou art strangely courteous and most unwontedly pious on this summer morning? I would I were a black Prior or a barefoot Palmer, to avail myself of thy unwonted zeal and courtesy — certes, I would make more out of it than a kiss of the hand."

"Thou art no fool thus far, Wamba," answered Gurth, "though thou arguest from appearances, and the wisest of us can do no more — But it is time to look after my charge."

So saying, he turned back to the mansion, attended by the Jester.

Meanwhile the travellers continued to press on their journey with a despatch which argued the extremity of the Jew's fears, since persons at his age are seldom fond of rapid motion. The Palmer, to whom every path and outlet in the wood appeared to be familiar, led the way through the most devious paths, and more than once excited anew the suspicion of the Israelite, that he intended to betray him into some ambuscade of his enemies.

His doubts might have been indeed pardoned; for, except perhaps the flying fish, there was no race existing on the earth, in the air, or the waters, who were the object of such an unintermitting, general, and relentless persecution as the Jews of this period. Upon the slightest and most unreasonable pretences, as well as upon accusations the most absurd and groundless, their persons and property were exposed to every turn of popular fury; for Norman, Saxon, Dane, and Briton, however adverse these races were to each other, contended which should look with greatest detestation upon a people, whom it was accounted a point of religion to hate, to revile, to despise, to plunder, and to persecute. The kings of the Norman race, and the independent nobles, who followed their example in all acts of tyranny, maintained against this devoted people a persecution of a more regular, calculated, and self-interested kind. It is a well-known story of King John, that he confined a wealthy Jew in one of the royal castles, and daily caused one of his teeth to be torn out, until, when the jaw of the unhappy Israelite was half disfurnished, he consented to pay a large sum, which it was the tyrant's object to extort from him. The little ready money which was in the country was chiefly in possession of this persecuted people, and the nobility hesitated not to follow the example of their sovereign, in wringing it from them by every species of oppression, and even personal torture. Yet the passive courage inspired by the love of gain, induced the Jews to dare the various evils to which they were subjected, in consideration of the immense profits which they were enabled to realize in a country naturally so wealthy as England. In spite of every kind of discouragement, and even of the special court of taxations already mentioned, called the Jews' Exchequer, erected for the very purpose of despoiling and distressing them, the Jews increased, multiplied, and accumulated huge sums, which they transferred from one hand to another by means of bills of exchange — an invention for which commerce is said to be indebted to them, and which enabled them to transfer their wealth from land to land, that when threatened with oppression in one country, their treasure might be secured in another.

The obstinacy and avarice of the Jews being thus in a measure placed in opposition to the fanaticism and tyranny of those under whom they lived, seemed to increase in proportion to the persecution with which they were visited; and the immense wealth they usually acquired in commerce, while it frequently placed them in danger, was at other times used to extend their influence, and to secure to them a certain degree of protection. On these terms they lived; and their character, influenced accordingly, was watchful, suspicious, and timid — yet obstinate, uncomplying, and skilful in evading the dangers to which they were exposed.

When the travellers had pushed on at a rapid rate through many devious paths, the Palmer at length broke silence.

"That large decayed oak," he said, "marks the boundaries over which Front-de-Bœuf claims authority — we are long since far from those of Malvoisin. There is now no fear of pursuit."

"May the wheels of their chariots be taken off,"

said the Jew, "like those of the host of Pharaoh, that they may drive heavily!—But leave me not, good Pilgrim—Think but of that fierce and savage Templar, with his Saracen slaves—they will regard neither territory, nor manor, nor lordship."

"Our road," said the Palmer, "should here separate; for it beseems not men of my character and thine to travel together longer than needs must be. Besides, what succour couldst thou have from me, a peaceful Pilgrim, against two armed heathens?"

"O good youth," answered the Jew, "thou canst defend me, and I know thou wouldst. Poor as I am, I will requite it—not with money, for money, so help me my Father Abraham, I have none—but——"

"Money and recompense," said the Palmer, interrupting him, "I have already said, I require not of thee. Guide thee, I can; and, it may be, even in some sort defend thee; since to protect a Jew against a Saracen, can scarce be accounted unworthy of a Christian. Therefore, Jew, I will see thee safe under some fitting escort. We are now not far from the town of Sheffield, where thou mayest easily find many of thy tribe with whom to take refuge."

"The blessing of Jacob be upon thee, good youth!" said the Jew; "in Sheffield I can harbour with my kinsman Zareth, and find some means of travelling forth with safety."

"Be it so," said the Palmer; "at Sheffield then we part, and half-an-hour's riding will bring us in sight of that town."

The half hour was spent in perfect silence on both parts; the Pilgrim perhaps disdaining to address the Jew, except in case of absolute necessity, and the Jew not presuming to force a conversation with a person whose journey to the Holy Sepulchre gave a sort of sanctity to his character. They paused on the top of a gently rising bank, and the Pilgrim, pointing to the town of Sheffield, which lay beneath them, repeated the words, "Here, then, we part."

"Not till you have had the poor Jew's thanks," said Isaac; "for I presume not to ask you to go with me to my kinsman Zareth's, who might aid me with some means of repaying your good offices."

"I have already said," answered the Pilgrim, "that I desire no recompense. If, among the huge list of thy debtors, thou wilt, for my sake, spare the gyves and the dungeon to some unhappy Christian who stands in thy danger, I shall hold this morning's service to thee well bestowed."

"Stay, stay," said the Jew, laying hold of his garment; "something would I do more than this, something for thyself.—God knows the Jew is poor—yes, Isaac is the beggar of his tribe—but forgive me should I guess what thou most lackest at this moment."

"If thou wert to guess truly," said the Palmer, "it is what thou canst not supply, wert thou as wealthy as thou sayest thou art poor."

"As I say?" echoed the Jew; "O! believe it, I say but the truth; I am a plundered, indebted, distressed man. Hard hands have wrung from me my goods, my money, my ships, and all that I possessed—Yet I can tell thee what thou lackest, and, it may be, supply it too. Thy wish even now is for a horse and armour."

The Palmer started, and turned suddenly towards the Jew:—"What fiend prompted that guess?" said he, hastily.

"No matter," said the Jew, smiling, "so that it be a true one—and, as I can guess thy want, so I can supply it."

"But consider," said the Palmer, "my character, my dress, my vow."

"I know you Christians," replied the Jew, "and that the noblest of you will take the staff and sandal in superstitious penance, and walk afoot to visit the graves of dead men."

"Blaspheme not, Jew," said the Pilgrim, sternly.

"Forgive me," said the Jew; "I spoke rashly. But there dropt words from you last night and this morning, that, like sparks from flint, shewed the metal within; and in the bosom of that Palmer's gown, is hidden a knight's chain and spurs of gold. They glanced as you stooped over my bed in the morning."

The Pilgrim could not forbear smiling. "Were thy garments searched by as curious an eye, Isaac," said he, "what discoveries might not be made?"

"No more of that," said the Jew, changing colour; and drawing forth his writing materials in haste, as if to stop the conversation, he began to write upon a piece of paper, which he supported on the top of his yellow cap, without dismounting from his mule. When he had finished, he delivered the scroll, which was in the Hebrew character, to the Pilgrim, saying, "In the town of Leicester all men know the rich Jew, Kirjath Jairam of Lombardy; give him this scroll—he hath on sale six Milan harnesses, the worst would suit a crowned head—ten goodly steeds, the worst might mount a king, were he to do battle for his throne. Of these he will give thee thy choice, with every thing else that can furnish thee forth for the tournament: when it is over, thou wilt return them safely—unless thou shouldst have wherewith to pay their value to the owner."

"But, Isaac," said the Pilgrim, smiling, "dost thou know that in these sports, the arms and steed of the knight who is unhorsed are forfeit to his victor? Now I may be unfortunate, and so lose what I cannot replace or repay."

The Jew looked somewhat astounded at this possibility; but collecting his courage, he replied hastily, "No—no—no—It is impossible—I will not think so. The blessing of our Father will be upon thee. Thy lance will be powerful as the rod of Moses."

So saying, he was turning his mule's head away, when the Palmer, in his turn, took hold of his gaberdine. "Nay, but Isaac, thou knowest not all the risk. The steed may be slain, the armour injured—for I will spare neither horse nor man. Besides, those of thy tribe give nothing for nothing; something there must be paid for their use."

The Jew twisted himself in the saddle, like a man in a fit of the colic; but his better feelings predominated over those which were most familiar to him. "I care not," he said, "I care not—let me go. If there is damage, it will cost you nothing—if there is usage money, Kirjath Jairam will forgive it for the sake of his kinsman Isaac. Fare thee well!—Yet hark thee, good youth," said he, turning about, "thrust thyself not too forward into this vain hurly-burly—I speak not for endangering the steed and coat of armour, but for the sake of thine own life and limbs."

"Gramercy for thy caution," said the Palmer, again smiling; "I will use thy courtesy frankly, and it will go hard with me but I will requite it."

They parted and took different roads for the town of Sheffield.

CHAPTER VIII.

Knights, with a long retinue of their squires,
In gaudy liveries march and quaint attires;
One laced the helm, another held the lance,
A third the shining buckler did advance.
The courser paw'd the ground with restless feet,
And snorting foam'd and champ'd the golden bit.
The smiths and armourers on palfreys ride,
Files in their hands, and hammers at their side;
And nails for loosen'd spears, and thongs for shields provide.
The yeomen guard the streets in seemly bands;
And clowns come crowding on, with cudgels in their hands.
Palamon and Arcite.

The condition of the English nation was at this time sufficiently miserable. King Richard was absent a prisoner, and in the power of the perfidious and cruel Duke of Austria. Even the very place of his captivity was uncertain, and his fate but very imperfectly known to the generality of his subjects, who were, in the meantime, a prey to every species of subaltern oppression.

Prince John, in league with Philip of France, Cœur-de-Lion's mortal enemy, was using every species of influence with the Duke of Austria, to prolong the captivity of his brother Richard, to whom he stood indebted for so many favours. In the meantime, he was strengthening his own faction in the kingdom, of which he proposed to dispute the succession, in case of the King's death, with the legitimate heir, Arthur Duke of Brittany, son of Geoffrey Plantagenet, the elder brother of John. This usurpation, it is well known, he afterwards effected. His own character being light, profligate, and perfidious, John easily attached to his person and faction, not only all who had reason to dread the resentment of Richard for criminal proceedings during his absence, but also the numerous class of "lawless resolutes," whom the crusades had turned back on their country, accomplished in the vices of the East, impoverished in substance, and hardened in character, and who placed their hopes of harvest in civil commotion.

To these causes of public distress and apprehension, must be added, the multitude of outlaws, who, driven to despair by the oppression of the feudal nobility, and the severe exercise of the forest laws, banded together in large gangs, and, keeping possession of the forests and the wastes, set at defiance the justice and magistracy of the country. The nobles themselves, each fortified within his own castle, and playing the petty sovereign over his own dominions, were the leaders of bands scarce less lawless and oppressive than those of the avowed depredators. To maintain these retainers, and to support the extravagance and magnificence which their pride induced them to affect, the nobility borrowed sums of money from the Jews at the most usurious interest, which gnawed into their estates like consuming cankers, scarce to be cured unless when circumstances gave them an opportunity of getting free, by exercising upon their creditors some act of unprincipled violence.

Under the various burdens imposed by this unhappy state of affairs, the people of England suffered deeply for the present, and had yet more dreadful cause to fear for the future. To augment their misery, a contagious disorder of a dangerous nature spread through the land; and, rendered more virulent by the uncleanness, the indifferent food, and the wretched lodging of the lower classes, swept off many whose fate the survivors were tempted to envy, as exempting them from the evils which were to come.

Yet amid these accumulated distresses, the poor as well as the rich, the vulgar as well as the noble, in the event of a tournament, which was the grand spectacle of that age, felt as much interested as the half-starved citizen of Madrid, who has not a real left to buy provisions for his family, feels in the issue of a bull-fight. Neither duty nor infirmity could keep youth or age from such exhibitions. The Passage of Arms, as it was called, which was to take place at Ashby, in the county of Leicester, as champions of the first renown were to take the field in the presence of Prince John himself, who was expected to grace the lists, had attracted universal attention, and an immense confluence of persons of all ranks hastened upon the appointed morning to the place of combat.

The scene was singularly romantic. On the verge of a wood, which approached to within a mile of the town of Ashby, was an extensive meadow, of the finest and most beautiful green turf, surrounded on one side by the forest, and fringed on the other by straggling oak-trees, some of which had grown to an immense size. The ground, as if fashioned on purpose for the martial display which was intended, sloped gradually down on all sides to a level bottom, which was enclosed for the lists with strong palisades, forming a space of a quarter of a mile in length, and about half as broad. The form of the enclosure was an oblong square, save that the corners were considerably rounded off, in order to afford more convenience for the spectators. The openings for the entry of the combatants were at the northern and southern extremities of the lists, accessible by strong wooden gates, each wide enough to admit two horsemen riding abreast. At each of these portals were stationed two heralds, attended by six trumpets, as many pursuivants, and a strong body of men-at-arms for maintaining order, and ascertaining the quality of the knights who proposed to engage in this martial game.

On a platform beyond the southern entrance, formed by a natural elevation of the ground, were pitched five magnificent pavilions, adorned with pennons of russet and black, the chosen colours of the five knights challengers. The cords of the tents were of the same colour. Before each pavilion was suspended the shield of the knight by whom it was occupied, and beside it stood his squire, quaintly disguised as a salvage or silvan man, or in some other fantastic dress, according to the taste of his master, and the character he was pleased to assume during the game.[1] The central pavilion, as the place of honour, had been assigned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose renown in all games of chivalry, no less than his connection with the knights who had undertaken this Passage of Arms, had occasioned him to be eagerly received

1 This sort of masquerade is supposed to have occasioned the introduction of supporters into the science of heraldry.

into the company of the challengers, and even adopted as their chief and leader, though he had so recently joined them. On one side of his tent were pitched those of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf and Richard de Malvoisin, and on the other was the pavilion of Hugh de Grantmesnil, a noble baron in the vicinity, whose ancestor had been Lord High Steward of England in the time of the Conqueror, and his son William Rufus. Ralph de Vipont, a knight of St John of Jerusalem, who had some ancient possessions at a place called Heather, near Ashby-de-la-Zouche, occupied the fifth pavilion. From the entrance into the lists, a gently sloping passage, ten yards in breadth, led up to the platform on which the tents were pitched. It was strongly secured by a palisade on each side, as was the esplanade in front of the pavilions, and the whole was guarded by men-at-arms.

The northern access to the lists terminated in a similar entrance of thirty feet in breadth, at the extremity of which was a large enclosed space for such knights as might be disposed to enter the lists with the challengers, behind which were placed tents containing refreshments of every kind for their accommodation, with armourers, farriers, and other attendants, in readiness to give their services wherever they might be necessary.

The exterior of the lists was in part occupied by temporary galleries, spread with tapestry and carpets, and accommodated with cushions for the convenience of those ladies and nobles who were expected to attend the tournament. A narrow space, betwixt these galleries and the lists, gave accommodation for yeomanry and spectators of a better degree than the mere vulgar, and might be compared to the pit of a theatre. The promiscuous multitude arranged themselves upon large banks of turf prepared for the purpose, which, aided by the natural elevation of the ground, enabled them to overlook the galleries, and obtain a fair view into the lists. Besides the accommodation which these stations afforded, many hundreds had perched themselves on the branches of the trees which surrounded the meadow; and even the steeple of a country church, at some distance, was crowded with spectators.

It only remains to notice respecting the general arrangement, that one gallery in the very centre of the eastern side of the lists, and consequently exactly opposite to the spot where the shock of the combat was to take place, was raised higher than the others, more richly decorated, and graced by a sort of throne and canopy, on which the royal arms were emblazoned. Squires, pages, and yeomen in rich liveries, waited around this place of honour, which was designed for Prince John and his attendants. Opposite to this royal gallery was another, elevated to the same height, on the western side of the lists; and more gaily, if less sumptuously decorated, than that destined for the Prince himself. A train of pages and of young maidens, the most beautiful who could be selected, gaily dressed in fancy habits of green and pink, surrounded a throne decorated in the same colours. Among pennons and flags bearing wounded hearts, burning hearts, bleeding hearts, bows and quivers, and all the commonplace emblems of the triumphs of Cupid, a blazoned inscription informed the spectators, that this seat of honour was designed for *La Royne de la Beaulté et des Amours.* But who was to represent the Queen of Beauty and of Love on the present occasion no one was prepared to guess.

Meanwhile, spectators of every description thronged forward to occupy their respective stations, and not without many quarrels concerning those which they were entitled to hold. Some of these were settled by the men-at-arms with brief ceremony; the shafts of their battle-axes, and pummels of their swords, being readily employed as arguments to convince the more refractory. Others, which involved the rival claims of more elevated persons, were determined by the heralds, or by the two marshals of the field, William de Wyvil, and Stephen de Martival, who, armed at all points, rode up and down the lists to enforce and preserve good order among the spectators.

Gradually the galleries became filled with knights and nobles, in their robes of peace, whose long and rich-tinted mantles were contrasted with the gayer and more splendid habits of the ladies, who, in a greater proportion than even the men themselves, thronged to witness a sport, which one would have thought too bloody and dangerous to afford their sex much pleasure. The lower and interior space was soon filled by substantial yeomen and burghers, and such of the lesser gentry, as, from modesty, poverty, or dubious title, durst not assume any higher place. It was of course amongst these that the most frequent disputes for precedence occurred.

"Dog of an unbeliever," said an old man, whose threadbare tunic bore witness to his poverty, as his sword, and dagger, and golden chain intimated his pretensions to rank,—"whelp of a she-wolf! darest thou press upon a Christian, and a Norman gentleman of the blood of Montdidier?"

This rough expostulation was addressed to no other than our acquaintance Isaac, who, richly and even magnificently dressed in a gaberdine ornamented with lace and lined with fur, was endeavouring to make place in the foremost row beneath the gallery for his daughter, the beautiful Rebecca, who had joined him at Ashby, and who was now hanging on her father's arm, not a little terrified by the popular displeasure which seemed generally excited by her parent's presumption. But Isaac, though we have seen him sufficiently timid on other occasions, knew well that at present he had nothing to fear. It was not in places of general resort, or where their equals were assembled, that any avaricious or malevolent noble durst offer him injury. At such meetings the Jews were under the protection of the general law; and if that proved a weak assurance, it usually happened that there were among the persons assembled some barons, who, for their own interested motives, were ready to act as their protectors. On the present occasion, Isaac felt more than usually confident, being aware that Prince John was even then in the very act of negotiating a large loan from the Jews of York, to be secured upon certain jewels and lands. Isaac's own share in this transaction was considerable, and he well knew that the Prince's eager desire to bring it to a conclusion would ensure him his protection in the dilemma in which he stood.

Imboldened by these considerations, the Jew pursued his point, and jostled the Norman Christian, without respect either to his descent, quality, or religion. The complaints of the old man, however, excited the indignation of the bystanders. One of these, a stout well-set yeoman, arrayed in

Lincoln green, having twelve arrows stuck in his belt, with a baldric and badge of silver, and a bow of six feet length in his hand, turned short round, and while his countenance, which his constant exposure to weather had rendered brown as a hazel nut, grew darker with anger, he advised the Jew to remember, that all the wealth he had acquired by sucking the blood of his miserable victims, had but swelled him like a bloated spider, which might be overlooked while he kept in a corner, but would be crushed if it ventured into the light. This intimation, delivered in Norman-English with a firm voice and a stern aspect, made the Jew shrink back; and he would have probably withdrawn himself altogether from a vicinity so dangerous, had not the attention of every one been called to the sudden entrance of Prince John, who at that moment entered the lists, attended by a numerous and gay train, consisting partly of laymen, partly of churchmen, as light in their dress, and as gay in their demeanour, as their companions. Among the latter was the Prior of Jorvaulx, in the most gallant trim which a dignitary of the church could venture to exhibit. Fur and gold were not spared in his garments; and the points of his boots, out-heroding the preposterous fashion of the time, turned up so very far, as to be attached, not to his knees merely, but to his very girdle, and effectually prevented him from putting his foot into the stirrup. This, however, was a slight inconvenience to the gallant Abbot, who, perhaps, even rejoicing in the opportunity to display his accomplished horsemanship before so many spectators, especially of the fair sex, dispensed with the use of these supports to a timid rider. The rest of Prince John's retinue consisted of the favourite leaders of his mercenary troops, some marauding barons and profligate attendants upon the court, with several Knights Templars and Knights of St John.

It may be here remarked, that the knights of these two orders were accounted hostile to King Richard, having adopted the side of Philip of France in the long train of disputes which took place in Palestine betwixt that monarch and the lion-hearted King of England. It was the well-known consequence of this discord that Richard's repeated victories had been rendered fruitless, his romantic attempts to besiege Jerusalem disappointed, and the fruit of all the glory which he had acquired had dwindled into an uncertain truce with the Sultan Saladin. With the same policy which had dictated the conduct of their brethren in the Holy Land, the Templars and Hospitallers in England and Normandy attached themselves to the faction of Prince John, having little reason to desire the return of Richard to England, or the succession of Arthur, his legitimate heir. For the opposite reason, Prince John hated and contemned the few Saxon families of consequence which subsisted in England, and omitted no opportunity of mortifying and affronting them; being conscious that his person and pretensions were disliked by them, as well as by the greater part of the English commons, who feared farther innovation upon their rights and liberties, from a sovereign of John's licentious and tyrannical disposition.

Attended by this gallant equipage, himself well mounted, and splendidly dressed in crimson and in gold, bearing upon his hand a falcon, and having his head covered by a rich fur bonnet, adorned with a circle of precious stones, from which his long curled hair escaped and overspread his shoulders, Prince John, upon a grey and high-mettled palfrey, caracoled within the lists at the head of his jovial party, laughing loud with his train, and eyeing with all the boldness of royal criticism the beauties who adorned the lofty galleries.

Those who remarked in the physiognomy of the Prince a dissolute audacity, mingled with extreme haughtiness and indifference to the feelings of others, could not yet deny to his countenance that sort of comeliness which belongs to an open set of features, well formed by nature, modelled by art to the usual rules of courtesy, yet so far frank and honest, that they seemed as if they disclaimed to conceal the natural workings of the soul. Such an expression is often mistaken for manly frankness, when in truth it arises from the reckless indifference of a libertine disposition, conscious of superiority of birth, of wealth, or of some other adventitious advantage, totally unconnected with personal merit. To those who did not think so deeply, and they were the greater number by a hundred to one, the splendour of Prince John's *rheno*, (*i. e.* fur tippet,) the richness of his cloak, lined with the most costly sables, his maroquin boots and golden spurs, together with the grace with which he managed his palfrey, were sufficient to merit clamorous applause.

In his joyous caracole round the lists, the attention of the Prince was called by the commotion, not yet subsided, which had attended the ambitious movement of Isaac towards the higher places of the assembly. The quick eye of Prince John instantly recognized the Jew, but was much more agreeably attracted by the beautiful daughter of Zion, who, terrified by the tumult, clung close to the arm of her aged father.

The figure of Rebecca might indeed have compared with the proudest beauties of England, even though it had been judged by as shrewd a connoisseur as Prince John. Her form was exquisitely symmetrical, and was shewn to advantage by a sort of Eastern dress, which she wore according to the fashion of the females of her nation. Her turban of yellow silk suited well with the darkness of her complexion. The brilliancy of her eyes, the superb arch of her eyebrows, her well-formed aquiline nose, her teeth as white as pearl, and the profusion of her sable tresses which, each arranged in its own little spiral of twisted curls, fell down upon as much of a lovely neck and bosom as a simarre of the richest Persian silk, exhibiting flowers in their natural colours embossed upon a purple ground, permitted to be visible—all these constituted a combination of loveliness, which yielded not to the most beautiful of the maidens who surrounded her. It is true, that of the golden and pearl-studded clasps, which closed her vest from the throat to the waist, the three uppermost were left unfastened on account of the heat, which something enlarged the prospect to which we allude. A diamond necklace, with pendants of inestimable value, were by this means also made more conspicuous. The feather of an ostrich, fastened in her turban by an agraffe set with brilliants, was another distinction of the beautiful Jewess, scoffed and sneered at by the proud dames who sat above her, but secretly envied by those who affected to deride them.

"By the bald scalp of Abraham," said Prince

John, "yonder Jewess must be the very model of that perfection, whose charms drove frantic the wisest king that ever lived! What sayest thou, Prior Aymer?—By the Temple of that wise king, which our wiser brother Richard proved unable to recover, she is the very Bride of the Canticles!"

"The Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley," —answered the Prior, in a sort of snuffling tone; "but your Grace must remember she is still but a Jewess."

"Ay!" added Prince John, without heeding him, "and there is my Mammon of unrighteousness too —the Marquis of Marks, the Baron of Byzants, contesting for place with penniless dogs, whose threadbare cloaks have not a single cross in their pouches to keep the devil from dancing there. By the body of St Mark, my prince of supplies, with his lovely Jewess, shall have a place in the gallery! —What is she, Isaac? Thy wife or thy daughter, that Eastern houri that thou lockest under thy arm as thou wouldst thy treasure-casket?"

"My daughter Rebecca, so please your Grace," answered Isaac, with a low congee, nothing embarrassed by the Prince's salutation, in which, however, there was at least as much mockery as courtesy.

"The wiser man thou," said John, with a peal of laughter, in which his gay followers obsequiously joined, "But, daughter or wife, she should be preferred according to her beauty and thy merits. —Who sits above there?" he continued, bending his eye on the gallery. "Saxon churls, lolling at their lazy length!—out upon them!—let them sit close, and make room for my prince of usurers and his lovely daughter. I'll make the hinds know they must share the high places of the synagogue with those whom the synagogue properly belongs to."

Those who occupied the gallery to whom this injurious and unpolite speech was addressed, were the family of Cedric the Saxon, with that of his ally and kinsman, Athelstane of Coningsburgh, a personage, who, on account of his descent from the last Saxon monarchs of England, was held in the highest respect by all the Saxon natives of the north of England. But with the blood of this ancient royal race, many of their infirmities had descended to Athelstane. He was comely in countenance, bulky and strong in person, and in the flower of his age—yet inanimate in expression, dull-eyed, heavy-browed, inactive and sluggish in all his motions, and so slow in resolution, that the soubriquet of one of his ancestors was conferred upon him, and he was very generally called Athelstane the Unready. His friends, and he had many, who, as well as Cedric, were passionately attached to him, contended that this sluggish temper arose not from want of courage, but from mere want of decision; others alleged that his hereditary vice of drunkenness had obscured his faculties, never of a very acute order, and that the passive courage and meek good-nature which remained behind, were merely the dregs of a character that might have been deserving of praise, but of which all the valuable parts had flown off in the progress of a long course of brutal debauchery.

It was to this person, such as we have described him, that the Prince addressed his imperious command to make place for Isaac and Rebecca. Athelstane, utterly confounded at an order which the manners and feelings of the times rendered so injuriously insulting, unwilling to obey, yet undetermined how to resist, opposed only the *vis inertiæ* to the will of John; and, without stirring or making any motion whatever of obedience, opened his large grey eyes, and stared at the Prince with an astonishment which had in it something extremely ludicrous. But the impatient John regarded it in no such light.

"The Saxon porker," he said, "is either asleep or minds me not—Prick him with your lance, De Bracy," speaking to a knight who rode near him, the leader of a band of Free Companions, or Condottieri; that is, of mercenaries belonging to no particular nation, but attached for the time to any prince by whom they were paid. There was a murmur even among the attendants of Prince John; but De Bracy, whose profession freed him from all scruples, extended his long lance over the space which separated the gallery from the lists, and would have executed the commands of the Prince before Athelstane the Unready had recovered presence of mind sufficient even to draw back his person from the weapon, had not Cedric, as prompt as his companion was tardy, unsheathed, with the speed of lightning, the short sword which he wore, and at a single blow severed the point of the lance from the handle. The blood rushed into the countenance of Prince John. He swore one of his deepest oaths, and was about to utter some threat corresponding in violence, when he was diverted from his purpose, partly by his own attendants, who gathered around him conjuring him to be patient, partly by a general exclamation of the crowd, uttered in loud applause of the spirited conduct of Cedric. The Prince rolled his eyes in indignation, as if to collect some safe and easy victim; and chancing to encounter the firm glance of the same archer whom we have already noticed, and who seemed to persist in his gesture of applause, in spite of the frowning aspect which the Prince bent upon him, he demanded his reason for clamouring thus.

"I always add my hollo," said the yeoman, "when I see a good shot, or a gallant blow."

"Sayest thou?" answered the Prince; "then thou canst hit the white thyself, I'll warrant."

"A woodsman's mark, and at woodsman's distance, I can hit," answered the yeoman.

"And Wat Tyrrel's mark, at a hundred yards," said a voice from behind, but by whom uttered could not be discerned.

This allusion to the fate of William Rufus, his relative, at once incensed and alarmed Prince John He satisfied himself, however, with commanding the men-at-arms, who surrounded the lists, to keep an eye on the braggart, pointing to the yeoman.

"By St Grizzel," he added, "we will try his own skill, who is so ready to give his voice to the feats of others!"

"I shall not fly the trial," said the yeoman, with the composure which marked his whole deportment.

"Meanwhile, stand up, ye Saxon churls," said the fiery Prince; "for, by the light of Heaven, since I have said it, the Jew shall have his seat amongst ye!"

"By no means, an it please your Grace!—it is not fit for such as we to sit with the rulers of the land," said the Jew; whose ambition for prece-

dence, though it had led him to dispute place with the extenuated and impoverished descendant of the line of Montdidier, by no means stimulated him to an intrusion upon the privileges of the wealthy Saxons.

"Up, infidel dog, when I command you," said Prince John, "or I will have thy swarthy hide stript off, and tanned for horse-furniture."

Thus urged, the Jew began to ascend the steep and narrow steps which led up to the gallery.

"Let me see," said the Prince, "who dare stop him," fixing his eye on Cedric, whose attitude intimated his intention to hurl the Jew down headlong.

The catastrophe was prevented by the clown Wamba, who, springing betwixt his master and Isaac, and exclaiming, in answer to the Prince's defiance, "Marry, that will I!" opposed to the beard of the Jew a shield of brawn, which he plucked from beneath his cloak, and with which, doubtless, he had furnished himself, lest the tournament should have proved longer than his appetite could endure abstinence. Finding the abomination of his tribe opposed to his very nose, while the Jester, at the same time, flourished his wooden sword above his head, the Jew recoiled, missed his footing, and rolled down the steps,—an excellent jest to the spectators, who set up a loud laughter, in which Prince John and his attendants heartily joined.

"Deal me the prize, cousin Prince," said Wamba; "I have vanquished my foe in fair fight with sword and shield," he added, brandishing the brawn in one hand and the wooden sword in the other.

"Who, and what art thou, noble champion?" said Prince John, still laughing.

"A fool by right of descent," answered the Jester; "I am Wamba, the son of Witless, who was the son of Weatherbrain, who was the son of an Alderman."

"Make room for the Jew in front of the lower ring," said Prince John, not unwilling perhaps to seize an apology to desist from his original purpose; "to place the vanquished beside the victor were false heraldry."

"Knave upon fool were worse," answered the Jester, "and Jew upon bacon worst of all."

"Gramercy! good fellow," cried Prince John, "thou pleasest me—Here, Isaac, lend me a handful of byzants."

As the Jew, stunned by the request, afraid to refuse, and unwilling to comply, fumbled in the furred bag which hung by his girdle, and was perhaps endeavouring to ascertain how few coins might pass for a handful, the Prince stooped from his jennet and settled Isaac's doubts by snatching the pouch itself from his side; and flinging to Wamba a couple of the gold pieces which it contained, he pursued his career round the lists, leaving the Jew to the derision of those around him, and himself receiving as much applause from the spectators as if he had done some honest and honourable action.

CHAPTER IX.

At this the challenger with fierce defy
His trumpet sounds; the challenged makes reply:
With clangour rings the field, resounds the vaulted sky.
Their visors closed, their lances in the rest,
Or at the helmet pointed or the crest,
They vanish from the barrier, speed the race,
And spurring see decrease the middle space.

Palamon and Arcite.

In the midst of Prince John's cavalcade, he suddenly stopt, and appealing to the Prior of Jorvaulx, declared the principal business of the day had been forgotten.

"By my halidom," said he, "we have forgotten, Sir Prior, to name the fair Sovereign of Love and of Beauty, by whose white hand the palm is to be distributed. For my part, I am liberal in my ideas, and I care not if I give my vote for the black-eyed Rebecca."

"Holy Virgin," answered the Prior, turning up his eyes in horror, "a Jewess!—We should deserve to be stoned out of the lists; and I am not yet old enough to be a martyr. Besides, I swear by my patron saint, that she is far inferior to the lovely Saxon, Rowena."

"Saxon or Jew," answered the Prince, "Saxon or Jew, dog or hog, what matters it? I say, name Rebecca, were it only to mortify the Saxon churls."

A murmur arose even among his own immediate attendants.

"This passes a jest, my lord," said De Bracy; "no knight here will lay lance in rest if such an insult is attempted."

"It is the mere wantonness of insult," said one of the oldest and most important of Prince John's followers, Waldemar Fitzurse, "and if your Grace attempt it, cannot but prove ruinous to your projects."

"I entertained you, sir," said John, reining up his palfrey haughtily, "for my follower, but not for my counsellor."

"Those who follow your Grace in the paths which you tread," said Waldemar, but speaking in a low voice, "acquire the right of counsellors; for your interest and safety are not more deeply engaged than their own."

From the tone in which this was spoken, John saw the necessity of acquiescence. "I did but jest," he said; "and you turn upon me like so many adders! Name whom you will, in the fiend's name, and please yourselves."

"Nay, nay," said De Bracy, "let the fair sovereign's throne remain unoccupied, until the conqueror shall be named, and then let him choose the lady by whom it shall be filled. It will add another grace to his triumph, and teach fair ladies to prize the love of valiant knights, who can exalt them to such distinction."

"If Brian de Bois-Guilbert gain the prize," said the Prior, "I will gage my rosary that I name the Sovereign of Love and Beauty."

"Bois-Guilbert," answered De Bracy, "is a good lance; but there are others around these lists, Sir Prior, who will not fear to encounter him."

"Silence, sirs," said Waldemar, "and let the Prince assume his seat. The knights and spectators are alike impatient, the time advances, and highly fit it is that the sports should commence."

Prince John, though not yet a monarch, had in Waldemar Fitzurse all the inconveniences of a favourite minister, who, in serving his sovereign, must always do so in his own way. The Prince acquiesced, however, although his disposition was precisely of that kind which is apt to be obstinate upon trifles, and, assuming his throne, and being surrounded by his followers, gave signal to the heralds to proclaim the laws of the tournament, which were briefly as follows:

First, the five challengers were to undertake all comers.

Secondly, any knight proposing to combat, might, if he pleased, select a special antagonist from among the challengers, by touching his shield. If he did so with the reverse of his lance, the trial of skill was made with what were called the arms of courtesy, that is, with lances at whose extremity a piece of round flat board was fixed, so that no danger was encountered, save from the shock of the horses and riders. But if the shield was touched with the sharp end of the lance, the combat was understood to be at *outrance;* that is, the knights were to fight with sharp weapons, as in actual battle.

Thirdly, when the knights present had accomplished their vow, by each of them breaking five lances, the Prince was to declare the victor in the first day's tourney, who should receive as prize a war-horse of exquisite beauty and matchless strength; and in addition to this reward of valour, it was now declared, he should have the peculiar honour of naming the Queen of Love and Beauty, by whom the prize should be given on the ensuing day.

Fourthly, it was announced, that, on the second day, there should be a general tournament, in which all the knights present, who were desirous to win praise, might take part; and being divided into two bands of equal numbers, might fight it out manfully, until the signal was given by Prince John to cease the combat. The elected Queen of Love and Beauty was then to crown the knight whom the Prince should adjudge to have borne himself best in this second day, with a coronet composed of thin gold plate, cut into the shape of a laurel crown. On this second day the knightly games ceased. But on that which was to follow, feats of archery, of bull-baiting, and other popular amusements, were to be practised, for the more immediate amusement of the populace. In this manner did Prince John endeavour to lay the foundation of a popularity, which he was perpetually throwing down by some inconsiderate act of wanton aggression upon the feelings and prejudices of the people.

The lists now presented a most splendid spectacle. The sloping galleries were crowded with all that was noble, great, wealthy, and beautiful in the northern and midland parts of England; and the contrast of the various dresses of these dignified spectators, rendered the view as gay as it was rich, while the interior and lower space, filled with the substantial burgesses and yeomen of merry England, formed, in their more plain attire, a dark fringe, or border, around this circle of brilliant embroidery, relieving, and, at the same time, setting off its splendour.

The heralds finished their proclamation with their usual cry of "Largesse, largesse, gallant knights!" and gold and silver pieces were showered on them from the galleries, it being a high point of chivalry to exhibit liberality towards those whom the age accounted at once the secretaries and the historians of honour. The bounty of the spectators was acknowledged by the customary shouts of "Love of Ladies—Death of Champions—Honour to the Generous—Glory to the Brave!"—to which the more humble spectators added their acclamations, and a numerous band of trumpeters the flourish of their martial instruments. When these sounds had ceased, the heralds withdrew from the lists in gay and glittering procession, and none remained within them save the marshals of the field, who, armed cap-a-pie, sat on horseback, motionless as statues, at the opposite ends of the lists. Meantime, the enclosed space at the northern extremity of the lists, large as it was, was now completely crowded with knights desirous to prove their skill against the challengers, and, when viewed from the galleries, presented the appearance of a sea of waving plumage, intermixed with glistening helmets, and tall lances, to the extremities of which were, in many cases, attached small pennons of about a span's breadth, which, fluttering in the air as the breeze caught them, joined with the restless motion of the feathers to add liveliness to the scene.

At length the barriers were opened, and five knights, chosen by lot, advanced slowly into the area; a single champion riding in front, and the other four following in pairs. All were splendidly armed, and my Saxon authority (in the Wardour Manuscript) records at great length their devices, their colours, and the embroidery of their horse trappings. It is unnecessary to be particular on these subjects. To borrow lines from a contemporary poet, who has written but too little—

> "The knights are dust
> And their good swords are rust,
> Their souls are with the saints, we trust." [1]

Their escutcheons have long mouldered from the walls of their castles. Their castles themselves are but green mounds and shattered ruins—the place that once knew them, knows them no more—nay, many a race since theirs has died out and been forgotten in the very land which they occupied, with all the authority of feudal proprietors and feudal lords. What, then, would it avail the reader to know their names, or the evanescent symbols of their martial rank!

Now, however, no whit anticipating the oblivion which awaited their names and feats, the champions advanced through the lists, restraining their fiery steeds, and compelling them to move slowly, while, at the same time, they exhibited their paces, together with the grace and dexterity of the riders. As the procession entered the lists, the sound of a wild Barbaric music was heard from behind the tents of the challengers, where the performers were concealed. It was of Eastern origin, having been brought from the Holy Land; and the mixture of the cymbals and bells seemed to bid welcome at once, and defiance, to the knights as they advanced. With the eyes of an immense concourse of spectators fixed upon them, the five knights advanced

[1] These lines are part of an unpublished poem by Coleridge, whose Muse so often tantalizes with fragments which indicate her powers, while the manner in which she flings them from her betrays her caprice; yet whose unfinished sketches display more talent than the laboured masterpieces of others.

up the platform upon which the tents of the challengers stood, and there separating themselves, each touched slightly, and with the reverse of his lance, the shield of the antagonist to whom he wished to oppose himself. The lower orders of spectators in general — nay, many of the higher class, and it is even said several of the ladies, were rather disappointed at the champions choosing the arms of courtesy. For the same sort of persons, who, in the present day, applaud most highly the deepest tragedies, were then interested in a tournament exactly in proportion to the danger incurred by the champions engaged.

Having intimated their more pacific purpose, the champions retreated to the extremity of the lists, where they remained drawn up in a line; while the challengers, sallying each from his pavilion, mounted their horses, and, headed by Brian de Bois-Guilbert, descended from the platform, and opposed themselves individually to the knights who had touched their respective shields.

At the flourish of clarions and trumpets, they started out against each other at full gallop; and such was the superior dexterity or good fortune of the challengers, that those opposed to Bois-Guilbert, Malvoisin, and Front-de-Bœuf, rolled on the ground. The antagonist of Grantmesnil, instead of bearing his lance-point fair against the crest or the shield of his enemy, swerved so much from the direct line as to break the weapon athwart the person of his opponent — a circumstance which was accounted more disgraceful than that of being actually unhorsed; because the latter might happen from accident, whereas the former evinced awkwardness and want of management of the weapon and of the horse. The fifth knight alone maintained the honour of his party, and parted fairly with the Knight of St John, both splintering their lances without advantage on either side.

The shouts of the multitude, together with the acclamations of the heralds, and the clangour of the trumpets, announced the triumph of the victors and the defeat of the vanquished. The former retreated to their pavilions, and the latter, gathering themselves up as they could, withdrew from the lists in disgrace and dejection, to agree with their victors concerning the redemption of their arms and their horses, which, according to the laws of the tournament, they had forfeited. The fifth of their number alone tarried in the lists long enough to be greeted by the applauses of the spectators, amongst whom he retreated, to the aggravation, doubtless, of his companions' mortification.

A second and a third party of knights took the field; and although they had various success, yet, upon the whole, the advantage decidedly remained with the challengers, not one of whom lost his seat or swerved from his charge — misfortunes which befell one or two of their antagonists in each encounter. The spirits, therefore, of those opposed to them, seemed to be considerably damped by their continued success. Three knights only appeared on the fourth entry, who, avoiding the shields of Bois-Guilbert and Front-de-Bœuf, contented themselves with touching those of the three other knights, who had not altogether manifested the same strength and dexterity. This politic selection did not alter the fortune of the field, the challengers were still successful; one of their antagonists was overthrown, and both the others failed in the *attaint*,[1] that is, in striking the helmet and shield of their antagonist firmly and strongly, with the lance held in a direct line, so that the weapon might break unless the champion was overthrown.

After this fourth encounter, there was a considerable pause; nor did it appear that any one was very desirous of renewing the contest. The spectators murmured among themselves; for, among the challengers, Malvoisin and Front-de-Bœuf were unpopular from their characters, and the others, except Grantmesnil, were disliked as strangers and foreigners.

But none shared the general feeling of dissatisfaction so keenly as Cedric the Saxon, who saw, in each advantage gained by the Norman challengers, a repeated triumph over the honour of England. His own education had taught him no skill in the games of chivalry, although, with the arms of his Saxon ancestors, he had manifested himself, on many occasions, a brave and determined soldier. He looked anxiously to Athelstane, who had learned the accomplishments of the age, as if desiring that he should make some personal effort to recover the victory which was passing into the hands of the Templar and his associates. But, though both stout of heart, and strong of person, Athelstane had a disposition too inert and unambitious to make the exertions which Cedric seemed to expect from him.

"The day is against England, my lord," said Cedric, in a marked tone; "are you not tempted to take the lance?"

"I shall tilt to-morrow," answered Athelstane, "in the *mêlée;* it is not worth while for me to arm myself to-day."

Two things displeased Cedric in this speech. It contained the Norman word *mêlée*, (to express the general conflict,) and it evinced some indifference to the honour of the country; but it was spoken by Athelstane, whom he held in such profound respect, that he would not trust himself to canvass his motives or his foibles. Moreover, he had no time to make any remark, for Wamba thrust in his word, observing, "It was better, though scarce easier, to be the best man among a hundred, than the best man of two."

Athelstane took the observation as a serious compliment; but Cedric, who better understood the Jester's meaning, darted at him a severe and menacing look; and lucky it was for Wamba, perhaps, that the time and place prevented his receiving, notwithstanding his place and service, more sensible marks of his master's resentment.

The pause in the tournament was still uninterrupted, excepting by the voices of the heralds exclaiming — "Love of ladies, splintering of lances! stand forth, gallant knights, fair eyes look upon your deeds!"

The music also of the challengers breathed from time to time wild bursts expressive of triumph or defiance, while the clowns grudged a holiday which seemed to pass away in inactivity; and old knights and nobles lamented in whispers the decay of martial spirit, spoke of the triumphs of their younger days, but agreed that the land did not now supply dames of such transcendent beauty as had

[1] This term of chivalry, transferred to the law, gives the phrase of being attainted of treason.

animated the jousts of former times. Prince John began to talk to his attendants about making ready the banquet, and the necessity of adjudging the prize to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had, with a single spear, overthrown two knights, and foiled a third.

At length, as the Saracenic music of the challengers concluded one of those long and high flourishes with which they had broken the silence of the lists, it was answered by a solitary trumpet, which breathed a note of defiance from the northern extremity. All eyes were turned to see the new champion which these sounds announced, and no sooner were the barriers opened than he paced into the lists. As far as could be judged of a man sheathed in armour, the new adventurer did not greatly exceed the middle size, and seemed to be rather slender than strongly made. His suit of armour was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oak-tree pulled up by the roots, with the Spanish word *Desdichado*, signifying Disinherited. He was mounted on a gallant black horse, and as he passed through the lists he gracefully saluted the Prince and the ladies by lowering his lance. The dexterity with which he managed his steed, and something of youthful grace which he displayed in his manner, won him the favour of the multitude, which some of the lower classes expressed by calling out, "Touch Ralph de Vipont's shield — touch the Hospitaller's shield; he has the least sure seat, he is your cheapest bargain."

The champion, moving onward amid these well-meant hints, ascended the platform by the sloping alley which led to it from the lists, and, to the astonishment of all present, riding straight up to the central pavilion, struck with the sharp end of his spear the shield of Brian de Bois-Guilbert until it rung again. All stood astonished at his presumption, but none more than the redoubted Knight whom he had thus defied to mortal combat, and who, little expecting so rude a challenge, was standing carelessly at the door of the pavilion.

"Have you confessed yourself, brother," said the Templar, "and have you heard mass this morning, that you peril your life so frankly?"

"I am fitter to meet death than thou art," answered the Disinherited Knight; for by this name the stranger had recorded himself in the books of the tourney.

"Then take your place in the lists," said Bois-Guilbert, "and look your last upon the sun; for this night thou shalt sleep in paradise."

"Gramercy for thy courtesy," replied the Disinherited Knight; "and to requite it, I advise thee to take a fresh horse and a new lance, for by my honour you will need both."

Having expressed himself thus confidently, he reined his horse backward down the slope which he had ascended, and compelled him in the same manner to move backward through the lists, till he reached the northern extremity, where he remained stationary, in expectation of his antagonist. This feat of horsemanship again attracted the applause of the multitude.

However incensed at his adversary for the precautions which he recommended, Brian de Bois-Guilbert did not neglect his advice; for his honour was too nearly concerned, to permit his neglecting any means which might ensure victory over his presumptuous opponent. He changed his horse for a proved and fresh one of great strength and spirit. He chose a new and a tough spear, lest the wood of the former might have been strained in the previous encounters he had sustained. Lastly, he laid aside his shield, which had received some little damage, and received another from his squires. His first had only borne the general device of his rider, representing two knights riding upon one horse, an emblem expressive of the original humility and poverty of the Templars, qualities which they had since exchanged for the arrogance and wealth that finally occasioned their suppression. Bois-Guilbert's new shield bore a raven in full flight, holding in its claws a skull, and bearing the motto, *Gare le Corbeau*.

When the two champions stood opposed to each other at the two extremities of the lists, the public expectation was strained to the highest pitch. Few augured the possibility that the encounter could terminate well for the Disinherited Knight, yet his courage and gallantry secured the general good wishes of the spectators.

The trumpets had no sooner given the signal, than the champions vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the centre of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The lances burst into shivers up to the very grasp, and it seemed at the moment that both knights had fallen, for the shock had made each horse recoil backwards upon its haunches. The address of the riders recovered their steeds by use of the bridle and spur; and having glared on each other for an instant with eyes which seemed to flash fire through the bars of their visors, each made a demi-volte, and, retiring to the extremity of the lists, received a fresh lance from the attendants.

A loud shout from the spectators, waving of scarfs and handkerchiefs, and general acclamations, attested the interest taken by the spectators in this encounter; the most equal, as well as the best performed, which had graced the day. But no sooner had the knights resumed their station, than the clamour of applause was hushed into a silence, so deep and so dead, that it seemed the multitude were afraid even to breathe.

A few minutes pause having been allowed, that the combatants and their horses might recover breath, Prince John with his truncheon signed to the trumpets to sound the onset. The champions a second time sprung from their stations, and closed in the centre of the lists, with the same speed, the same dexterity, the same violence, but not the same equal fortune as before.

In this second encounter, the Templar aimed at the centre of his antagonist's shield, and struck it so fair and forcibly, that his spear went to shivers, and the Disinherited Knight reeled in his saddle. On the other hand, that champion had, in the beginning of his career, directed the point of his lance towards Bois-Guilbert's shield, but, changing his aim almost in the moment of encounter, he addressed it to the helmet, a mark more difficult to hit, but which, if attained, rendered the shock more irresistible. Fair and true he hit the Norman on the visor, where his lance's point kept hold of the bars. Yet, even at this disadvantage, the Templar sustained his high reputation; and had not the girths of his saddle burst, he might not have been unhorsed. As it chanced, however, saddle, horse,

and man, rolled on the ground under a cloud of dust.

To extricate himself from the stirrups and fallen steed, was to the Templar scarce the work of a moment; and, stung with madness, both at his disgrace and at the acclamations with which it was hailed by the spectators, he drew his sword and waved it in defiance of his conqueror. The Disinherited Knight sprung from his steed, and also unsheathed his sword. The marshals of the field, however, spurred their horses between them, and reminded them, that the laws of the tournament did not, on the present occasion, permit this species of encounter.

"We shall meet again, I trust," said the Templar, casting a resentful glance at his antagonist; "and where there are none to separate us."

"If we do not," said the Disinherited Knight, "the fault shall not be mine. On foot or horseback, with spear, with axe, or with sword, I am alike ready to encounter thee."

More and angrier words would have been exchanged, but the marshals, crossing their lances betwixt them, compelled them to separate. The Disinherited Knight returned to his first station, and Bois-Guilbert to his tent, where he remained for the rest of the day in an agony of despair.

Without alighting from his horse, the conqueror called for a bowl of wine, and opening the beaver, or lower part of his helmet, announced that he quaffed it, "To all true English hearts, and to the confusion of foreign tyrants." He then commanded his trumpet to sound a defiance to the challengers, and desired a herald to announce to them, that he should make no election, but was willing to encounter them in the order in which they pleased to advance against him.

The gigantic Front-de-Bœuf, armed in sable armour, was the first who took the field. He bore on a white shield a black bull's head, half defaced by the numerous encounters which he had undergone, and bearing the arrogant motto, *Cave, adsum.* Over this champion the Disinherited Knight obtained a slight but decisive advantage. Both Knights broke their lances fairly, but Front-de-Bœuf, who lost a stirrup in the encounter, was adjudged to have the disadvantage.

In the stranger's third encounter with Sir Philip Malvoisin, he was equally successful; striking that baron so forcibly on the casque, that the laces of the helmet broke, and Malvoisin, only saved from falling by being unhelmeted, was declared vanquished like his companions.

In his fourth combat with De Grantmesnil, the Disinherited Knight shewed as much courtesy as he had hitherto evinced courage and dexterity. De Grantmesnil's horse, which was young and violent, reared and plunged in the course of the career so as to disturb the rider's aim, and the stranger, declining to take the advantage which this accident afforded him, raised his lance and passing his antagonist without touching him, wheeled his horse and rode back again to his own end of the lists, offering his antagonist, by a herald, the chance of a second encounter. This De Grantmesnil declined, avowing himself vanquished as much by the courtesy as by the address of his opponent.

Ralph de Vipont summed up the list of the stranger's triumphs, being hurled to the ground with such force, that the blood gushed from his nose and his mouth, and he was borne senseless from the lists.

The acclamations of thousands applauded the unanimous award of the Prince and marshals, announcing that day's honours to the Disinherited Knight.

CHAPTER X.

——— In the midst was seen
A lady of a more majestic mien,
By stature and by beauty mark'd their sovereign Queen.
* * * * * * *
And as in beauty she surpass'd the choir,
So nobler than the rest was her attire;
A crown of ruddy gold enclosed her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a show;
A branch of Agnus Castus in her hand,
She bore aloft her symbol of command.
The Flower and the Leaf.

William de Wyvil and Stephen de Martival, the marshals of the field, were the first to offer their congratulations to the victor, praying him, at the same time, to suffer his helmet to be unlaced, or, at least, that he would raise his visor ere they conducted him to receive the prize of the day's tourney from the hands of Prince John. The Disinherited Knight, with all knightly courtesy, declined their request, alleging, that he could not at this time suffer his face to be seen, for reasons which he had assigned to the heralds when he entered the lists. The marshals were perfectly satisfied by this reply; for amidst the frequent and capricious vows by which knights were accustomed to bind themselves in the days of chivalry, there were none more common than those by which they engaged to remain incognito for a certain space, or until some particular adventure was achieved. The marshals, therefore, pressed no farther into the mystery of the Disinherited Knight, but, announcing to Prince John the conqueror's desire to remain unknown, they requested permission to bring him before his Grace, in order that he might receive the reward of his valour.

John's curiosity was excited by the mystery observed by the stranger; and, being already displeased with the issue of the tournament, in which the challengers whom he favoured had been successively defeated by one knight, he answered haughtily to the marshals, "By the light of Our Lady's brow, this same knight hath been disinherited as well of his courtesy as of his lands, since he desires to appear before us without uncovering his face.—Wot ye, my lords," he said, turning round to his train, "who this gallant can be, that bears himself thus proudly?"

"I cannot guess," answered De Bracy, "nor did I think there had been within the four seas that girth Britain a champion that could bear down these five knights in one day's jousting. By my faith, I shall never forget the force with which he shocked De Vipont. The poor Hospitaller was hurled from his saddle like a stone from a sling."

"Boast not of that," said a Knight of St John, who was present; "your Temple champion had no better luck. I saw your brave lance, Bois-Guilbert, roll thrice over, grasping his hands full of sand at every turn."

De Bracy, being attached to the Templars, would have replied, but was prevented by Prince John.

"Silence, sirs!" he said; "what unprofitable debate have we here?"

"The victor," said De Wyvil, "still waits the pleasure of your highness."

"It is our pleasure," answered John, "that he do so wait until we learn whether there is not some one who can at least guess at his name and quality. Should he remain there till night-fall, he has had work enough to keep him warm."

"Your Grace," said Waldemar Fitzurse, "will do less than due honour to the victor, if you compel him to wait till we tell your highness that which we cannot know; at least *I* can form no guess — unless he be one of the good lances who accompanied King Richard to Palestine, and who are now straggling homeward from the Holy Land."

"It may be the Earl of Salisbury," said De Bracy; "he is about the same pitch."

"Sir Thomas de Multon, the Knight of Gilsland, rather," said Fitzurse; "Salisbury is bigger in the bones." A whisper arose among the train, but by whom first suggested could not be ascertained. "It might be the King — it might be Richard Cœur-de-Lion himself!"

"Over gods forbode!" said Prince John, involuntarily turning at the same time as pale as death, and shrinking as if blighted by a flash of lightning; "Waldemar! — De Bracy! brave knights and gentlemen, remember your promises, and stand truly by me!"

"Here is no danger impending," said Waldemar Fitzurse; "are you so little acquainted with the gigantic limbs of your father's son, as to think they can be held within the circumference of yonder suit of armour? — De Wyvil and Martival, you will best serve the Prince by bringing forward the victor to the throne, and ending an error that has conjured all the blood from his cheeks. — Look at him more closely," he continued, "your highness will see that he wants three inches of King Richard's height, and twice as much of his shoulder-breadth. The very horse he backs, could not have carried the ponderous weight of King Richard through a single course."

While he was yet speaking, the marshals brought forward the Disinherited Knight to the foot of a wooden flight of steps, which formed the ascent from the lists to Prince John's throne. Still discomposed with the idea that his brother, so much injured, and to whom he was so much indebted, had suddenly arrived in his native kingdom, even the distinctions pointed out by Fitzurse did not altogether remove the Prince's apprehensions; and while, with a short and embarrassed eulogy upon his valour, he caused to be delivered to him the war-horse assigned as the prize, he trembled lest from the barred visor of the mailed form before him, an answer might be returned, in the deep and awful accents of Richard the Lion-hearted.

But the Disinherited Knight spoke not a word in reply to the compliment of the Prince, which he only acknowledged with a profound obeisance.

The horse was led into the lists by two grooms richly dressed, the animal itself being fully accoutred with the richest war-furniture; which, however, scarcely added to the value of the noble creature in the eyes of those who were judges. Laying one hand upon the pommel of the saddle, the Disinherited Knight vaulted at once upon the back of the steed without making use of the stirrup, and, brandishing aloft his lance, rode twice around the lists, exhibiting the points and paces of the horse with the skill of a perfect horseman.

The appearance of vanity, which might otherwise have been attributed to this display, was removed by the propriety shewn in exhibiting to the best advantage the princely reward with which he had been just honoured, and the Knight was again greeted by the acclamations of all present.

In the meanwhile, the bustling Prior of Jorvaulx had reminded Prince John, in a whisper, that the victor must now display his good judgment, instead of his valour, by selecting from among the beauties who graced the galleries, a lady who should fill the throne of the Queen of Beauty and of Love, and deliver the prize of the tourney upon the ensuing day. The Prince accordingly made a sign with his truncheon, as the Knight passed him in his second career around the lists. The Knight turned towards the throne, and, sinking his lance, until the point was within a foot of the ground, remained motionless, as if expecting John's commands; while all admired the sudden dexterity with which he instantly reduced his fiery steed from a state of violent emotion and high excitation to the stillness of an equestrian statue.

"Sir Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since that is the only title by which we can address you, it is now your duty, as well as privilege, to name the fair lady, who, as Queen of Honour and of Love, is to preside over next day's festival. If, as a stranger in our land, you should require the aid of other judgment to guide your own, we can only say that Alicia, the daughter of our gallant knight Waldemar Fitzurse, has at our court been long held the first in beauty as in place. Nevertheless, it is your undoubted prerogative to confer on whom you please this crown, by the delivery of which to the lady of your choice, the election of to-morrow's Queen will be formal and complete.— Raise your lance."

The Knight obeyed; and Prince John placed upon its point a coronet of green satin, having around its edge a circlet of gold, the upper edge of which was relieved by arrow-points and hearts placed interchangeably, like the strawberry leaves and balls upon a ducal crown.

In the broad hint which he dropped respecting the daughter of Waldemar Fitzurse, John had more than one motive, each the offspring of a mind, which was a strange mixture of carelessness and presumption with low artifice and cunning. He wished to banish from the minds of the chivalry around him his own indecent and unacceptable jest respecting the Jewess Rebecca; he was desirous of conciliating Alicia's father Waldemar, of whom he stood in awe, and who had more than once shewn himself dissatisfied during the course of the day's proceedings. He had also a wish to establish himself in the good graces of the lady; for John was at least as licentious in his pleasures as profligate in his ambition. But besides all these reasons, he was desirous to raise up against the Disinherited Knight (towards whom he already entertained a strong dislike) a powerful enemy in the person of Waldemar Fitzurse, who was likely, he thought, highly to resent the injury done to his daughter, in case, as was not unlikely, the victor should make another choice.

And so indeed it proved. For the Disinherited

Knight passed the gallery close to that of the Prince, in which the Lady Alicia was seated in the full pride of triumphant beauty, and, pacing forwards as slowly as he had hitherto rode swiftly around the lists, he seemed to exercise his right of examining the numerous fair faces which adorned that splendid circle.

It was worth while to see the different conduct of the beauties who underwent this examination, during the time it was proceeding. Some blushed, some assumed an air of pride and dignity, some looked straight forward, and essayed to seem utterly unconscious of what was going on, some drew back in alarm, which was perhaps affected, some endeavoured to forbear smiling, and there were two or three who laughed outright. There were also some who dropped their veils over their charms; but as the Wardour Manuscript says, these were fair ones of ten years' standing, it may be supposed, that, having had their full share of such vanities, they were willing to withdraw their claim, in order to give a fair chance to the rising beauties of the age.

At length the champion paused beneath the balcony in which the Lady Rowena was placed, and the expectation of the spectators was excited to the utmost.

It must be owned, that if an interest displayed in his success could have bribed the Disinherited Knight, the part of the lists before which he paused had merited his predilection. Cedric the Saxon, overjoyed at the discomfiture of the Templar, and still more so at the miscarriage of his two malevolent neighbours, Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, had, with his body half stretched over the balcony, accompanied the victor in each course, not with his eyes only, but with his whole heart and soul. The Lady Rowena had watched the progress of the day with equal attention, though without openly betraying the same intense interest. Even the unmoved Athelstane had shewn symptoms of shaking off his apathy, when, calling for a huge goblet of muscadine, he quaffed it to the health of the Disinherited Knight.

Another group, stationed under the gallery occupied by the Saxons, had shewn no less interest in the fate of the day.

"Father Abraham!" said Isaac of York, when the first course was run betwixt the Templar and the Disinherited Knight, "how fiercely that Gentile rides! Ah, the good horse that was brought all the long way from Barbary, he takes no more care of him than if he were a wild ass's colt — and the noble armour, that was worth so many zecchins to Joseph Pareira, the armourer of Milan, besides seventy in the hundred of profits, he cares for it as little as if he had found it in the highways!"

"If he risks his own person and limbs, father," said Rebecca, "in doing such a dreadful battle, he can scarce be expected to spare his horse and armour."

"Child," replied Isaac, somewhat heated, "thou knowest not what thou speakest — His neck and limbs are his own, but his horse and armour belong to——Holy Jacob! what was I about to say! — Nevertheless, it is a good youth — See, Rebecca! see, he is again about to go up to battle against the Philistine — Pray, child — pray for the safety of the good youth, — and of the speedy horse, and the rich armour. — God of my fathers!" he again exclaimed, "he hath conquered, and the uncircumcised Philistine hath fallen before his lance, — even as Og the King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites, fell before the sword of our fathers! — Surely he shall take their gold and their silver, and their war-horses, and their armour of brass and of steel, for a prey and for a spoil."

The same anxiety did the worthy Jew display during every course that was run, seldom failing to hazard a hasty calculation concerning the value of the horse and armour which was forfeited to the champion upon each new success. There had been therefore no small interest taken in the success of the Disinherited Knight, by those who occupied the part of the lists before which he now paused.

Whether from indecision or some other motive of hesitation, the champion of the day remained stationary for more than a minute, while the eyes of the silent audience were riveted upon his motions; and then, gradually and gracefully sinking the point of his lance, he deposited the coronet which it supported at the feet of the fair Rowena. The trumpets instantly sounded, while the heralds proclaimed the Lady Rowena the Queen of Beauty and of Love for the ensuing day, menacing with suitable penalties those who should be disobedient to her authority. They then repeated their cry of "Largesse," to which Cedric, in the height of his joy, replied by an ample donative, and to which Athelstane, though less promptly, added one equally large.

There was some murmuring among the damsels of Norman descent, who were as much unused to see the preference given to a Saxon beauty, as the Norman nobles were to sustain defeat in the games of chivalry which they themselves had introduced. But these sounds of disaffection were drowned by the popular shout of "Long live the Lady Rowena, the chosen and lawful Queen of Love and of Beauty!" To which many in the lower area added, "Long live the Saxon Princess! long live the race of the immortal Alfred!"

However unacceptable these sounds might be to Prince John, and to those around him, he saw himself nevertheless obliged to confirm the nomination of the victor, and accordingly calling to horse, he left his throne; and mounting his jennet, accompanied by his train, he again entered the lists. The Prince paused a moment beneath the gallery of the Lady Alicia, to whom he paid his compliments, observing, at the same time, to those around him — "By my halidome, sirs! if the Knight's feats in arms have shewn that he hath limbs and sinews, his choice hath no less proved that his eyes are none of the clearest."

It was on this occasion, as during his whole life, John's misfortune, not perfectly to understand the characters of those whom he wished to conciliate. Waldemar Fitzurse was rather offended than pleased at the Prince stating thus broadly an opinion, that his daughter had been slighted.

"I know no right of chivalry," he said, "more precious or inalienable than that of each free knight to choose his lady-love by his own judgment. My daughter courts distinction from no one; and in her own character, and in her own sphere, will never fail to receive the full proportion of that which is her due."

Prince John replied not; but, spurring his horse,

as if to give vent to his vexation, he made the animal bound forward to the gallery where Rowena was seated, with the crown still at her feet.

"Assume," he said, "fair lady, the mark of your sovereignty, to which none vows homage more sincerely than ourself, John of Anjoù; and if it please you to-day, with your noble sire and friends, to grace our banquet in the Castle of Ashby, we shall learn to know the empress to whose service we devote to-morrow."

Rowena remained silent, and Cedric answered for her in his native Saxon.

"The Lady Rowena," he said, "possesses not the language in which to reply to your courtesy, or to sustain her part in your festival. I also, and the noble Athelstane of Coningsburgh, speak only the language, and practise only the manners, of our fathers. We therefore decline with thanks your Highness's courteous invitation to the banquet. To-morrow, the Lady Rowena will take upon her the state to which she has been called by the free election of the victor Knight, confirmed by the acclamations of the people."

So saying, he lifted the coronet, and placed it upon Rowena's head, in token of her acceptance of the temporary authority assigned to her.

"What says he?" said Prince John, affecting not to understand the Saxon language, in which, however, he was well skilled. The purport of Cedric's speech was repeated to him in French. "It is well," he said; "to-morrow we will ourself conduct this mute sovereign to her seat of dignity.—You, at least, Sir Knight," he added, turning to the victor, who had remained near the gallery, "will this day share our banquet?"

The Knight, speaking for the first time, in a low and hurried voice, excused himself by pleading fatigue, and the necessity of preparing for to-morrow's encounter.

"It is well," said Prince John, haughtily; "although unused to such refusals, we will endeavour to digest our banquet as we may, though ungraced by the most successful in arms, and his elected Queen of Beauty."

So saying, he prepared to leave the lists with his glittering train, and his turning his steed for that purpose, was the signal for the breaking up and dispersion of the spectators.

Yet, with the vindictive memory proper to offended pride, especially when combined with conscious want of desert, John had hardly proceeded three paces, ere again, turning around, he fixed an eye of stern resentment upon the yeoman who had displeased him in the early part of the day, and issued his commands to the men-at-arms who stood near—"On your life, suffer not that fellow to escape."

The yeoman stood the angry glance of the Prince with the same unvaried steadiness which had marked his former deportment, saying, with a smile, "I have no intention to leave Ashby until the day after to-morrow—I must see how Staffordshire and Leicestershire can draw their bows—the forests of Needwood and Charnwood must rear good archers."

"I," said Prince John to his attendants, but not in direct reply,—"I will see how he can draw his own; and wo betide him unless his skill should prove some apology for his insolence!"

"It is full time," said De Bracy, "that the *outre-cuidance*[1] of these peasants should be restrained by some striking example."

Waldemar Fitzurse, who probably thought his patron was not taking the readiest road to popularity, shrugged up his shoulders and was silent. Prince John resumed his retreat from the lists, and the dispersion of the multitude became general.

In various routes, according to the different quarters from which they came, and in groups of various numbers, the spectators were seen retiring over the plain. By far the most numerous part streamed towards the town of Ashby, where many of the distinguished persons were lodged in the castle, and where others found accommodation in the town itself. Among these were most of the knights who had already appeared in the tournament, or who proposed to fight there the ensuing day, and who, as they rode slowly along, talking over the events of the day, were greeted with loud shouts by the populace. The same acclamations were bestowed upon Prince John, although he was indebted for them rather to the splendour of his appearance and train, than to the popularity of his character.

A more sincere and more general, as well as a better-merited acclamation attended the victor of the day, until, anxious to withdraw himself from popular notice, he accepted the accommodation of one of those pavilions pitched at the extremities of the lists, the use of which was courteously tendered him by the marshals of the field. On his retiring to his tent, many who had lingered in the lists, to look upon and form conjectures concerning him, also dispersed.

The signs, and sounds of a tumultuous concourse of men lately crowded together in one place, and agitated by the same passing events, were now exchanged for the distant hum of voices of different groups retreating in all directions, and these speedily died away in silence. No other sounds were heard save the voices of the menials who stripped the galleries of their cushions and tapestry, in order to put them in safety for the night, and wrangled among themselves for the half-used bottles of wine and relics of the refreshment which had been served round to the spectators.

Beyond the precincts of the lists more than one forge was erected; and these now began to glimmer through the twilight, announcing the toil of the armourers, which was to continue through the whole night, in order to repair or alter the suits of armour to be used again on the morrow.

A strong guard of men-at-arms renewed at intervals, from two hours to two hours, surrounded the lists, and kept watch during the night.

CHAPTER XI.

> Thus, like the sad presaging raven, that tolls
> The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,
> And in the shadow of the silent night
> Doth shake contagion from her sable wings;
> Vex'd and tormented, runs poor Barrabas,
> With fatal curses towards these Christians.
>
> *Jew of Malta.*

The Disinherited Knight had no sooner reached his pavilion, than squires and pages in abundance tendered their services to disarm him, to bring

[1] Presumption, insolence.

fresh attire, and to offer him the refreshment of the bath. Their zeal on this occasion was perhaps sharpened by curiosity, since every one desired to know who the Knight was that had gained so many laurels, yet had refused, even at the command of Prince John, to lift his visor or to name his name. But their officious inquisitiveness was not gratified.

The Disinherited Knight refused all other assistance save that of his own squire, or rather yeoman — a clownish-looking man, who, wrapt in a cloak of dark-coloured felt, and having his head and face half buried in a Norman bonnet made of black fur, seemed to affect the incognito as much as his master. All others being excluded from the tent, this attendant relieved his master from the more burdensome parts of his armour, and placed food and wine before him, which the exertions of the day rendered very acceptable.

The Knight had scarcely finished a hasty meal, ere his menial announced to him that five men, each leading a barbed steed, desired to speak with him. The Disinherited Knight had exchanged his armour for the long robe usually worn by those of his condition, which, being furnished with a hood, concealed the features, when such was the pleasure of the wearer, almost as completely as the visor of the helmet itself; but the twilight, which was now fast darkening, would of itself have rendered a disguise unnecessary, unless to persons to whom the face of an individual chanced to be particularly well known.

The Disinherited Knight, therefore, stept boldly forth to the front of his tent, and found in attendance the squires of the challengers, whom he easily knew by their russet and black dresses, each of whom led his master's charger loaded with the armour in which he had that day fought.

"According to the laws of chivalry," said the foremost of these men, "I, Baldwin de Oyley, squire to the redoubted Knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, make offer to you, styling yourself, for the present, the Disinherited Knight, of the horse and armour, used by the said Brian de Bois-Guilbert in this day's Passage of Arms, leaving it with your nobleness to retain or to ransom the same, according to your pleasure; for such is the law of arms."

The other squires repeated nearly the same formula, and then stood to await the decision of the Disinherited Knight.

"To you four, sirs," replied the Knight, addressing those who had last spoken, "and to your honourable and valiant masters, I have one common reply. Commend me to the noble knights, your masters, and say, I should do ill to deprive them of steeds and arms, which can never be used by braver cavaliers. — I would I could here end my message to these gallant knights; but being, as I term myself, in truth and earnest, the Disinherited, I must be thus far bound to your masters, that they will, of their courtesy, be pleased to ransom their steeds and armour, since that which I wear I can hardly term mine own."

"We stand commissioned, each of us," answered the squire of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, "to offer a hundred zecchins in ransom of these horses and suits of armour."

"It is sufficient," said the Disinherited Knight. "Half the sum my present necessities compel me to accept; of the remaining half, distribute one moiety among yourselves, sir squires, and divide the other half betwixt the heralds and the pursuivants, and minstrels, and attendants."

The squires, with cap in hand, and low reverences, expressed their deep sense of a courtesy and generosity not often practised, at least upon a scale so extensive. The Disinherited Knight then addressed his discourse to Baldwin, the squire of Brian de Bois-Guilbert. "From your master," said he, "I will accept neither arms nor ransom. Say to him in my name, that our strife is not ended — no, not till we have fought as well with swords as with lances — as well on foot as on horseback. To this mortal quarrel he has himself defied me, and I shall not forget the challenge. — Meantime, let him be assured, that I hold him not as one of his companions, with whom I can with pleasure exchange courtesies, but rather as one with whom I stand upon terms of mortal defiance."

"My master," answered Baldwin, "knows how to requite scorn with scorn, and blows with blows, as well as courtesy with courtesy. Since you disdain to accept from him any share of the ransom at which you have rated the arms of the other knights, I must leave his armour and his horse here, being well assured that he will never deign to mount the one or wear the other."

"You have spoken well, good squire," said the Disinherited Knight, "well and boldly, as it beseemeth him to speak who answers for an absent master. Leave not, however, the horse and armour here. Restore them to thy master; or, if he scorns to accept them, retain them, good friend, for thine own use. So far as they are mine, I bestow them upon you freely."

Baldwin made a deep obeisance, and retired with his companions; and the Disinherited Knight entered the pavilion.

"Thus far, Gurth," said he, addressing his attendant, "the reputation of English Chivalry hath not suffered in my hands."

"And I," said Gurth, "for a Saxon swineherd, have not ill played the personage of a Norman squire-at-arms."

"Yea, but," answered the Disinherited Knight, "thou hast ever kept me in anxiety lest thy clownish bearing should discover thee."

"Tush!" said Gurth, "I fear discovery from none, saving my playfellow, Wamba the Jester, of whom I could never discover whether he were most knave or fool. Yet I could scarce choose but laugh, when my old master passed so near to me, dreaming all the while that Gurth was keeping his porkers many a mile off, in the thickets and swamps of Rotherwood. If I am discovered ——"

"Enough," said the Disinherited Knight, "thou knowest my promise."

"Nay, for that matter," said Gurth, "I will never fail my friend for fear of my skin-cutting. I have a tough hide, that will bear knife or scourge as well as any boar's hide in my herd."

"Trust me, I will requite the risk you run for my love, Gurth," said the Knight. "Meanwhile, I pray you to accept these ten pieces of gold."

"I am richer," said Gurth, putting them into his pouch, "than ever was swineherd or bondsman."

"Take this bag of gold to Ashby," continued his master, "and find out Isaac the Jew of York, and let him pay himself for the horse and arms with which his credit supplied me."

"Nay, by St Dunstan," replied Gurth, "that I will not do."

"How, knave," replied his master, "wilt thou not obey my commands?"

"So they be honest, reasonable, and Christian commands," replied Gurth; "but this is none of these. To suffer the Jew to pay himself would be dishonest, for it would be cheating my master; and unreasonable, for it were the part of a fool; and unchristian, since it would be plundering a believer to enrich an infidel."

"See him contented, however, thou stubborn varlet," said the Disinherited Knight.

"I will do so," said Gurth, taking the bag under his cloak, and leaving the apartment; "and it will go hard," he muttered, "but I content him with one-half of his own asking." So saying, he departed, and left the Disinherited Knight to his own perplexed ruminations; which, upon more accounts than it is now possible to communicate to the reader, were of a nature peculiarly agitating and painful.

We must now change the scene to the village of Ashby, or rather to a country house in its vicinity belonging to a wealthy Israelite, with whom Isaac, his daughter, and retinue, had taken up their quarters; the Jews, it is well known, being as liberal in exercising the duties of hospitality and charity among their own people, as they were alleged to be reluctant and churlish in extending them to those whom they termed Gentiles, and whose treatment of them certainly merited little hospitality at their hand.

In an apartment, small indeed, but richly furnished with decorations of an Oriental taste, Rebecca was seated on a heap of embroidered cushions, which, piled along a low platform that surrounded the chamber, served, like the estrada of the Spaniards, instead of chairs and stools. She was watching the motions of her father with a look of anxious and filial affection, while he paced the apartment with a dejected mien and disordered step; sometimes clasping his hands together—sometimes casting his eyes to the roof of the apartment, as one who laboured under great mental tribulation. "O, Jacob!" he exclaimed—"O, all ye twelve Holy Fathers of our tribe! what a losing venture is this for one who hath duly kept every jot and tittle of the law of Moses—Fifty zecchins wrenched from me at one clutch, and by the talons of a tyrant!"

"But, father," said Rebecca, "you seemed to give the gold to Prince John willingly."

"Willingly? the blotch of Eygpt upon him!—Willingly, saidst thou?—Ay, as willingly as when, in the Gulf of Lyons, I flung over my merchandise to lighten the ship, while she laboured in the tempest—robed the seething billows in my choice silks—perfumed their briny foam with myrrh and aloes—enriched their caverns with gold and silver work! And was not that an hour of unutterable misery, though my own hands made the sacrifice?"

"But it was a sacrifice which Heaven exacted to save our lives," answered Rebecca, "and the God of our fathers has since blessed your store and your gettings."

"Ay," answered Isaac, "but if the tyrant lays hold on them as he did to-day, and compels me to smile while he is robbing me?—O, daughter, disinherited and wandering as we are, the worst evil which befalls our race is, that when we are wronged and plundered, all the world laughs around, and we are compelled to suppress our sense of injury, and to smile tamely, when we would revenge bravely."

"Think not thus of it, my father," said Rebecca; "we also have advantages. These Gentiles, cruel and oppressive as they are, are in some sort dependent on the dispersed children of Zion, whom they despise and persecute. Without the aid of our wealth, they could neither furnish forth their hosts in war, nor their triumphs in peace; and the gold which we lend them returns with increase to our coffers. We are like the herb which flourisheth most when it is most trampled on. Even this day's pageant had not proceeded without the consent of the despised Jew, who furnished the means."

"Daughter," said Isaac, "thou hast harped upon another string of sorrow. The goodly steed and the rich armour, equal to the full profit of my adventure with our Kirjath Jairam of Leicester—there is a dead loss too—ay, a loss which swallows up the gains of a week; ay, of the space between two Sabbaths—and yet it may end better than I now think, for 'tis a good youth."

"Assuredly," said Rebecca, "you shall not repent you of requiting the good deed received of the stranger knight."

"I trust so, daughter," said Isaac, "and I trust too in the rebuilding of Zion; but as well do I hope with my own bodily eyes to see the walls and battlements of the new Temple, as to see a Christian, yea, the very best of Christians, repay a debt to a Jew, unless under the awe of the judge and jailor."

So saying, he resumed his discontented walk through the apartment; and Rebecca, perceiving that her attempts at consolation only served to awaken new subjects of complaint, wisely desisted from her unavailing efforts—a prudential line of conduct, and we recommend to all who set up for comforters and advisers, to follow it in the like circumstances.

The evening was now becoming dark, when a Jewish servant entered the apartment, and placed upon the table two silver lamps, fed with perfumed oil; the richest wines, and the most delicate refreshments, were at the same time displayed by another Israelitish domestic on a small ebony table, inlaid with silver; for, in the interior of their houses, the Jews refused themselves no expensive indulgences. At the same time the servant informed Isaac, that a Nazarene (so they termed Christians, while conversing among themselves) desired to speak with him. He that would live by traffic, must hold himself at the disposal of every one claiming business with him. Isaac at once replaced on the table the untasted glass of Greek wine which he had just raised to his lips, and saying hastily to his daughter, "Rebecca, veil thyself," commanded the stranger to be admitted.

Just as Rebecca had dropped over her fine features a screen of silver gauze which reached to her feet, the door opened, and Gurth entered, wrapt in the ample folds of his Norman mantle. His appearance was rather suspicious than prepossessing, especially as, instead of doffing his bonnet, he pulled it still deeper over his rugged brow.

"Art thou Isaac the Jew of York?" said Gurth, in Saxon.

"I am," replied Isaac, in the same language, (for his traffic had rendered every tongue spoken in Britain familiar to him) — "and who art thou?"

"That is not to the purpose," answered Gurth.

"As much as my name is to thee," replied Isaac; "for without knowing thine, how can I hold intercourse with thee?"

"Easily," answered Gurth; "I, being to pay money, must know that I deliver it to the right person; thou, who art to receive it, will not, I think, care very greatly by whose hands it is delivered."

"O," said the Jew, "you are come to pay moneys! — Holy Father Abraham! that altereth our relation to each other. And from whom dost thou bring it?"

"From the Disinherited Knight," said Gurth, "victor in this day's tournament. It is the price of the armour supplied to him by Kirjath Jairam of Leicester, on thy recommendation. The steed is restored to thy stable: I desire to know the amount of the sum which I am to pay for the armour."

"I said he was a good youth!" exclaimed Isaac with joyful exultation. "A cup of wine will do thee no harm," he added, filling and handing to the swineherd a richer draught than Gurth had ever before tasted. "And how much money," continued Isaac, "hast thou brought with thee?"

"Holy Virgin!" said Gurth, setting down the cup, "what nectar these unbelieving dogs drink, while true Christians are fain to quaff ale as muddy and thick as the draff we give to hogs! — What money have I brought with me?" continued the Saxon, when he had finished this uncivil ejaculation, "even but a small sum; something in hand the whilst. What, Isaac! thou must bear a conscience, though it be a Jewish one."

"Nay, but," said Isaac, "thy master has won goodly steeds and rich armours with the strength of his lance, and of his right hand — but 'tis a good youth — the Jew will take these in present payment, and render him back the surplus."

"My master has disposed of them already," said Gurth.

"Ah! that was wrong," said the Jew, "that was the part of a fool. No Christians here could buy so many horses and armour — no Jew except myself would give him half the values. But thou hast a hundred zecchins with thee in that bag," said Isaac, prying under Gurth's cloak, "it is a heavy one."

"I have heads for cross-bow bolts in it," said Gurth, readily.

"Well, then" — said Isaac, panting and hesitating between habitual love of gain and a new-born desire to be liberal in the present instance, "if I should say that I would take eighty zecchins for the good steed and the rich armour, which leaves me not a guilder's profit, have you money to pay me?"

"Barely," said Gurth, though the sum demanded was more reasonable than he expected, "and it will leave my master nigh penniless. Nevertheless, if such be your least offer, I must be content."

"Fill thyself another goblet of wine," said the Jew. "Ah! eighty zecchins is too little. It leaveth no profit for the usages of the money; and, besides, the good horse may have suffered wrong in this day's encounter. O, it was a hard and a dangerous meeting! man and steed rushing on each other like wild bulls of Bashan! The horse cannot but have had wrong."

"And I say," replied Gurth, "he is sound, wind and limb; and you may see him now, in your stable. And I say, over and above, that seventy zecchins is enough for the armour, and I hope a Christian's word is as good as a Jew's. If you will not take seventy, I will carry this bag" (and he shook it till the contents jingled) "back to my master."

"Nay, nay!" said Isaac; "lay down the talents — the shekels — the eighty zecchins, and thou shalt see I will consider thee liberally."

Gurth at length complied; and telling out eighty zecchins upon the table, the Jew delivered out to him an acquittance for the horse and suit of armour. The Jew's hand trembled for joy as he wrapped up the first seventy pieces of gold. The last ten he told over with much deliberation, pausing, and saying something as he took each piece from the table, and dropped it into his purse. It seemed as if his avarice were struggling with his better nature, and compelling him to pouch zecchin after zecchin, while his generosity urged him to restore some part at least to his benefactor, or as a donation to his agent. His whole speech ran nearly thus: —

"Seventy-one — seventy-two; thy master is a good youth — seventy-three, an excellent youth — seventy-four — that piece hath been clipt within the ring — seventy-five — and that looketh light of weight — seventy-six — when thy master wants money, let him come to Isaac of York — seventy-seven — that is, with reasonable security." Here he made a considerable pause, and Gurth had good hope that the last three pieces might escape the fate of their comrades; but the enumeration proceeded. — "Seventy-eight — thou art a good fellow — seventy-nine — and deservest something for thyself ——"

Here the Jew paused again, and looked at the last zecchin, intending, doubtless, to bestow it upon Gurth. He weighed it upon the tip of his finger, and made it ring by dropping it upon the table. Had it rung too flat, or had it felt a hair's breadth too light, generosity had carried the day; but, unhappily for Gurth, the chime was full and true, the zecchin plump, newly coined, and a grain above weight. Isaac could not find in his heart to part with it, so dropt it into his purse as if in absence of mind, with the words, "Eighty completes the tale, and I trust thy master will reward thee handsomely. — Surely," he added, looking earnestly at the bag, "thou hast more coins in that pouch?"

Gurth grinned, which was his nearest approach to a laugh, as he replied, "About the same quantity which thou hast just told over so carefully." He then folded the quittance, and put it under his cap, adding, — "Peril of thy beard, Jew, see that this be full and ample!" He filled himself, unbidden, a third goblet of wine, and left the apartment without ceremony.

"Rebecca," said the Jew, "that Ishmaelite hath gone somewhat beyond me. Nevertheless his master is a good youth — ay, and I am well pleased that he hath gained shekels of gold and shekels of silver, even by the speed of his horse and by the

strength of his lance, which, like that of Goliath the Philistine, might vie with a weaver's beam."

As he turned to receive Rebecca's answer, he observed, that during his chaffering with Gurth, she had left the apartment unperceived.

In the meanwhile, Gurth had descended the stair, and, having reached the dark antechamber, or hall, was puzzling about to discover the entrance, when a figure in white, shewn by a small silver lamp which she held in her hand, beckoned him into a side apartment. Gurth had some reluctance to obey the summons. Rough and impetuous as a wild boar, where only earthly force was to be apprehended, he had all the characteristic terrors of a Saxon respecting fawns, forest-fiends, white women, and the whole of the superstitions which his ancestors had brought with them from the wilds of Germany. He remembered, moreover, that he was in the house of a Jew, a people who, besides the other unamiable qualities which popular report ascribed to them, were supposed to be profound necromancers and cabalists. Nevertheless, after a moment's pause, he obeyed the beckoning summons of the apparition, and followed her into the apartment which she indicated, where he found to his joyful surprise that his fair guide was the beautiful Jewess whom he had seen at the tournament, and a short time in her father's apartment.

She asked him the particulars of his transaction with Isaac, which he detailed accurately.

"My father did but jest with thee, good fellow," said Rebecca; "he owes thy master deeper kindness than these arms and steed could pay, were their value tenfold. What sum didst thou pay my father even now?"

"Eighty zecchins," said Gurth, surprised at the question.

"In this purse," said Rebecca, "thou wilt find a hundred. Restore to thy master that which is his due, and enrich thyself with the remainder. Haste — begone — stay not to render thanks! and beware how you pass through this crowded town, where thou mayst easily lose both thy burden and thy life. — Reuben," she added, clapping her hands together, "light forth this stranger, and fail not to draw lock and bar behind him."

Reuben, a dark-brow'd and black-bearded Israelite, obeyed her summons, with a torch in his hand; undid the outward door of the house, and conducting Gurth across a paved court, let him out through a wicket in the entrance-gate, which he closed behind him with such bolts and chains as would well have become that of a prison.

"By St Dunstan," said Gurth, as he stumbled up the dark avenue, "this is no Jewess, but an angel from heaven! Ten zecchins from my brave young master — twenty from this pearl of Zion — Oh, happy day! — Such another, Gurth, will redeem thy bondage, and make thee a brother as free of thy guild as the best. And then do I lay down my swineherd's horn and staff, and take the freeman's sword and buckler, and follow my young master to the death, without hiding either my face or my name."

CHAPTER XII.

1st Outlaw. Stand, sir, and throw us that you have about you; If not, we 'll make you sit, and rifle you.
Speed. Sir, we are undone! these are the villains That all the travellers do fear so much.
Val. My friends, ——
1st Out. That 's not so, sir, we are your enemies.
2d Out. Peace! we 'll hear him.
3d Out. Ay, by my beard, will we; For he 's a proper man.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

THE nocturnal adventures of Gurth were not yet concluded; indeed he himself became partly of that mind, when, after passing one or two straggling houses which stood in the outskirts of the village, he found himself in a deep lane, running between two banks overgrown with hazel and holly, while here and there a dwarf oak flung its arms altogether across the path. The lane was moreover much rutted and broken up by the carriages which had recently transported articles of various kinds to the tournament; and it was dark, for the banks and bushes intercepted the light of the harvest moon.

From the village were heard the distant sounds of revelry, mixed occasionally with loud laughter, sometimes broken by screams, and sometimes by wild strains of distant music. All these sounds, intimating the disorderly state of the town, crowded with military nobles and their dissolute attendants, gave Gurth some uneasiness. "The Jewess was right," he said to himself. "By Heaven and St Dunstan, I would I were safe at my journey's end with all this treasure! Here are such numbers, I will not say of arrant thieves, but of errant knights and errant squires, errant monks and errant minstrels, errant jugglers and errant jesters, that a man with a single merk would be in danger, much more a poor swineherd with a whole bagful of zecchins. Would I were out of the shade of these infernal bushes, that I might at least see any of St Nicholas's clerks before they spring on my shoulders."

Gurth accordingly hastened his pace, in order to gain the open common to which the lane led, but was not so fortunate as to accomplish his object. Just as he had attained the upper end of the lane, where the underwood was thickest, four men sprung upon him, even as his fears anticipated, two from each side of the road, and seized him so fast, that resistance, if at first practicable, would have been now too late. — "Surrender your charge," said one of them; "we are the deliverers of the commonwealth, who ease every man of his burden."

"You should not ease me of mine so lightly," muttered Gurth, whose surly honesty could not be tamed even by the pressure of immediate violence, — "had I it but in my power to give three strokes in its defence."

"We shall see that presently," said the robber; and, speaking to his companions, he added, "bring along the knave. I see he would have his head broken, as well as his purse cut, and so be let blood in two veins at once."

Gurth was hurried along agreeably to this mandate, and having been dragged somewhat roughly over the bank, on the left-hand side of the lane, found himself in a straggling thicket, which lay betwixt it and the open common. He was com-

pelled to follow his rough conductors into the very depth of this cover, where they stopt unexpectedly in an irregular open space, free in a great measure from trees, and on which, therefore, the beams of the moon fell without much interruption from boughs and leaves. Here his captors were joined by two other persons, apparently belonging to the gang. They had short swords by their sides, and quarter-staves in their hands, and Gurth could now observe that all six wore visors, which rendered their occupation a matter of no question, even had their former proceedings left it in doubt.

"What money hast thou, churl?" said one of the thieves.

"Thirty zecchins of my own property," answered Gurth, doggedly.

"A forfeit — a forfeit," shouted the robbers; "a Saxon hath thirty zecchins, and returns sober from a village! An undeniable and unredeemable forfeit of all he hath about him."

"I hoarded it to purchase my freedom," said Gurth.

"Thou art an ass," replied one of the thieves; "three quarts of double ale had rendered thee as free as thy master, ay, and freer too, if he be a Saxon like thyself."

"A sad truth," replied Gurth; "but if these same thirty zecchins will buy my freedom from you, unloose my hands, and I will pay them to you."

"Hold," said one who seemed to exercise some authority over the others; "this bag which thou bearest, as I can feel through thy cloak, contains more coin than thou hast told us of."

"It is the good knight my master's," answered Gurth, "of which, assuredly, I would not have spoken a word, had you been satisfied with working your will upon mine own property."

"Thou art an honest fellow," replied the robber, "I warrant thee; and we worship not St Nicholas so devoutly but what thy thirty zecchins may yet escape, if thou deal uprightly with us. Meantime render up thy trust for the time." So saying, he took from Gurth's breast the large leathern pouch, in which the purse given him by Rebecca was enclosed, as well as the rest of the zecchins, and then continued his interrogation. — "Who is thy master?"

"The Disinherited Knight," said Gurth.

"Whose good lance," replied the robber, "won the prize in to-day's tourney? What is his name and lineage?"

"It is his pleasure," answered Gurth, "that they be concealed; and from me, assuredly, you will learn nought of them."

"What is thine own name and lineage?"

"To tell that," said Gurth, "might reveal my master's."

"Thou art a saucy groom," said the robber, "but of that anon. How comes thy master by this gold? is it of his inheritance, or by what means hath it accrued to him?"

"By his good lance," answered Gurth. — "These bags contain the ransom of four good horses, and four good suits of armour."

"How much is there?" demanded the robber.

"Two hundred zecchins."

"Only two hundred zecchins!" said the bandit; "your master hath dealt liberally by the vanquished, and put them to a cheap ransom. Name those who paid the gold."

Gurth did so.

"The armour and horse of the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, at what ransom were they held? — Thou seest thou canst not deceive me."

"My master," replied Gurth, "will take nought from the Templar save his life's-blood. They are on terms of mortal defiance, and cannot hold courteous intercourse together."

"Indeed!" — repeated the robber, and paused after he had said the word. "And what wert thou now doing at Ashby with such a charge in thy custody?"

"I went thither to render to Isaac the Jew of York," replied Gurth, "the price of a suit of armour with which he fitted my master for this tournament."

"And how much didst thou pay to Isaac? — Methinks, to judge by weight, there is still two hundred zecchins in that pouch."

"I paid to Isaac," said the Saxon, "eighty zecchins, and he restored me a hundred in lieu thereof."

"How! what!" exclaimed all the robbers at once; "darest thou trifle with us, that thou tellest such improbable lies?"

"What I tell you," said Gurth, "is as true as the moon is in heaven. You will find the just sum in a silken purse within the leathern pouch, and separate from the rest of the gold."

"Bethink thee, man," said the Captain, "thou speakest of a Jew — of an Israelite, — as unapt to restore gold, as the dry sand of his deserts to return the cup of water which the pilgrim spills upon them."

"There is no more mercy in them," said another of the banditti, "than in an unbribed sheriff's officer."

"It is, however, as I say," said Gurth.

"Strike a light instantly," said the Captain; "I will examine this said purse; and if it be as this fellow says, the Jew's bounty is little less miraculous than the stream which relieved his fathers in the wilderness."

A light was procured accordingly, and the robber proceeded to examine the purse. The others crowded around him, and even two who had hold of Gurth relaxed their grasp while they stretched their necks to see the issue of the search. Availing himself of their negligence, by a sudden exertion of strength and activity, Gurth shook himself free of their hold, and might have escaped, could he have resolved to leave his master's property behind him. But such was no part of his intention. He wrenched a quarter-staff from one of the fellows, struck down the Captain, who was altogether unaware of his purpose, and had well-nigh repossessed himself of the pouch and treasure. The thieves, however, were too nimble for him, and again secured both the bag and the trusty Gurth.

"Knave!" said the Captain, getting up, "thou hast broken my head; and with other men of our sort thou wouldst fare the worse for thy insolence. But thou shalt know thy fate instantly. First let us speak of thy master; the knight's matters must go before the squire's, according to the due order of chivalry. Stand thou fast in the meantime — if thou stir again, thou shalt have that will make thee quiet for thy life — Comrades!" he then said, addressing his gang, "this purse is embroidered with Hebrew characters, and I well believe the

yeoman's tale is true. The errant knight, his master, must needs pass us toll-free. He is too like ourselves for us to make booty of him, since dogs should not worry dogs where wolves and foxes are to be found in abundance."

"Like us?" answered one of the gang; "I should like to hear how that is made good."

"Why, thou fool," answered the Captain, "is he not poor and disinherited as we are?—Doth he not win his substance at the sword's point as we do?—Hath he not beaten Front-de-Bœuf and Malvoisin, even as we would beat them if we could? Is he not the enemy to life and death of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whom we have so much reason to fear? And were all this otherwise, wouldst thou have us shew a worse conscience than an unbeliever, a Hebrew Jew?"

"Nay, that were a shame," muttered the other fellow; "and yet, when I served in the band of stout old Gandelyn, we had no such scruples of conscience. And this insolent peasant,—he too, I warrant me, is to be dismissed scatheless?"

"Not if *thou* canst scathe him," replied the Captain.—"Here, fellow," continued he, addressing Gurth, "canst thou use the staff, that thou starts to it so readily?"

"I think," said Gurth, "thou shouldst be best able to reply to that question."

"Nay, by my troth, thou gavest me a round knock," replied the Captain; "do as much for this fellow, and thou shalt pass scot-free; and if thou dost not—why, by my faith, as thou art such a sturdy knave, I think I must pay thy ransom myself.—Take thy staff, Miller," he added, "and keep thy head; and do you others let the fellow go, and give him a staff—there is light enough to lay on load by."

The two champions being alike armed with quarter-staves, stepped forward into the centre of the open space, in order to have the full benefit of the moonlight; the thieves in the meantime laughing, and crying to their comrade, "Miller! beware thy toll-dish." The Miller, on the other hand, holding his quarter-staff by the middle, and making it flourish round his head after the fashion which the French call *faire le moulinet*, exclaimed boastfully, "Come on, churl, an thou darest: thou shalt feel the strength of a miller's thumb!"

"If thou be'st a miller," answered Gurth, undauntedly, making his weapon play around his head with equal dexterity, "thou art doubly a thief, and I, as a true man, bid thee defiance."

So saying, the two champions closed together, and for a few minutes they displayed great equality in strength, courage, and skill, intercepting and returning the blows of their adversary with the most rapid dexterity, while, from the continued clatter of their weapons, a person at a distance might have supposed that there were at least six persons engaged on each side. Less obstinate, and even less dangerous combats, have been described in good heroic verse; but that of Gurth and the Miller must remain unsung, for want of a sacred poet to do justice to its eventful progress. Yet, though quarter-staff play be out of date, what we can in prose we will do for these bold champions.

Long they fought equally, until the Miller began to lose temper at finding himself so stoutly opposed, and at hearing the laughter of his companions, who, as usual in such cases, enjoyed his vexation. This was not a state of mind favourable to the noble game of quarter-staff, in which, as in ordinary cudgel-playing, the utmost coolness is requisite; and it gave Gurth, whose temper was steady, though surly, the opportunity of acquiring a decided advantage, in availing himself of which he displayed great mastery.

The Miller pressed furiously forward, dealing blows with either end of his weapon alternately, and striving to come to half-staff distance, while Gurth defended himself against the attack, keeping his hands about a yard asunder, and covering himself by shifting his weapon with great celerity, so as to protect his head and body. Thus did he maintain the defensive, making his eye, foot, and hand keep true time, until, observing his antagonist to lose wind, he darted the staff at his face with his left hand; and, as the Miller endeavoured to parry the thrust, he slid his right hand down to his left, and with the full swing of the weapon struck his opponent on the left side of the head, who instantly measured his length upon the greensward.

"Well and yeomanly done!" shouted the robbers; "fair play and Old England for ever! The Saxon hath saved both his purse and his hide, and the Miller has met his match."

"Thou mayst go thy ways, my friend," said the Captain, addressing Gurth, in special confirmation of the general voice, "and I will cause two of my comrades to guide thee by the best way to thy master's pavilion, and to guard thee from nightwalkers that might have less tender consciences than ours; for there is many one of them upon the amble in such a night as this. Take heed, however," he added sternly; "remember thou hast refused to tell thy name—ask not after ours, nor endeavour to discover who or what we are; for, if thou makest such an attempt, thou wilt come by worse fortune than has yet befallen thee."

Gurth thanked the Captain for his courtesy, and promised to attend to his recommendation. Two of the outlaws, taking up their quarter-staves, and desiring Gurth to follow close in the rear, walked roundly forward along a by-path, which traversed the thicket and the broken ground adjacent to it. On the very verge of the thicket two men spoke to his conductors, and receiving an answer in a whisper, withdrew into the wood, and suffered them to pass unmolested. This circumstance induced Gurth to believe both that the gang was strong in numbers, and that they kept regular guards around their place of rendezvous.

When they arrived on the open heath, where Gurth might have had some trouble in finding his road, the thieves guided him straight forward to the top of a little eminence, whence he could see, spread beneath him in the moonlight, the palisades of the lists, the glimmering pavilions pitched at either end, with the pennons which adorned them fluttering in the moonbeam, and from which could be heard the hum of the song with which the sentinels were beguiling their night-watch.

Here the thieves stopt.

"We go with you no farther," said they; "it were not safe that we should do so.—Remember the warning you have received—keep secret what has this night befallen you, and you will have no room to repent it—neglect what is now told you, and the Tower of London shall not protect you against our revenge."

"Good-night to you, kind sirs," said Gurth; "I shall remember your orders, and trust that there is no offence in wishing you a safer and an honester trade."

Thus they parted, the outlaws returning in the direction from whence they had come, and Gurth proceeding to the tent of his master, to whom, notwithstanding the injunction he had received, he communicated the whole adventures of the evening.

The Disinherited Knight was filled with astonishment, no less at the generosity of Rebecca, by which, however, he resolved he would not profit, than that of the robbers, to whose profession such a quality seemed totally foreign. His course of reflections upon these singular circumstances was, however, interrupted by the necessity for taking repose, which the fatigue of the preceding day, and the propriety of refreshing himself for the morrow's encounter, rendered alike indispensable.

The knight, therefore, stretched himself for repose upon a rich couch with which the tent was provided; and the faithful Gurth, extending his hardy limbs upon a bear-skin which formed a sort of carpet to the pavilion, laid himself across the opening of the tent, so that no one could enter without awakening him.

CHAPTER XIII.

The heralds left their pricking up and down,
Now ringen trumpets loud and clarion.
There is no more to say, but east and west,
In go the speares sadly in the rest,
In goth the sharp spur into the side,
There see men who can just and who can ride;
There shiver shaftes upon shieldes thick,
He feeleth through the heart-spone the prick;
Up springen speares, twenty feet in height,
Out go the swordes to the silver bright;
The helms they to-hewn and to-shred:
Out burst the blood with stern streames red.

CHAUCER.

Morning arose in unclouded splendour, and ere the sun was much above the horizon, the idlest or the most eager of the spectators appeared on the common, moving to the lists as to a general centre, in order to secure a favourable situation for viewing the continuation of the expected games.

The marshals and their attendants appeared next on the field, together with the heralds, for the purpose of receiving the names of the knights who intended to just, with the side which each chose to espouse. This was a necessary precaution, in order to secure equality betwixt the two bodies who should be opposed to each other.

According to due formality, the Disinherited Knight was to be considered as leader of the one body, while Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had been rated as having done second-best in the preceding day, was named first champion of the other band. Those who had concurred in the challenge adhered to his party of course, excepting only Ralph de Vipont, whom his fall had rendered unfit so soon to put on his armour. There was no want of distinguished and noble candidates to fill up the ranks on either side.

In fact, although the general tournament, in which all knights fought at once, was more dangerous than single encounters, they were, nevertheless, more frequented and practised by the chivalry of the age. Many knights, who had not sufficient confidence in their own skill to defy a single adversary of high reputation, were, nevertheless, desirous of displaying their valour in the general combat, where they might meet others with whom they were more upon an equality. On the present occasion, about fifty knights were inscribed as desirous of combating upon each side, when the marshals declared that no more could be admitted, to the disappointment of several who were too late in preferring their claim to be included.

About the hour of ten o'clock, the whole plain was crowded with horsemen, horsewomen, and foot-passengers, hastening to the tournament; and shortly after, a grand flourish of trumpets announced Prince John and his retinue, attended by many of those knights who meant to take share in the game, as well as others who had no such intention.

About the same time arrived Cedric the Saxon, with the Lady Rowena, unattended, however, by Athelstane. This Saxon lord had arrayed his tall and strong person in armour, in order to take his place among the combatants; and, considerably to the surprise of Cedric, had chosen to enlist himself on the part of the Knight Templar. The Saxon, indeed, had remonstrated strongly with his friend upon the injudicious choice he had made of his party; but he had only received that sort of answer usually given by those who are more obstinate in following their own course, than strong in justifying it.

His best, if not his only reason, for adhering to the party of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Athelstane had the prudence to keep to himself. Though his apathy of disposition prevented his taking any means to recommend himself to the Lady Rowena, he was, nevertheless, by no means insensible to her charms, and considered his union with her as a matter already fixed beyond doubt, by the assent of Cedric and her other friends. It had therefore been with smothered displeasure that the proud though indolent Lord of Coningsburgh beheld the victor of the preceding day select Rowena as the object of that honour which it became his privilege to confer. In order to punish him for a preference which seemed to interfere with his own suit, Athelstane, confident of his strength, and to whom his flatterers, at least, ascribed great skill in arms, had determined not only to deprive the Disinherited Knight of his powerful succour, but, if an opportunity should occur, to make him feel the weight of his battle-axe.

De Bracy, and other Knights attached to Prince John, in obedience to a hint from him, had joined the party of the challengers, John being desirous to secure, if possible, the victory to that side. On the other hand, many other Knights, both English and Norman, natives and strangers, took part against the challengers, the more readily that the opposite band was to be led by so distinguished a champion as the Disinherited Knight had approved himself.

As soon as Prince John observed that the destined Queen of the day had arrived upon the field, assuming that air of courtesy which sat well upon him when he was pleased to exhibit it, he rode forward to meet her, doffed his bonnet, and, alighting from his horse, assisted the Lady Rowena

from her saddle, while his followers uncovered at the same time, and one of the most distinguished dismounted to hold her palfrey.

"It is thus," said Prince John, "that we set the dutiful example of loyalty to the Queen of Love and Beauty, and are ourselves her guide to the throne which she must this day occupy.—Ladies," he said, "attend your Queen, as you wish in your turn to be distinguished by like honours."

So saying, the Prince marshalled Rowena to the seat of honour opposite his own, while the fairest and most distinguished ladies present crowded after her to obtain places as near as possible to their temporary sovereign.

No sooner was Rowena seated, than a burst of music, half-drowned by the shouts of the multitude, greeted her new dignity. Meantime, the sun shone fierce and bright upon the polished arms of the knights of either side, who crowded the opposite extremities of the lists, and held eager conference together concerning the best mode of arranging their line of battle, and supporting the conflict.

The heralds then proclaimed silence until the laws of the tourney should be rehearsed. These were calculated in some degree to abate the dangers of the day; a precaution the more necessary, as the conflict was to be maintained with sharp swords and pointed lances.

The champions were therefore prohibited to thrust with the sword, and were confined to striking. A knight, it was announced, might use a mace or battle-axe at pleasure, but the dagger was a prohibited weapon. A knight unhorsed might renew the fight on foot with any other on the opposite side in the same predicament; but mounted horsemen were in that case forbidden to assail him. When any knight could force his antagonist to the extremity of the lists, so as to touch the palisade with his person or arms, such opponent was obliged to yield himself vanquished, and his armour and horse were placed at the disposal of the conqueror. A knight thus overcome was not permitted to take farther share in the combat. If any combatant was struck down, and unable to recover his feet, his squire or page might enter the lists, and drag his master out of the press; but in that case the knight was adjudged vanquished, and his arms and horse declared forfeited. The combat was to cease as soon as Prince John should throw down his leading staff, or truncheon; another precaution usually taken to prevent the unnecessary effusion of blood by the too long endurance of a sport so desperate. Any knight breaking the rules of the tournament, or otherwise transgressing the rules of honourable chivalry, was liable to be stript of his arms, and, having his shield reversed, to be placed in that posture astride upon the bars of the palisade, and exposed to public derision, in punishment of his unknightly conduct. Having announced these precautions, the heralds concluded with an exhortation to each good knight to do his duty, and to merit favour from the Queen of Beauty and of Love.

This proclamation having been made, the heralds withdrew to their stations. The knights, entering at either end of the lists in long procession, arranged themselves in a double file, precisely opposite to each other, the leader of each party being in the centre of the foremost rank, a post which he did not occupy until each had carefully arranged the ranks of his party, and stationed every one in his place.

It was a goodly, and at the same time an anxious sight, to behold so many gallant champions, mounted bravely, and armed richly, stand ready prepared for an encounter so formidable, seated on their war-saddles like so many pillars of iron, and awaiting the signal of encounter with the same ardour as their generous steeds, which, by neighing and pawing the ground, gave signal of their impatience.

As yet the knights held their long lances upright, their bright points glancing to the sun, and the streamers with which they were decorated fluttering over the plumage of the helmets. Thus they remained while the marshals of the field surveyed their ranks with the utmost exactness, lest either party had more or fewer than the appointed number. The tale was found exactly complete. The marshals then withdrew from the lists, and William de Wyvil, with a voice of thunder, pronounced the signal words—*Laissez aller!* The trumpets sounded as he spoke — the spears of the champions were at once lowered and placed in the rests — the spurs were dashed into the flanks of the horses, and the two foremost ranks of either party rushed upon each other in full gallop, and met in the middle of the lists with a shock, the sound of which was heard at a mile's distance. The rear rank of each party advanced at a slower pace to sustain the defeated, and follow up the success of the victors of their party.

The consequences of the encounter were not instantly seen, for the dust raised by the trampling of so many steeds darkened the air, and it was a minute ere the anxious spectators could see the fate of the encounter. When the fight became visible, half the knights on each side were dismounted, some by the dexterity of their adversary's lance, — some by the superior weight and strength of opponents, which had borne down both horse and man, — some lay stretched on earth as if never more to rise, — some had already gained their feet, and were closing hand to hand with those of their antagonists who were in the same predicament, — and several on both sides, who had received wounds by which they were disabled, were stopping their blood with their scarfs, and endeavouring to extricate themselves from the tumult. The mounted knights, whose lances had been almost all broken by the fury of the encounter, were now closely engaged with their swords, shouting their war-cries, and exchanging buffets, as if honour and life depended on the issue of the combat.

The tumult was presently increased by the advance of the second rank on either side, which, acting as a reserve, now rushed on to aid their companions. The followers of Brian de Bois-Guilbert shouted — "*Ha! Beau-seant! Beau-seant!*[1] — For the Temple — For the Temple!" The opposite party shouted in answer — "*Desdichado! Desdichado!*" — which watch-word they took from the motto upon their leader's shield.

The champions thus encountering each other with the utmost fury, and with alternate success,

[1] *Beau-seant* was the name of the Templars' banner, which was half black, half white, to intimate, it is said, that they were candid and fair towards Christians, but black and terrible towards infidels.

the tide of battle seemed to flow now toward the southern, now toward the northern extremity of the lists, as the one or the other party prevailed. Meantime the clang of the blows, and the shouts of the combatants, mixed fearfully with the sound of the trumpets, and drowned the groans of those who fell, and lay rolling defenceless beneath the feet of the horses. The splendid armour of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood, and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-axe. The gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snow-flakes. All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.

Yet such is the force of habit, that not only the vulgar spectators, who are naturally attracted by sights of horror, but even the ladies of distinction, who crowded the galleries, saw the conflict with a thrilling interest certainly, but without a wish to withdraw their eyes from a sight so terrible. Here and there, indeed, a fair cheek might turn pale, or a faint scream might be heard, as a lover, a brother, or a husband, was struck from his horse. But, in general, the ladies around encouraged the combatants, not only by clapping their hands and waving their veils and kerchiefs, but even by exclaiming, "Brave lance! Good sword!" when any successful thrust or blow took place under their observation.

Such being the interest taken by the fair sex in this bloody game, that of the men is the more easily understood. It shewed itself in loud acclamations upon every change of fortune, while all eyes were so riveted on the lists, that the spectators seemed as if they themselves had dealt and received the blows which were there so freely bestowed. And between every pause was heard the voice of the heralds, exclaiming, "Fight on, brave knights! Man dies, but glory lives!—Fight on—death is better than defeat!—Fight on, brave knights!—for bright eyes behold your deeds!"

Amid the varied fortunes of the combat, the eyes of all endeavoured to discover the leaders of each band, who, mingling in the thick of the fight, encouraged their companions both by voice and example. Both displayed great feats of gallantry, nor did either Bois-Guilbert or the Disinherited Knight find in the ranks opposed to them a champion who could be termed their unquestioned match. They repeatedly endeavoured to single out each other, spurred by mutual animosity, and aware that the fall of either leader might be considered as decisive of victory. Such, however, was the crowd and confusion, that, during the earlier part of the conflict, their efforts to meet were unavailing, and they were repeatedly separated by the eagerness of their followers, each of whom was anxious to win honour, by measuring his strength against the leader of the opposite party.

But when the field became thin by the numbers on either side who had yielded themselves vanquished, had been compelled to the extremity of the lists, or been otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the strife, the Templar and the Disinherited Knight at length encountered hand to hand, with all the fury that mortal animosity, joined to rivalry of honour, could inspire. Such was the address of each in parrying and striking, that the spectators broke forth into a unanimous and involuntary shout, expressive of their delight and admiration.

But at this moment the party of the Disinherited Knight had the worst; the gigantic arm of Front-de-Bœuf on the one flank, and the ponderous strength of Athelstane on the other, bearing down and dispersing those immediately exposed to them. Finding themselves freed from their immediate antagonists, it seems to have occurred to both these knights at the same instant, that they would render the most decisive advantage to their party, by aiding the Templar in his contest with his rival. Turning their horses, therefore, at the same moment, the Norman spurred against the Disinherited Knight on the one side, and the Saxon on the other. It was utterly impossible that the object of this unequal and unexpected assault could have sustained it, had he not been warned by a general cry from the spectators, who could not but take interest in one exposed to such disadvantage.

"Beware! beware! Sir Disinherited!" was shouted so universally, that the knight became aware of his danger; and, striking a full blow at the Templar, he reined back his steed in the same moment, so as to escape the charge of Athelstane and Front-de-Bœuf. These knights, therefore, their aim being thus eluded, rushed from opposite sides betwixt the object of their attack and the Templar, almost running their horses against each other ere they could stop their career. Recovering their horses, however, and wheeling them round, the whole three pursued their united purpose of bearing to the earth the Disinherited Knight.

Nothing could have saved him, except the remarkable strength and activity of the noble horse which he had won on the preceding day.

This stood him in the more stead, as the horse of Bois-Guilbert was wounded, and those of Front-de-Bœuf and Athelstane were both tired with the weight of their gigantic masters, clad in complete armour, and with the preceding exertions of the day. The masterly horsemanship of the Disinherited Knight, and the activity of the noble animal which he mounted, enabled him for a few minutes to keep at sword's point his three antagonists, turning and wheeling with the agility of a hawk upon the wing, keeping his enemies as far separate as he could, and rushing now against the one, now against the other, dealing sweeping blows with his sword, without waiting to receive those which were aimed at him in return.

But although the lists rang with the applauses of his dexterity, it was evident that he must at last be overpowered; and the nobles around Prince John implored him with one voice to throw down his warder, and to save so brave a knight from the disgrace of being overcome by odds.

"Not I, by the light of Heaven!" answered Prince John; "this same springal, who conceals his name, and despises our proffered hospitality, has already gained one prize, and may now afford to let others have their turn." As he spoke thus an unexpected incident changed the fortune of the day.

There was among the ranks of the Disinherited Knight a champion in black armour, mounted on a black horse, large of size, tall, and to all appearance powerful and strong, like the rider by whom he was mounted. This knight, who bore on his shield no device of any kind, had hitherto evinced

very little interest in the event of the fight, beating off with seeming ease those combatants who attacked him, but neither pursuing his advantages, nor himself assailing any one. In short, he had hitherto acted the part rather of a spectator than of a party in the tournament, a circumstance which procured him among the spectators the name of *Le Noir Faineant*, or the Black Sluggard.

At once this knight seemed to throw aside his apathy, when he discovered the leader of his party so hard bestead; for, setting spurs to his horse, which was quite fresh, he came to his assistance like a thunderbolt, exclaiming in a voice like a trumpet-call, "*Desdichado*, to the rescue!" It was high time; for, while the Disinherited Knight was pressing upon the Templar, Front-de-Bœuf had got nigh to him with his uplifted sword; but ere the blow could descend, the Sable Knight dealt a stroke on his head, which, glancing from the polished helmet, lighted with violence scarcely abated on the *chamfron* of the steed, and Front-de-Bœuf rolled on the ground, both horse and man equally stunned by the fury of the blow. *Le Noir Faineant* then turned his horse upon Athelstane of Coningsburgh; and his own sword having been broken in his encounter with Front-de-Bœuf, he wrenched from the hand of the bulky Saxon the battle-axe which he wielded, and, like one familiar with the use of the weapon, bestowed him such a blow upon the crest, that Athelstane also lay senseless on the field. Having achieved this double feat, for which he was the more highly applauded that it was totally unexpected from him, the knight seemed to resume the sluggishness of his character, returning calmly to the northern extremity of the lists, leaving his leader to cope as he best could with Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This was no longer matter of so much difficulty as formerly. The Templar's horse had bled much, and gave way under the shock of the Disinherited Knight's charge. Brian de Bois-Guilbert rolled on the field, encumbered with the stirrup, from which he was unable to draw his foot. His antagonist sprung from horseback, waved his fatal sword over the head of his adversary, and commanded him to yield himself; when Prince John, more moved by the Templar's dangerous situation than he had been by that of his rival, saved him the mortification of confessing himself vanquished, by casting down his warder, and putting an end to the conflict.

It was, indeed, only the relics and embers of the fight which continued to burn; for of the few knights who still continued in the lists, the greater part had, by tacit consent, forborne the conflict for some time, leaving it to be determined by the strife of the leaders.

The squires, who had found it a matter of danger and difficulty to attend their masters during the engagement, now thronged into the lists to pay their dutiful attendance to the wounded, who were removed with the utmost care and attention to the neighbouring pavilions, or to the quarters prepared for them in the adjoining village.

Thus ended the memorable field of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, one of the most gallantly contested tournaments of that age; for although only four knights, including one who was smothered by the heat of his armour, had died upon the field, yet upwards of thirty were desperately wounded, four or five of whom never recovered. Several more were disabled for life; and those who escaped best carried the marks of the conflict to the grave with them. Hence it is always mentioned in the old records, as the Gentle and Joyous Passage of Arms of Ashby.

It being now the duty of Prince John to name the knight who had done best, he determined that the honour of the day remained with the knight whom the popular voice had termed *Le Noir Faineant*. It was pointed out to the Prince, in impeachment of this decree, that the victory had been in fact won by the Disinherited Knight, who, in the course of the day, had overcome six champions with his own hand, and who had finally unhorsed and struck down the leader of the opposite party. But Prince John adhered to his own opinion, on the ground that the Disinherited Knight and his party had lost the day, but for the powerful assistance of the Knight of the Black Armour, to whom, therefore, he persisted in awarding the prize.

To the surprise of all present, however, the knight thus preferred was nowhere to be found. He had left the lists immediately when the conflict ceased, and had been observed by some spectators to move down one of the forest glades with the same slow pace and listless and indifferent manner which had procured him the epithet of the Black Sluggard. After he had been summoned twice by sound of trumpet, and proclamation of the heralds, it became necessary to name another to receive the honours which had been assigned to him. Prince John had now no farther excuse for resisting the claim of the Disinherited Knight, whom, therefore, he named the champion of the day.

Through a field slippery with blood, and encumbered with broken armour and the bodies of slain and wounded horses, the marshals of the lists again conducted the victor to the foot of Prince John's throne.

"Disinherited Knight," said Prince John, "since by that title only you will consent to be known to us, we a second time award to you the honours of this tournament, and announce to you your right to claim and receive from the hands of the Queen of Love and Beauty, the Chaplet of Honour which your valour has justly deserved." The Knight bowed low and gracefully, but returned no answer.

While the trumpets sounded, while the heralds strained their voices in proclaiming honour to the brave and glory to the victor — while ladies waved their silken kerchiefs and embroidered veils, and while all ranks joined in a clamorous shout of exultation, the marshals conducted the Disinherited Knight across the lists to the foot of that throne of honour which was occupied by the Lady Rowena.

On the lower step of this throne the champion was made to kneel down. Indeed his whole action since the fight had ended, seemed rather to have been upon the impulse of those around him than from his own free will; and it was observed that he tottered as they guided him the second time across the lists. Rowena, descending from her station with a graceful and dignified step, was about to place the chaplet which she held in her hand upon the helmet of the champion, when the marshals exclaimed with one voice, "It must not be thus — his head must be bare." The knight muttered faintly a few words, which were lost in the hollow of his helmet, but their purport seemed

to be a desire that his casque might not be removed.

Whether from love of form, or from curiosity, the marshals paid no attention to his expressions of reluctance, but unhelmed him by cutting the laces of his casque, and undoing the fastening of his gorget. When the helmet was removed, the well-formed, yet sun-burnt features of a young man of twenty-five were seen, amidst a profusion of short fair hair. His countenance was as pale as death, and marked in one or two places with streaks of blood.

Rowena had no sooner beheld him than she uttered a faint shriek; but at once summoning up the energy of her disposition, and compelling herself, as it were, to proceed, while her frame yet trembled with the violence of sudden emotion, she placed upon the drooping head of the victor the splendid chaplet which was the destined reward of the day, and pronounced, in a clear and distinct tone, these words: "I bestow on thee this chaplet, Sir Knight, as the meed of valour assigned to this day's victor:" Here she paused a moment, and then firmly added, "And upon brows more worthy could a wreath of chivalry never be placed!"

The knight stooped his head, and kissed the hand of the lovely Sovereign by whom his valour had been rewarded; and then, sinking yet farther forward, lay prostrate at her feet.

There was a general consternation. Cedric, who had been struck mute by the sudden appearance of his banished son, now rushed forward, as if to separate him from Rowena. But this had been already accomplished by the marshals of the field, who, guessing the cause of Ivanhoe's swoon, had hastened to undo his armour, and found that the head of a lance had penetrated his breastplate, and inflicted a wound in his side.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Heroes, approach!" Atrides thus aloud,
"Stand forth distinguish'd from the circling crowd,
Ye who by skill or manly force may claim,
Your rivals to surpass and merit fame.
This cow, worth twenty oxen, is decreed,
For him who farthest sends the winged reed."

Iliad.

The name of Ivanhoe was no sooner pronounced than it flew from mouth to mouth, with all the celerity with which eagerness could convey and curiosity receive it. It was not long ere it reached the circle of the Prince, whose brow darkened as he heard the news. Looking around him, however, with an air of scorn, "My lords," said he, "and especially you, Sir Prior, what think ye of the doctrine the learned tell us, concerning innate attractions and antipathies? Methinks that I felt the presence of my brother's minion, even when I least guessed whom yonder suit of armour enclosed."

"Front-de-Bœuf must prepare to restore his fief of Ivanhoe," said De Bracy, who, having discharged his part honourably in the tournament, had laid his shield and helmet aside, and again mingled with the Prince's retinue.

"Ay," answered Waldemar Fitzurse, "this gallant is likely to reclaim the castle and manor which Richard assigned to him, and which your highness's generosity has since given to Front-de-Bœuf."

"Front-de-Bœuf," replied John, "is a man more willing to swallow three manors such as Ivanhoe, than to disgorge one of them. For the rest, sirs, I hope none here will deny my right to confer the fiefs of the crown upon the faithful followers who are around me, and ready to perform the usual military service, in the room of those who have wandered to foreign countries, and can neither render homage nor service when called upon."

The audience were too much interested in the question not to pronounce the Prince's assumed right altogether indubitable. "A generous Prince!—a most noble Lord, who thus takes upon himself the task of rewarding his faithful followers!"

Such were the words which burst from the train, expectants all of them of similar grants at the expense of King Richard's followers and favourites, if indeed they had not as yet received such. Prior Aymer also assented to the general proposition, observing, however, "That the blessed Jerusalem could not indeed be termed a foreign country. She was *communis mater*—the mother of all Christians. But he saw not," he declared, "how the Knight of Ivanhoe could plead any advantage from this, since he" (the Prior) "was assured that the crusaders, under Richard, had never proceeded much farther than Askalon, which, as all the world knew, was a town of the Philistines, and entitled to none of the privileges of the Holy City."

Waldemar, whose curiosity had led him towards the place where Ivanhoe had fallen to the ground, now returned. "The gallant," said he, "is likely to give your Highness little disturbance, and to leave Front-de-Bœuf in the quiet possession of his gains—he is severely wounded."

"Whatever becomes of him," said Prince John, "he is victor of the day; and were he tenfold our enemy, or the devoted friend of our brother, which is perhaps the same, his wounds must be looked to—our own physician shall attend him."

A stern smile curled the Prince's lip as he spoke. Waldemar Fitzurse hastened to reply, that Ivanhoe was already removed from the lists, and in the custody of his friends.

"I was somewhat afflicted," he said, "to see the grief of the Queen of Love and Beauty, whose sovereignty of a day this event has changed into mourning. I am not a man to be moved by a woman's lament for her lover, but this same Lady Rowena suppressed her sorrow with such dignity of manner, that it could only be discovered by her folded hands, and her tearless eye, which trembled as it remained fixed on the lifeless form before her."

"Who is this Lady Rowena," said Prince John, "of whom we have heard so much?"

"A Saxon heiress of large possessions," replied the Prior Aymer; "a rose of loveliness, and a jewel of wealth; the fairest among a thousand, a bundle of myrrh, and a cluster of camphire."

"We shall cheer her sorrows," said Prince John, "and amend her blood, by wedding her to a Norman. She seems a minor, and must therefore be at our royal disposal in marriage.—How sayst thou De Bracy? What thinkst thou of gaining fair lands and livings, by wedding a Saxon, after the fashion of the followers of the Conqueror?"

"If the lands are to my liking, my lord," answered De Bracy, "it will be hard to displease me

with a bride; and deeply will I hold myself bound to your highness for a good deed, which will fulfil all promises made in favour of your servant and vassal."

"We will not forget it," said Prince John; "and that we may instantly go to work, command our seneschal presently to order the attendance of the Lady Rowena and her company—that is, the rude churl her guardian, and the Saxon ox whom the Black Knight struck down in the tournament, upon this evening's banquet.—De Bigot," he added to his seneschal, "thou wilt word this our second summons so courteously, as to gratify the pride of these Saxons, and make it impossible for them again to refuse; although, by the bones of Becket, courtesy to them is casting pearls before swine."

Prince John had proceeded thus far, and was about to give the signal for retiring from the lists, when a small billet was put into his hand.

"From whence?" said Prince John, looking at the person by whom it was delivered.

"From foreign parts, my lord, but from whence I know not," replied his attendant. "A Frenchman brought it hither, who said, he had ridden night and day to put it into the hands of your highness."

The Prince looked narrowly at the superscription, and then at the seal, placed so as to secure the flox-silk with which the billet was surrounded, and which bore the impression of three fleurs-de-lis. John then opened the billet with apparent agitation, which visibly and greatly increased when he had perused the contents, which were expressed in these words—

"*Take heed to yourself, for the Devil is unchained!*"

The Prince turned as pale as death, looked first on the earth, and then to heaven, like a man who has received news that sentence of execution has been passed upon him. Recovering from the first effects of his surprise, he took Waldemar Fitzurse and De Bracy aside, and put the billet into their hands successively. "It means," he added, in a faltering voice, "that my brother Richard has obtained his freedom."

"This may be a false alarm, or a forged letter," said De Bracy.

"It is France's own hand and seal," replied Prince John.

"It is time, then," said Fitzurse, "to draw our party to a head, either at York, or some other centrical place. A few days later, and it will be indeed too late. Your highness must break short this present mummery."

"The yeomen and commons," said De Bracy, "must not be dismissed discontented, for lack of their share in the sports."

"The day," said Waldemar, "is not yet very far spent—let the archers shoot a few rounds at the target, and the prize be adjudged. This will be an abundant fulfilment of the Prince's promises, so far as this herd of Saxon serfs is concerned."

"I thank thee, Waldemar," said the Prince; "thou remindest me, too, that I have a debt to pay to that insolent peasant who yesterday insulted our person. Our banquet also shall go forward to-night as we proposed. Were this my last hour of power, it should be an hour sacred to revenge and to pleasure—let new cares come with to-morrow's new day."

The sound of the trumpets soon recalled those spectators who had already begun to leave the field; and proclamation was made that Prince John, suddenly called by high and peremptory public duties, held himself obliged to discontinue the entertainments of to-morrow's festival: Nevertheless, that, unwilling so many good yeomen should depart without a trial of skill, he was pleased to appoint them, before leaving the ground, presently to execute the competition of archery intended for the morrow. To the best archer a prize was to be awarded, being a bugle-horn, mounted with silver, and a silken baldric richly ornamented with a medallion of Saint Hubert, the patron of silvan sport.

More than thirty yeomen at first presented themselves as competitors, several of whom were rangers and under-keepers in the royal forests of Needwood and Charnwood. When, however, the archers understood with whom they were to be matched, upwards of twenty withdrew themselves from the contest, unwilling to encounter the dishonour of almost certain defeat. For in those days the skill of each celebrated marksman was as well known for many miles round him, as the qualities of a horse trained at Newmarket are familiar to those who frequent that well-known meeting.

The diminished list of competitors for silvan fame still amounted to eight. Prince John stepped from his royal seat to view more nearly the persons of these chosen yeomen, several of whom wore the royal livery. Having satisfied his curiosity by this investigation, he looked for the object of his resentment, whom he observed standing on the same spot, and with the same composed countenance which he had exhibited upon the preceding day.

"Fellow," said Prince John, "I guessed by thy insolent babble thou wert no true lover of the longbow, and I see thou darest not adventure thy skill among such merry-men as stand yonder."

"Under favour, sir," replied the yeoman, "I have another reason for refraining to shoot, besides the fearing discomfiture and disgrace."

"And what is thy other reason?" said Prince John, who, for some cause which perhaps he could not himself have explained, felt a painful curiosity respecting this individual.

"Because," replied the woodsman, "I know not if these yeomen and I are used to shoot at the same marks; and because, moreover, I know not how your Grace might relish the winning of a third prize by one who has unwittingly fallen under your displeasure."

Prince John coloured as he put the question, "What is thy name, yeoman?"

"Locksley," answered the yeoman.

"Then, Locksley," said Prince John, "thou shalt shoot in thy turn, when these yeomen have displayed their skill. If thou carriest the prize, I will add to it twenty nobles; but if thou losest it, thou shalt be stript of thy Lincoln green, and scourged out of the lists with bowstrings, for a wordy and insolent braggart."

"And how if I refuse to shoot on such a wager?" said the yeoman.—"Your Grace's power, supported, as it is, by so many men-at-arms, may indeed easily strip and scourge me, but cannot compel me to bend or to draw my bow."

"If thou refusest my fair proffer," said the

Prince, "the Provost of the lists shall cut thy bow-string, break thy bow and arrows, and expel thee from the presence as a faint-hearted craven."

"This is no fair chance you put on me, proud Prince," said the yeoman, "to compel me to peril myself against the best archers of Leicester and Staffordshire, under the penalty of infamy if they should overshoot me. Nevertheless, I will obey your pleasure."

"Look to him close, men-at-arms," said Prince John, "his heart is sinking; I am jealous lest he attempt to escape the trial.—And do you, good fellows, shoot boldly round; a buck and a butt of wine are ready for your refreshment in yonder tent, when the prize is won."

A target was placed at the upper end of the southern avenue which led to the lists. The contending archers took their station in turn, at the bottom of the southern access; the distance between that station and the mark allowing full distance for what was called a shot at rovers. The archers, having previously determined by lot their order of precedence, were to shoot each three shafts in succession. The sports were regulated by an officer of inferior rank, termed the Provost of the Games; for the high rank of the marshals of the lists would have been held degraded, had they condescended to superintend the sports of the yeomanry.

One by one the archers, stepping forward, delivered their shafts yeomanlike and bravely. Of twenty-four arrows, shot in succession, ten were fixed in the target, and the others ranged so near it, that, considering the distance of the mark, it was accounted good archery. Of the ten shafts which hit the target, two within the inner ring were shot by Hubert, a forester in the service of Malvoisin, who was accordingly pronounced victorious.

"Now, Locksley," said Prince John to the bold yeoman, with a bitter smile, "wilt thou try conclusions with Hubert, or wilt thou yield up bow, baldric, and quiver, to the Provost of the sports?"

"Sith it be no better," said Locksley, "I am content to try my fortune; on condition that when I have shot two shafts at yonder mark of Hubert's, he shall be bound to shoot one at that which I shall propose."

"That is but fair," answered Prince John, "and it shall not be refused thee.—If thou dost beat this braggart, Hubert, I will fill the bugle with silver-pennies for thee."

"A man can do but his best," answered Hubert; "but my grandsire drew a good long-bow at Hastings, and I trust not to dishonour his memory."

The former target was now removed, and a fresh one of the same size placed in its room. Hubert, who, as victor in the first trial of skill, had the right to shoot first, took his aim with great deliberation, long measuring the distance with his eye, while he held in his hand his bended bow, with the arrow placed on the string. At length he made a step forward, and raising the bow at the full stretch of his left arm, till the centre or grasping-place was nigh level with his face, he drew his bowstring to his ear. The arrow whistled through the air, and lighted within the inner ring of the target, but not exactly in the centre.

"You have not allowed for the wind, Hubert," said his antagonist, bending his bow, "or that had been a better shot."

So saying, and without shewing the least anxiety to pause upon his aim, Locksley stept to the appointed station, and shot his arrow as carelessly in appearance as if he had not even looked at the mark. He was speaking almost at the instant that the shaft left the bowstring, yet it alighted in the target two inches nearer to the white spot which marked the centre than that of Hubert.

"By the light of Heaven!" said Prince John to Hubert, "an thou suffer that runagate knave to overcome thee, thou art worthy of the gallows!"

Hubert had but one set speech for all occasions. "An your highness were to hang me," he said, "a man can but do his best. Nevertheless, my grandsire drew a good bow——"

"The foul fiend on thy grandsire and all his generation!" interrupted John; "shoot, knave, and shoot thy best, or it shall be the worse for thee!"

Thus exhorted, Hubert resumed his place, and not neglecting the caution which he had received from his adversary, he made the necessary allowance for a very light air of wind, which had just arisen, and shot so successfully that his arrow alighted in the very centre of the target.

"A Hubert! a Hubert!" shouted the populace, more interested in a known person than in a stranger. "In the clout!—in the clout!—a Hubert for ever!"

"Thou canst not mend that shot, Locksley," said the Prince, with an insulting smile.

"I will notch his shaft for him, however," replied Locksley.

And letting fly his arrow with a little more precaution than before, it lighted right upon that of his competitor, which it split to shivers. The people who stood around were so astonished at his wonderful dexterity, that they could not even give vent to their surprise in their usual clamour. "This must be the devil, and no man of flesh and blood," whispered the yeomen to each other; "such archery was never seen since a bow was first bent in Britain."

"And now," said Locksley, "I will crave your Grace's permission to plant such a mark as is used in the North Country; and welcome every brave yeoman who shall try a shot at it to win a smile from the bonny lass he loves best."

He then turned to leave the lists. "Let your guards attend me," he said, "if you please—I go but to cut a rod from the next willow-bush."

Prince John made a signal that some attendants should follow him in case of his escape; but the cry of "Shame! shame!" which burst from the multitude, induced him to alter his ungenerous purpose.

Locksley returned almost instantly with a willow wand about six feet in length, perfectly straight, and rather thicker than a man's thumb. He began to peel this with great composure, observing at the same time, that to ask a good woodsman to shoot at a target so broad as had hitherto been used, was to put shame upon his skill. "For his own part," he said, "and in the land where he was bred, men would as soon take for their mark King Arthur's round-table, which held sixty Knights around it. A child of seven years old," he said, "might hit yonder target with a headless shaft; but," added he,

walking deliberately to the other end of the lists, and sticking the willow wand upright in the ground, "he that hits that rod at five-score yards, I call him an archer fit to bear both bow and quiver before a king, an it were the stout King Richard himself."

"My grandsire," said Hubert, "drew a good bow at the battle of Hastings, and never shot at such a mark in his life—and neither will I. If this yeoman can cleave that rod, I give him the bucklers—or rather, I yield to the devil that is in his jerkin, and not to any human skill; a man can but do his best, and I will not shoot where I am sure to miss. I might as well shoot at the edge of our parson's whittle, or at a wheat straw, or at a sunbeam, as at a twinkling white streak which I can hardly see."

"Cowardly dog!" said Prince John.—"Sirrah Locksley, do thou shoot; but, if thou hittest such a mark, I will say thou art the first man ever did so. Howe'er it be, thou shalt not crow over us with a mere show of superior skill."

"I will do my best, as Hubert says," answered Locksley; "no man can do more."

So saying, he again bent his bow, but on the present occasion looked with attention to his weapon, and changed the string, which he thought was no longer truly round, having been a little frayed by the two former shots. He then took his aim with some deliberation, and the multitude awaited the event in breathless silence. The archer vindicated their opinion of his skill: his arrow split the willow rod against which it was aimed. A jubilee of acclamations followed; and even Prince John, in admiration of Locksley's skill, lost for an instant his dislike to his person. "These twenty nobles," he said, "which, with the bugle, thou hast fairly won, are thine own; we will make them fifty, if thou wilt take livery and service with us as a yeoman of our body guard, and be near to our person. For never did so strong a hand bend a bow, or so true an eye direct a shaft."

"Pardon me, noble Prince," said Locksley; "but I have vowed, that if ever I take service, it should be with your royal brother King Richard. These twenty nobles I leave to Hubert, who has this day drawn as brave a bow as his grandsire did at Hastings. Had his modesty not refused the trial, he would have hit the wand as well as I."

Hubert shook his head as he received with reluctance the bounty of the stranger; and Locksley, anxious to escape farther observation, mixed with the crowd, and was seen no more.

The victorious archer would not perhaps have escaped John's attention so easily, had not that Prince had other subjects of anxious and more important meditation pressing upon his mind at that instant. He called upon his chamberlain as he gave the signal for retiring from the lists, and commanded him instantly to gallop to Ashby, and seek out Isaac the Jew. "Tell the dog," he said, "to send me, before sun-down, two thousand crowns. He knows the security; but thou mayest shew him this ring for a token. The rest of the money must be paid at York within six days. If he neglects, I will have the unbelieving villain's head. Look that thou pass him not on the way; for the circumcised slave was displaying his stolen finery amongst us."

So saying, the Prince resumed his horse, and returned to Ashby, the whole crowd breaking up and dispersing upon his retreat.

CHAPTER XV.

In rough magnificence array'd,
When ancient Chivalry display'd
The pomp of her heroic games,
And crested chiefs and tissued dames
Assembled, at the clarion's call,
In some proud castle's high arch'd hall

WARTON.

Prince John held his high festival in the Castle of Ashby. This was not the same building of which the stately ruins still interest the traveller, and which was erected at a later period by the Lord Hastings, High Chamberlain of England, one of the first victims of the tyranny of Richard the Third, and yet better known as one of Shakespeare's characters than by his historical fame. The castle and town of Ashby, at this time, belonged to Roger de Quincy, Earl of Winchester, who, during the period of our history, was absent in the Holy Land. Prince John, in the meanwhile, occupied his castle, and disposed of his domains without scruple; and seeking at present to dazzle men's eyes by his hospitality and magnificence, had given orders for great preparations, in order to render the banquet as splendid as possible.

The purveyors of the Prince, who exercised on this and other occasions the full authority of royalty, had swept the country of all that could be collected which was esteemed fit for their master's table. Guests also were invited in great numbers; and in the necessity in which he then found himself of courting popularity, Prince John had extended his invitation to a few distinguished Saxon and Danish families, as well as to the Norman nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood. However despised and degraded on ordinary occasions, the great numbers of the Anglo-Saxons must necessarily render them formidable in the civil commotions which seemed approaching, and it was an obvious point of policy to secure popularity with their leaders.

It was accordingly the Prince's intention, which he for some time maintained, to treat these unwonted guests with a courtesy to which they had been little accustomed. But although no man with less scruple made his ordinary habits and feelings bend to his interest, it was the misfortune of this Prince, that his levity and petulance were perpetually breaking out, and undoing all that had been gained by his previous dissimulation.

Of this fickle temper he gave a memorable example in Ireland, when sent thither by his father, Henry the Second, with the purpose of buying golden opinions of the inhabitants of that new and important acquisition to the English crown. Upon this occasion the Irish chieftains contended which should first offer to the young Prince their loyal homage and the kiss of peace. But, instead of receiving their salutations with courtesy, John and his petulant attendants could not resist the temptation of pulling the long beards of the Irish chieftains; a conduct which, as might have been expected, was highly resented by these insulted dignitaries, and produced fatal consequences to the English domination in Ireland. It is necessary to

keep these inconsistencies of John's character in view, that the reader may understand his conduct during the present evening.

In execution of the resolution which he had formed during his cooler moments, Prince John received Cedric and Athelstane with distinguished courtesy, and expressed his disappointment, without resentment, when the indisposition of Rowena was alleged by the former as a reason for her not attending upon his gracious summons. Cedric and Athelstane were both dressed in the ancient Saxon garb, which, although not unhandsome in itself, and in the present instance composed of costly materials, was so remote in shape and appearance from that of the other guests, that Prince John took great credit to himself with Waldemar Fitzurse for refraining from laughter at a sight which the fashion of the day rendered ridiculous. Yet, in the eye of sober judgment, the short close tunic and long mantle of the Saxons was a more graceful, as well as a more convenient dress, than the garb of the Normans, whose under garment was a long doublet, so loose as to resemble a shirt or waggoner's frock, covered by a cloak of scanty dimensions, neither fit to defend the wearer from cold or from rain, and the only purpose of which appeared to be to display as much fur, embroidery, and jewellery work, as the ingenuity of the tailor could contrive to lay upon it. The Emperor Charlemagne, in whose reign they were first introduced, seems to have been very sensible of the inconveniencies arising from the fashion of this garment. "In Heaven's name," said he, "to what purpose serve these abridged cloaks? If we are in bed they are no cover, on horseback they are no protection from the wind and rain, and when seated, they do not guard our legs from the damp or the frost."

Nevertheless, spite of this imperial objurgation, the short cloaks continued in fashion down to the time of which we treat, and particularly among the princes of the House of Anjou. They were therefore in universal use among Prince John's courtiers; and the long mantle, which formed the upper garment of the Saxons, was held in proportional derision.

The guests were seated at a table which groaned under the quantity of good cheer. The numerous cooks who attended on the Prince's progress, having exerted all their art in varying the forms in which the ordinary provisions were served up, had succeeded almost as well as the modern professors of the culinary art in rendering them perfectly unlike their natural appearance. Besides these dishes of domestic origin, there were various delicacies brought from foreign parts, and a quantity of rich pastry, as well as of the simnel-bread and wastle cakes, which were only used at the tables of the highest nobility. The banquet was crowned with the richest wines, both foreign and domestic.

But, though luxurious, the Norman nobles were not, generally speaking, an intemperate race. While indulging themselves in the pleasures of the table, they aimed at delicacy, but avoided excess, and were apt to attribute gluttony and drunkenness to the vanquished Saxons, as vices peculiar to their inferior station. Prince John, indeed, and those who courted his pleasure by imitating his foibles, were apt to indulge to excess in the pleasures of the trencher and the goblet; and indeed it is well known that his death was occasioned by a surfeit upon peaches and new ale. His conduct, however, was an exception to the general manners of his countrymen.

With sly gravity, interrupted only by private signs to each other, the Norman knights and nobles beheld the ruder demeanour of Athelstane and Cedric at a banquet, to the form and fashion of which they were unaccustomed And while their manners were thus the subject of sarcastic observation, the untaught Saxons unwittingly transgressed several of the arbitrary rules established for the regulation of society. Now, it is well known, that a man may with more impunity be guilty of an actual breach either of real good breeding or of good morals, than appear ignorant of the most minute point of fashionable etiquette. Thus Cedric, who dried his hands with a towel, instead of suffering the moisture to exhale by waving them gracefully in the air, incurred more ridicule than his companion Athelstane, when he swallowed to his own single share the whole of a large pasty composed of the most exquisite foreign delicacies, and termed at that time a *Karum-pie*. When, however, it was discovered, by a serious cross-examination, that the Thane of Coningsburgh (or Franklin, as the Normans termed him) had no idea what he had been devouring, and that he had taken the contents of the Karum-pie for larks and pigeons, whereas they were in fact beccaficoes and nightingales, his ignorance brought him in for an ample share of the ridicule which would have been more justly bestowed on his gluttony.

The long feast had at length its end; and, while the goblet circulated freely, men talked of the feats of the preceding tournament,—of the unknown victor in the archery games—of the Black Knight, whose self-denial had induced him to withdraw from the honours he had won—and of the gallant Ivanhoe, who had so dearly bought the honours of the day. The topics were treated with military frankness, and the jest and laugh went round the hall. The brow of Prince John alone was overclouded during these discussions; some overpowering care seemed agitating his mind, and it was only when he received occasional hints from his attendants, that he seemed to take interest in what was passing around him. On such occasions he would start up, quaff a cup of wine as if to raise his spirits, and then mingle in the conversation by some observation made abruptly or at random.

"We drink this beaker," said he, "to the health of Wilfred of Ivanhoe, champion of this Passage of Arms, and grieve that his wound renders him absent from our board—Let all fill to the pledge, and especially Cedric of Rotherwood, the worthy father of a son so promising."

"No, my lord," replied Cedric, standing up, and placing on the table his untasted cup, "I yield not the name of son to the disobedient youth, who at once despises my commands, and relinquishes the manners and customs of his fathers."

"'Tis impossible," cried Prince John, with well-feigned astonishment, "that so gallant a knight should be an unworthy or disobedient son!"

"Yet, my lord," answered Cedric, "so it is with this Wilfred. He left my homely dwelling to mingle with the gay nobility of your brother's court, where he learned to do those tricks of horsemanship which you prize so highly. He left it contrary

to my wish and command; and in the days of Alfred that would have been termed disobedience — ay, and a crime severely punishable."

"Alas!" replied Prince John, with a deep sigh of affected sympathy, "since your son was a follower of my unhappy brother, it need not be inquired where or from whom he learned the lesson of filial disobedience."

Thus spake Prince John, wilfully forgetting, that of all the sons of Henry the Second, though no one was free from the charge, he himself had been most distinguished for rebellion and ingratitude to his father.

"I think," said he, after a moment's pause, "that my brother proposed to confer upon his favourite the rich manor of Ivanhoe."

"He did endow him with it," answered Cedric; "nor is it my least quarrel with my son, that he stooped to hold, as a feudal vassal, the very domains which his fathers possessed in free and independent right."

"We shall then have your willing sanction, good Cedric," said Prince John, "to confer this fief upon a person whose dignity will not be diminished by holding land of the British crown. — Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," he said, turning towards that Baron, "I trust you will so keep the goodly Barony of Ivanhoe, that Sir Wilfred shall not incur his father's displeasure by again entering upon that fief."

"By St Anthony!" answered the black-brow'd giant, "I will consent that your highness shall hold me a Saxon, if either Cedric or Wilfred, or the best that ever bore English blood, shall wrench from me the gift with which your highness has graced me."

"Whoever shall call thee Saxon, Sir Baron," replied Cedric, offended at a mode of expression by which the Normans frequently expressed their habitual contempt of the English, "will do thee an honour as great as it is undeserved."

Front-de-Bœuf would have replied, but Prince John's petulance and levity got the start.

"Assuredly," said he, "my lords, the noble Cedric speaks truth; and his race may claim precedence over us as much in the length of their pedigrees as in the longitude of their cloaks."

"They go before us indeed in the field — as deer before dogs," said Malvoisin.

"And with good right may they go before us — forget not," said Prior Aymer, "the superior decency and decorum of their manners."

"Their singular abstemiousness and temperance," said De Bracy, forgetting the plan which promised him a Saxon bride.

"Together with the courage and conduct," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "by which they distinguished themselves at Hastings and elsewhere."

While, with smooth and smiling cheek, the courtiers, each in turn, followed their Prince's example, and aimed a shaft of ridicule at Cedric, the face of the Saxon became inflamed with passion, and he glanced his eyes fiercely from one to another, as if the quick succession of so many injuries had prevented his replying to them in turn; or, like a baited bull, who, surrounded by his tormentors, is at a loss to choose from among them the immediate object of his revenge. At length he spoke, in a voice half choked with passion; and, addressing himself to Prince John as the head and front of the offence which he had received, "Whatever," he said, "have been the follies and vices of our race, a Saxon would have been held *nidering*,"[1] (the most emphatic term for abject worthlessness,) "who should in his own hall, and while his own wine-cup passed, have treated, or suffered to be treated, an unoffending guest, as your highness has this day beheld me used; and whatever was the misfortune of our fathers on the field of Hastings, those may at least be silent," here he looked at Front-de-Bœuf and the Templar, "who have within these few hours once and again lost saddle and stirrup before the lance of a Saxon."

"By my faith, a biting jest!" said Prince John. "How like you it, sirs? — Our Saxon subjects rise in spirit and courage; become shrewd in wit, and bold in bearing, in these unsettled times — What say ye, my lords? — By this good light, I hold it best to take our galleys, and return to Normandy in time."

"For fear of the Saxons!" said De Bracy, laughing; "we should need no weapons but our hunting spears to bring these boars to bay."

"A truce with your raillery, Sir Knights," said Fitzurse — "and it were well," he added, addressing the Prince, "that your highness should assure the worthy Cedric there is no insult intended him by jests, which must sound but harshly in the ear of a stranger."

"Insult!" answered Prince John, resuming his courtesy of demeanour; "I trust it will not be thought that I could mean, or permit any, to be offered in my presence. Here! I fill my cup to Cedric himself, since he refuses to pledge his son's health."

The cup went round amid the well-dissembled applause of the courtiers, which, however, failed to make the impression on the mind of the Saxon that had been designed. He was not naturally acute of perception, but those too much undervalued his understanding who deemed that this flattering compliment would obliterate the sense of the prior insult. He was silent, however, when the royal pledge again passed round, "To Sir Athelstane of Coningsburgh."

The knight made his obeisance, and shewed his sense of the honour by draining a huge goblet in answer to it.

"And now, sirs," said Prince John, who began to be warmed with the wine which he had drank, "having done justice to our Saxon guests, we will pray of them some requital to our courtesy. Worthy Thane," he continued, addressing Cedric, "may we pray you to name to us some Norman whose mention may least sully your mouth, and to wash down with a goblet of wine all bitterness which the sound may leave behind it?"

Fitzurse arose while Prince John spoke, and gliding behind the seat of the Saxon, whispered to him not to omit the opportunity of putting an end to unkindness betwixt the two races, by naming Prince John. The Saxon replied not to this politic insinuation, but, rising up, and filling his cup to the brim, he addressed Prince John in these words:

[1] There was nothing accounted so ignominious among the Saxons as to merit this disgraceful epithet. Even William the Conqueror, hated as he was by them, continued to draw a considerable army of Anglo-Saxons to his standard, by threatening to stigmatize those who staid at home, as *nidering*. Bartholinus, I think, mentions a similar phrase which had like influence on the Danes. — L. T.

"Your highness has required that I should name a Norman deserving to be remembered at our banquet. This, perchance, is a hard task, since it calls on the slave to sing the praises of the master — upon the vanquished, while pressed by all the evils of conquest, to sing the praises of the conqueror. Yet I *will* name a Norman — the first in arms and in place — the best and the noblest of his race. And the lips that shall refuse to pledge me to his well earned fame, I term false and dishonoured, and will so maintain them with my life, — I quaff this goblet to the health of Richard the Lion-hearted."

Prince John, who had expected that his own name would have closed the Saxon's speech, started when that of his injured brother was so unexpectedly introduced. He raised mechanically the wine cup to his lips, then instantly set it down, to view the demeanour of the company at this unexpected proposal, which many of them felt it as unsafe to oppose as to comply with. Some of them, ancient and experienced courtiers, closely imitated the example of the Prince himself, raising the goblet to their lips, and again replacing it before them. There were many who, with a more generous feeling, exclaimed, "Long live King Richard! and may he be speedily restored to us!" And some few, among whom were Front-de-Bœuf and the Templar, in sullen disdain suffered their goblets to stand untasted before them. But no man ventured directly to gainsay a pledge filled to the health of the reigning monarch.

Having enjoyed his triumph for about a minute, Cedric said to his companion, "Up, noble Athelstane! we have remained here long enough, since we have requited the hospitable courtesy of Prince John's banquet. Those who wish to know farther of our rude Saxon manners must henceforth seek us in the homes of our fathers, since we have seen enough of royal banquets, and enough of Norman courtesy."

So saying, he arose and left the banqueting room, followed by Athelstane, and by several other guests, who, partaking of the Saxon lineage, held themselves insulted by the sarcasms of Prince John and his courtiers.

"By the bones of St Thomas," said Prince John, as they retreated, "the Saxon churls have borne off the best of the day, and have retreated with triumph."

"*Conclamatum est, poculatum est*," said Prior Aymer; "we have drunk, and we have shouted — it were time we left our wine flagons."

"The monk hath some fair penitent to shrive to-night, that he is in such a hurry to depart," said De Bracy.

"Not so, Sir Knight," replied the Abbot; "but I must move several miles forward this evening upon my homeward journey."

"They are breaking up," said the Prince in a whisper to Fitzurse; "their fears anticipate the event, and this coward Prior is the first to shrink from me."

"Fear not, my Lord," said Waldemar; "I will shew him such reasons as shall induce him to join us when we hold our meeting at York. — Sir Prior," he said, "I must speak with you in private, before you mount your palfrey."

The other guests were now fast dispersing, with the exception of those immediately attached to Prince John's faction, and his retinue.

"This, then, is the result of your advice," said the Prince, turning an angry countenance upon Fitzurse; "that I should be bearded at my own board by a drunken Saxon churl, and that, on the mere sound of my brother's name, men should fall off from me as if I had the leprosy?"

"Have patience, sir," replied his counsellor; "I might retort your accusation, and blame the inconsiderate levity which foiled my design, and misled your own better judgment. But this is no time for recrimination. De Bracy and I will instantly go among these shuffling cowards, and convince them they have gone too far to recede."

"It will be in vain," said Prince John, pacing the apartment with disordered steps, and expressing himself with an agitation to which the wine he had drank partly contributed — "It will be in vain — they have seen the handwriting on the wall — they have marked the paw of the lion in the sand — they have heard his approaching roar shake the wood — nothing will reanimate their courage."

"Would to God," said Fitzurse to De Bracy, "that aught could reanimate his own! His brother's very name is an ague to him. Unhappy are the counsellors of a Prince, who wants fortitude and perseverance alike in good and in evil."

CHAPTER XVI.

> And yet he thinks, — ha, ha, ha, ha, — he thinks
> I am the tool and servant of his will.
> Well, let it be; through all the maze of trouble
> His plots and base oppression must create,
> I 'll shape myself a way to higher things,
> And who will say 'tis wrong?
>
> *Basil, a Tragedy.*

No spider ever took more pains to repair the shattered meshes of his web, than did Waldemar Fitzurse to reunite and combine the scattered members of Prince John's cabal. Few of these were attached to him from inclination, and none from personal regard. It was therefore necessary, that Fitzurse should open to them new prospects of advantage, and remind them of those which they at present enjoyed. To the young and wild nobles, he held out the prospect of unpunished licence and uncontrolled revelry; to the ambitious, that of power, and to the covetous, that of increased wealth and extended domains. The leaders of the mercenaries received a donation in gold; an argument the most persuasive to their minds, and without which all others would have proved in vain. Promises were still more liberally distributed than money by this active agent; and, in fine, nothing was left undone that could determine the wavering, or animate the disheartened. The return of King Richard he spoke of as an event altogether beyond the reach of probability; yet, when he observed, from the doubtful looks and uncertain answers which he received that this was the apprehension by which the minds of his accomplices were most haunted, he boldly treated that event, should it really take place, as one which ought not to alter their political calculations.

"If Richard returns," said Fitzurse, "he returns to enrich his needy and impoverished crusaders at the expense of those who did not follow him to the Holy Land. He returns to call to a fearful reckoning, those who, during his absence, have done

aught that can be construed offence or encroachment upon either the laws of the land or the privileges of the crown. He returns to avenge upon the Orders of the Temple and the Hospital, the preference which they shewed to Philip of France during the wars in the Holy Land. He returns, in fine, to punish as a rebel every adherent of his brother Prince John. Are ye afraid of his power?" continued the artful confident of that Prince; "we acknowledge him a strong and valiant knight; but these are not the days of King Arthur, when a champion could encounter an army. If Richard indeed comes back, it must be alone,—unfollowed—unfriended. The bones of his gallant army have whitened the sands of Palestine. The few of his followers who have returned have straggled hither, like this Wilfred of Ivanhoe, beggared and broken men.—And what talk ye of Richard's right of birth?" he proceeded, in answer to those who objected scruples on that head. "Is Richard's title of primogeniture more decidedly certain than that of Duke Robert of Normandy, the Conqueror's eldest son? And yet William the Red, and Henry, his second and third brothers, were successively preferred to him by the voice of the nation. Robert had every merit which can be pleaded for Richard; he was a bold knight, a good leader, generous to his friends and to the church, and, to crown the whole, a crusader and a conqueror of the Holy Sepulchre; and yet he died a blind and miserable prisoner in the Castle of Cardiff, because he opposed himself to the will of the people, who chose that he should not rule over them. It is our right," he said, "to choose from the blood royal the prince who is best qualified to hold the supreme power—that is," said he, correcting himself, "him whose election will best promote the interests of the nobility. In personal qualifications," he added, "it was possible that Prince John might be inferior to his brother Richard; but when it was considered that the latter returned with the sword of vengeance in his hand, while the former held out rewards, immunities, privileges, wealth, and honours, it could not be doubted which was the king whom in wisdom the nobility were called on to support."

These, and many more arguments, some adapted to the peculiar circumstances of those whom he addressed, had the expected weight with the nobles of Prince John's faction. Most of them consented to attend the propesed meeting at York, for the purpose of making general arrangements for placing the crown upon the head of Prince John.

It was late at night, when, worn out and exhausted with his various exertions, however gratified with the result, Fitzurse, returning to the Castle of Ashby, met with De Bracy, who had exchanged his banqueting garments for a short green kirtle, with hose of the same cloth and colour, a leathern cap or head-piece, a short sword, a horn slung over his shoulder, a long-bow in his hand, and a bundle of arrows stuck in his belt. Had Fitzurse met this figure in an outer apartment, he would have passed him without notice, as one of the yeomen of the guard; but finding him in the inner hall, he looked at him with more attention, and recognized the Norman knight in the dress of an English yeoman.

"What mummery is this, De Bracy?" said Fitzurse, somewhat angrily; "is this a time for Christmas gambols and quaint maskings, when the fate of our master, Prince John, is on the very verge of decision? Why hast thou not been, like me, among these heartless cravens, whom the very name of King Richard terrifies, as it is said to do the children of the Saracens?"

"I have been attending to mine own business," answered De Bracy calmly, "as you, Fitzurse, have been minding yours."

"I minding mine own business!" echoed Waldemar; "I have been engaged in that of Prince John, our joint patron."

"As if thou hadst any other reason for that, Waldemar," said De Bracy, "than the promotion of thine own individual interest? Come, Fitzurse, we know each other—ambition is thy pursuit, pleasure is mine, and they become our different ages. Of Prince John thou thinkest as I do; that he is too weak to be a determined monarch, too tyrannical to be an easy monarch, too insolent and presumptuous to be a popular monarch, and too fickle and timid to be long a monarch of any kind. But he is a monarch by whom Fitzurse and De Bracy hope to rise and thrive; and therefore you aid him with your policy; and I with the lances of my Free Companions."

"A hopeful auxiliary," said Fitzurse, impatiently; "playing the fool in the very moment of utter necessity.—What on earth dost thou purpose by this absurd disguise at a moment so urgent?"

"To get me a wife," answered de Bracy coolly, "after the manner of the tribe of Benjamin."

"The tribe of Benjamin!" said Fitzurse; "I comprehend thee not."

"Wert thou not in presence yester-even," said De Bracy, "when we heard the Prior Aymer tell us a tale in reply to the romance which was sung by the Minstrel?—He told how, long since in Palestine, a deadly feud arose between the tribe of Benjamin and the rest of the Israelitish nation; and how they cut to pieces well-nigh all the chivalry of that tribe; and how they swore by our blessed Lady, that they would not permit those who remained to marry in their lineage; and how they became grieved for their vow, and sent to consult his holiness the Pope how they might be absolved from it; and how, by the advice of the Holy Father, the youth of the tribe of Benjamin carried off from a superb tournament all the ladies who were there present, and thus won them wives without the consent either of their brides or their brides' families."

"I have heard the story," said Fitzurse, "though either the Prior or thou has made some singular alterations in date and circumstances."

"I tell thee," said De Bracy, "that I mean to purvey me a wife after the fashion of the tribe of Benjamin; which is as much as to say, that in this same equipment I will fall upon that herd of Saxon bullocks, who have this night left the castle, and carry off from them the lovely Rowena."

"Art thou mad, De Bracy?" said Fitzurse. "Bethink thee that, though the men be Saxons, they are rich and powerful, and regarded with the more respect by their countrymen, that wealth and honour are but the lot of few of Saxon descent."

"And should belong to none," said De Bracy; "the work of the Conquest should be completed."

"This is no time for it at least," said Fitzurse; "the approaching crisis renders the favour of the

multitude indispensable, and Prince John cannot refuse justice to any one who injures their favourites."

"Let him grant it, if he dare," said De Bracy; "he will soon see the difference betwixt the support of such a lusty lot of spears as mine, and that of a heartless mob of Saxon churls. Yet I mean no immediate discovery of myself. Seem I not in this garb as bold a forester as ever blew horn? The blame of the violence shall rest with the outlaws of the Yorkshire forests. I have sure spies on the Saxons' motions—To-night they sleep in the convent of Saint Wittol, or Withold, or whatever they call that churl of a Saxon Saint at Burton-on-Trent. Next day's march brings them within our reach, and, falcon-ways, we swoop on them at once. Presently after I will appear in mine own shape, play the courteous knight, rescue the unfortunate and afflicted fair one from the hands of the rude ravishers, conduct her to Front-de-Bœuf's Castle, or to Normandy, if it should be necessary, and produce her not again to her kindred until she be the bride and dame of Maurice de Bracy."

"A marvellously sage plan," said Fitzurse, "and, as I think, not entirely of thine own device.—Come, be frank, De Bracy, who aided thee in the invention? and who is to assist in the execution? for, as I think, thine own band lies as far off as York."

"Marry, if thou must needs know," said De Bracy, "it was the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert that shaped out the enterprise, which the adventure of the men of Benjamin suggested to me. He is to aid me in the onslaught, and he and his followers will personate the outlaws, from whom my valorous arm is, after changing my garb, to rescue the lady."

"By my halidome," said Fitzurse, "the plan was worthy of your united wisdom! and thy prudence, De Bracy, is most especially manifested in the project of leaving the lady in the hands of thy worthy confederate. Thou mayst, I think, succeed in taking her from her Saxon friends, but how thou wilt rescue her afterwards from the clutches of Bois-Guilbert seems considerably more doubtful—He is a falcon well accustomed to pounce on a partridge, and to hold his prey fast."

"He is a Templar," said De Bracy, "and cannot therefore rival me in my plan of wedding this heiress;—and to attempt aught dishonourable against the intended bride of De Bracy—By Heaven, were he a whole Chapter of his Order in his single person, he dared not to do me such an injury!"

"Then since nought that I can say," said Fitzurse, "will put this folly from thy imagination, (for well I know the obstinacy of thy disposition,) at least waste as little time as possible—let not thy folly be lasting as well as untimely."

"I tell thee," answered De Bracy, "that it will be the work of a few hours, and I shall be at York at the head of my daring and valorous fellows, as ready to support any bold design as thy policy can be to form one.—But I hear my comrades assembling, and the steeds stamping and neighing in the outer court.—Farewell.—I go, like a true knight, to win the smiles of beauty."

"Like a true knight!" repeated Fitzurse, looking after him; "like a fool, I should say, or like a child, who will leave the most serious and needful occupation, to chase the down of the thistle that drives past him.—But it is with such tools that I must work;—and for whose advantage?—For that of a Prince as unwise as he is profligate, and as likely to be an ungrateful master as he has already proved a rebellious son and an unnatural brother.—But he,—he, too, is but one of the tools with which I labour; and proud as he is, should he presume to separate his interest from mine, this is a secret which he shall soon learn."

The meditations of the statesman were here interrupted by the voice of the Prince from an interior apartment, calling out, "Noble Waldemar Fitzurse!" and, with bonnet doffed, the future Chancellor (for to such high preferment did the wily Norman aspire) hastened to receive the orders of the future sovereign.

CHAPTER XVII.

Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend hermit grew;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well;
Remote from man, with God he pass'd his days,
Prayer all his business—all his pleasure praise.
PARNELL.

THE reader cannot have forgotten that the event of the tournament was decided by the exertions of an unknown knight, whom, on account of the passive and indifferent conduct which he had manifested on the former part of the day, the spectators had entitled, *Le Noir Faineant*. This knight had left the field abruptly when the victory was achieved; and when he was called upon to receive the reward of his valour, he was nowhere to be found. In the meantime, while summoned by heralds and by trumpets, the knight was holding his course northward, avoiding all frequented paths, and taking the shortest road through the woodlands. He paused for the night at a small hostelry lying out of the ordinary route, where, however, he obtained from a wandering minstrel news of the event of the tourney.

On the next morning the knight departed early, with the intention of making a long journey; the condition of his horse, which he had carefully spared during the preceding morning, being such as enabled him to travel far without the necessity of much repose. Yet his purpose was baffled by the devious paths through which he rode, so that when evening closed upon him, he only found himself on the frontiers of the West Riding of Yorkshire. By this time both horse and man required refreshment, and it became necessary, moreover, to look out for some place in which they might spend the night, which was now fast approaching.

The place where the traveller found himself seemed unpropitious for obtaining either shelter or refreshment, and he was likely to be reduced to the usual expedient of knights-errant, who, on such occasions, turned their horses to graze, and laid themselves down to meditate on their lady-mistress, with an oak-tree for a canopy. But the Black Knight either had no mistress to meditate upon, or, being as indifferent in love as he seemed to be in war, was not sufficiently occupied by passionate reflections upon her beauty and cruelty, to be able to parry the effects of fatigue and hunger, and

suffer love to act as a substitute for the solid comforts of a bed and supper. He felt dissatisfied, therefore, when, looking around, he found himself deeply involved in woods, through which indeed there were many open glades, and some paths, but such as seemed only formed by the numerous herds of cattle which grazed in the forest, or by the animals of chase, and the hunters who made prey of them.

The sun, by which the knight had chiefly directed his course, had now sunk behind the Derbyshire hills on his left, and every effort which he might take to pursue his journey was as likely to lead him out of his road as to advance him on his route. After having in vain endeavoured to select the most beaten path, in hopes it might lead to the cottage of some herdsman, or the silvan lodge of a forester, and having repeatedly found himself totally unable to determine on a choice, the knight resolved to trust to the sagacity of his horse; experience having, on former occasions, made him acquainted with the wonderful talent possessed by these animals for extricating themselves and their riders on such emergencies.

The good steed, grievously fatigued with so long a day's journey under a rider cased in mail, had no sooner found, by the slackened reins, that he was abandoned to his own guidance, than he seemed to assume new strength and spirit; and whereas formerly he had scarce replied to the spur, otherwise than by a groan, he now, as if proud of the confidence reposed in him, pricked up his ears, and assumed, of his own accord, a more lively motion. The path which the animal adopted rather turned off from the course pursued by the knight during the day; but as the horse seemed confident in his choice, the rider abandoned himself to his discretion.

He was justified by the event; for the footpath soon after appeared a little wider and more worn, and the tinkle of a small bell gave the knight to understand that he was in the vicinity of some chapel or hermitage.

Accordingly, he soon reached an open plat of turf, on the opposite side of which, a rock, rising abruptly from a gently sloping plain, offered its grey and weather-beaten front to the traveller. Ivy mantled its sides in some places, and in others oaks and holly bushes, whose roots found nourishment in the cliffs of the crag, waved over the precipices below, like the plumage of the warrior over his steel helmet, giving grace to that whose chief expression was terror. At the bottom of the rock, and leaning, as it were, against it, was constructed a rude hut, built chiefly of the trunks of trees felled in the neighbouring forest, and secured against the weather by having its crevices stuffed with moss mingled with clay. The stem of a young fir-tree lopped of its branches, with a piece of wood tied across near the top, was planted upright by the door, as a rude emblem of the holy cross. At a little distance on the right hand, a fountain of the purest water trickled out of the rock, and was received in a hollow stone, which labour had formed into a rustic basin. Escaping from thence, the stream murmured down the descent by a channel which its course had long worn, and so wandered through the little plain to lose itself in the neighbouring wood.

Beside this fountain were the ruins of a very small chapel, of which the roof had partly fallen in. The building, when entire, had never been above sixteen feet long by twelve feet in breadth, and the roof, low in proportion, rested upon four concentric arches which sprung from the four corners of the building, each supported upon a short and heavy pillar. The ribs of two of these arches remained, though the roof had fallen down betwixt them; over the others it remained entire. The entrance to this ancient place of devotion was under a very low round arch, ornamented by several courses of that zig-zag moulding, resembling shark's teeth, which appears so often in the more ancient Saxon architecture. A belfry rose above the porch on four small pillars, within which hung the green and weatherbeaten bell, the feeble sounds of which had been some time before heard by the Black Knight.

The whole peaceful and quiet scene lay glimmering in twilight before the eyes of the traveller, giving him good assurance of lodging for the night; since it was a special duty of those hermits who dwelt in the woods, to exercise hospitality towards benighted or bewildered passengers.

Accordingly, the knight took no time to consider minutely the particulars which we have detailed, but thanking Saint Julian (the patron of travellers) who had sent him good harbourage, he leaped from his horse and assailed the door of the hermitage with the butt of his lance, in order to arouse attention and gain admittance.

It was some time before he obtained any answer, and the reply, when made, was unpropitious.

"Pass on, whosoever thou art," was the answer given by a deep hoarse voice from within the hut, "and disturb not the servant of God and Saint Dunstan in his evening devotions."

"Worthy father," answered the knight, "here is a poor wanderer bewildered in these woods, who gives thee the opportunity of exercising thy charity and hospitality."

"Good brother," replied the inhabitant of the hermitage, "it has pleased Our Lady and Saint Dunstan to destine me for the object of those virtues, instead of the exercise thereof. I have no provisions here which even a dog would share with me, and a horse of any tenderness of nurture would despise my couch — pass therefore on thy way, and God speed thee."

"But how," replied the knight, "is it possible for me to find my way through such a wood as this, when darkness is coming on? I pray you, reverend father, as you are a Christian, to undo your door, and at least point out to me my road."

"And I pray you, good Christian brother," replied the anchorite, "to disturb me no more. You have already interrupted one *pater*, two *aves*, and a *credo*, which I, miserable sinner that I am, should, according to my vow, have said before moonrise."

"The road — the road!" vociferated the knight, "give me directions for the road, if I am to expect no more from thee."

"The road," replied the hermit, "is easy to hit. The path from the wood leads to a morass, and from thence to a ford, which, as the rains have abated, may now be passable. When thou hast crossed the ford, thou wilt take care of thy footing up the left bank, as it is somewhat precipitous; and the path, which hangs over the river, has lately, as I learn, (for I seldom leave the duties of my

chapel,) given way in sundry places. Thou wilt then keep straight forward——"

"A broken path—a precipice—a ford, and a morass!" said the knight, interrupting him,—"Sir Hermit, if you were the holiest that ever wore beard or told bead, you shall scarce prevail on me to hold this road to-night. I tell thee, that thou, who livest by the charity of the country—ill deserved, as I doubt it is—hast no right to refuse shelter to the wayfarer when in distress. Either open the door quickly, or by the rood, I will beat it down and make entry for myself."

"Friend wayfarer," replied the hermit, "be not importunate; if thou puttest me to use the carnal weapon in mine own defence, it will be e'en the worse for you."

At this moment a distant noise of barking and growling, which the traveller had for some time heard, became extremely loud and furious, and made the knight suppose that the hermit, alarmed by his threat of making forcible entry, had called the dogs who made this clamour to aid him in his defence, out of some inner recess in which they had been kennelled. Incensed at this preparation on the hermit's part for making good his inhospitable purpose, the knight struck the door so furiously with his foot, that posts as well as staples shook with violence.

The anchorite, not caring again to expose his door to a similar shock, now called out aloud, "Patience, patience—spare thy strength, good traveller, and I will presently undo the door, though, it may be, my doing so will be little to thy pleasure."

The door accordingly was opened; and the hermit, a large, strong-built man, in his sackcloth gown and hood, girt with a rope of rushes, stood before the knight. He had in one hand a lighted torch, or link, and in the other a baton of crab-tree, so thick and heavy, that it might well be termed a club. Two large shaggy dogs, half greyhound half mastiff, stood ready to rush upon the traveller as soon as the door should be opened. But when the torch glanced upon the lofty crest and golden spurs of the knight, who stood without, the hermit, altering probably his original intentions, repressed the rage of his auxiliaries, and, changing his tone to a sort of churlish courtesy, invited the knight to enter his hut, making excuse for his unwillingness to open his lodge after sunset, by alleging the multitude of robbers and outlaws who were abroad, and who gave no honour to Our Lady or St Dunstan, nor to those holy men who spent life in their service.

"The poverty of your cell, good father," said the knight, looking around him, and seeing nothing but a bed of leaves, a crucifix rudely carved in oak, a missal, with a rough-hewn table and two stools, and one or two clumsy articles of furniture—"the poverty of your cell should seem a sufficient defence against any risk of thieves, not to mention the aid of two trusty dogs, large and strong enough, I think, to pull down a stag, and of course, to match with most men."

"The good keeper of the forest," said the hermit, "hath allowed me the use of these animals, to protect my solitude until the times shall mend."

Having said this, he fixed his torch in a twisted branch of iron which served for a candlestick; and placing the oaken trivet before the embers of the fire, which he refreshed with some dry wood, he placed a stool upon one side of the table, and beckoned to the knight to do the same upon the other.

They sat down, and gazed with great gravity at each other, each thinking in his heart that he had seldom seen a stronger or more athletic figure than was placed opposite to him.

"Reverend hermit," said the knight, after looking long and fixedly at his host, "were it not to interrupt your devout meditations, I would pray to know three things of your holiness; first, where I am to put my horse?—secondly, what I can have for supper?—thirdly, where I am to take up my couch for the night?"

"I will reply to you," said the hermit, "with my finger, it being against my rule to speak by words where signs can answer the purpose." So saying, he pointed successively to two corners of the hut. "Your stable," said he, "is there—your bed there; and," reaching down a platter with two handfuls of parched pease upon it from the neighbouring shelf, and placing it upon the table, he added, "your supper is here."

The knight shrugged his shoulders, and leaving the hut, brought in his horse, (which in the interim he had fastened to a tree,) unsaddled him with much attention, and spread upon the steed's weary back his own mantle.

The hermit was apparently somewhat moved to compassion by the anxiety as well as address which the stranger displayed in tending his horse; for, muttering something about provender left for the keeper's palfrey, he dragged out of a recess a bundle of forage, which he spread before the knight's charger, and immediately afterwards shook down a quantity of dried fern in the corner which he had assigned for the rider's couch. The knight returned him thanks for his courtesy; and, this duty done, both resumed their seats by the table, whereon stood the trencher of pease placed between them. The hermit, after a long grace, which had once been Latin, but of which original language few traces remained, excepting here and there the long rolling termination of some word or phrase, set example to his guest, by modestly putting into a very large mouth, furnished with teeth which might have ranked with those of a boar both in sharpness and whiteness, some three or four dried pease, a miserable grist as it seemed for so large and able a mill.

The knight, in order to follow so laudable an example, laid aside his helmet, his corslet, and the greater part of his armour, and shewed to the hermit a head thick-curled with yellow hair, high features, blue eyes, remarkably bright and sparkling, a mouth well formed, having an upper lip clothed with mustaches darker than his hair, and bearing altogether the look of a bold, daring, and enterprising man, with which his strong form well corresponded.

The hermit, as if wishing to answer to the confidence of his guest, threw back his cowl, and shewed a round bullet head belonging to a man in the prime of life. His close-shaven crown, surrounded by a circle of stiff curled black hair, had something the appearance of a parish pinfold begirt by its high hedge. The features expressed nothing of monastic austerity, or of ascetic privations; on the contrary, it was a bold bluff countenance, with broad black

eyebrows, a well-turned forehead, and cheeks as round and vermilion as those of a trumpeter, from which descended a long and curly black beard. Such a visage, joined to the brawny form of the holy man, spoke rather of sirloins and haunches, than of pease and pulse. This incongruity did not escape the guest. After he had with great difficulty accomplished the mastication of a mouthful of the dried pease, he found it absolutely necessary to request his pious entertainer to furnish him with some liquor; who replied to his request by placing before him a large can of the purest water from the fountain.

"It is from the well of Saint Dunstan," said he, "in which, betwixt sun and sun, he baptized five hundred heathen Danes and Britons — blessed be his name!" And applying his black beard to the pitcher, he took a draught much more moderate in quantity than his encomium seemed to warrant.

"It seems to me, reverend father," said the knight, "that the small morsels which you eat, together with this holy, but somewhat thin beverage, have thriven with you marvellously. You appear a man more fit to win the ram at a wrestling match, or the ring at a bout at quarter-staff, or the bucklers at a sword-play, than to linger out your time in this desolate wilderness, saying masses, and living upon parched pease and cold water."

"Sir Knight," answered the hermit, "your thoughts, like those of the ignorant laity are according to the flesh. It has pleased Our Lady and my patron saint to bless the pittance to which I restrain myself, even as the pulse and water was blessed to the children Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, who drank the same rather than defile themselves with the wine and meats which were appointed them by the King of the Saracens."

"Holy father," said the knight, "upon whose countenance it hath pleased Heaven to work such a miracle, permit a sinful layman to crave thy name?"

"Thou mayst call me," answered the hermit, "the Clerk of Copmanhurst, for so I am termed in these parts — They add, it is true, the epithet holy, but I stand not upon that, as being unworthy of such addition. — And now, valiant knight, may I pray ye for the name of my honourable guest?"

"Truly," said the knight, "Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst, men call me in these parts the Black Knight, — many, sir, add to it the epithet of Sluggard, whereby I am no way ambitious to be distinguished."

The hermit could scarcely forbear from smiling at his guest's reply.

"I see," said he, "Sir Sluggish Knight, that thou art a man of prudence and of counsel; and moreover, I see that my poor monastic fare likes thee not, accustomed, perhaps, as thou hast been to the licence of courts and camps, and the luxuries of cities; and now I bethink me, Sir Sluggard, that when the charitable keeper of this forest-walk left these dogs for my protection, and also those bundles of forage, he left me also some food, which, being unfit for my use, the very recollection of it had escaped me amid my more weighty meditations."

"I dare be sworn he did so," said the knight; "I was convinced that there was better food in the cell, Holy Clerk, since you first doffed your cowl. — Your keeper is ever a jovial fellow; and none who beheld thy grinders contending with these pease, and thy throat flooded with this ungenial element, could see thee doomed to such horse-provender and horse-beverage," (pointing to the provisions upon the table,) "and refrain from mending thy cheer. Let us see the keeper's bounty, therefore, without delay."

The hermit cast a wistful look upon the knight, in which there was a sort of comic expression of hesitation, as if uncertain how far he should act prudently in trusting his guest. There was, however, as much of bold frankness in the knight's countenance as was possible to be expressed by features. His smile, too, had something in it irresistibly comic, and gave an assurance of faith and loyalty, with which his host could not refrain from sympathizing.

After exchanging a mute glance or two, the hermit went to the farther side of the hut, and opened a hutch, which was concealed with great care and some ingenuity. Out of the recesses of a dark closet, into which this aperture gave admittance, he brought a large pasty, baked in a pewter platter of unusual dimensions. This mighty dish he placed before his guest, who, using his poniard to cut it open, lost no time in making himself acquainted with its contents.

"How long is it since the good keeper has been here?" said the knight to his host, after having swallowed several hasty morsels of this reinforcement to the hermit's good cheer.

"About two months," answered the father hastily.

"By the true Lord," answered the knight, "every thing in your hermitage is miraculous, Holy Clerk! for I would have been sworn that the fat buck which furnished this venison had been running on foot within the week."

The hermit was somewhat discountenanced by this observation; and, moreover, he had made but a poor figure while gazing on the diminution of the pasty on which his guest was making desperate inroads; a warfare in which his previous profession of abstinence left him no pretext for joining.

"I have been in Palestine, Sir Clerk," said the knight, stopping short of a sudden, "and I bethink me it is a custom there that every host who entertains a guest shall assure him of the wholesomeness of his food, by partaking of it along with him. Far be it from me to suspect so holy a man of aught inhospitable, nevertheless I will be highly bound to you would you comply with this Eastern custom."

"To ease your unnecessary scruples, Sir Knight, I will for once depart from my rule," replied the hermit. And as there were no forks in those days, his clutches were instantly in the bowels of the pasty.

The ice of ceremony being once broken, it seemed matter of rivalry between the guest and the entertainer which should display the best appetite; and although the former had probably fasted longest, yet the hermit fairly surpassed him.

"Holy Clerk," said the knight, when his hunger was appeased, "I would gage my good horse yonder against a zecchin, that that same honest keeper to whom we are obliged for the venison has left thee a stoup of wine or a runlet of canary, or some such trifle, by way of ally to this noble pasty. This would be a circumstance, doubtless, totally unworthy to dwell in the memory of so rigid an anchorite; yet, I think, were you to search yonder crypt once

more you would find that I am right in my conjecture."

The hermit replied by a grin: and returning to the hutch, he produced a leathern bottle, which might contain about four quarts. He also brought forth two large drinking cups, made out of the horn of the urus, and hooped with silver. Having made this goodly provision for washing down the supper, he seemed to think no farther ceremonious scruple necessary on his part; but filling both cups, and saying, in the Saxon fashion, "*Waes hael*, Sir Sluggish Knight!" he emptied his own at a draught.

"*Drink hael*, Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst!" answered the warrior, and did his host reason in a similar brimmer.

"Holy Clerk," said the stranger, after the first cup was thus swallowed, "I cannot but marvel that a man possessed of such thews and sinews as thine, and who therewithal shews the talent of so goodly a trencher-man, should think of abiding by himself in this wilderness. In my judgment, you are fitter to keep a castle or a fort, eating of the fat and drinking of the strong, than to live here upon pulse and water, or even upon the charity of the keeper. At least, were I as thou, I should find myself both disport and plenty out of the king's deer. There is many a goodly herd in these forests, and a buck will never be missed that goes to the use of Saint Dunstan's Chaplain."

"Sir Sluggish Knight," replied the Clerk, "these are dangerous words, and I pray you to forbear them. I am true hermit to the king and law, and were I to spoil my liege's game, I should be sure of the prison, and, an my gown saved me not, were in some peril of hanging."

"Nevertheless, were I as thou," said the knight, "I would take my walk by moonlight, when foresters and keepers were warm in bed, and ever and anon,—as I pattered my prayers,—I would let fly a shaft among the herds of dun deer that feed in the glades—Resolve me, Holy Clerk, hast thou never practised such a pastime?"

"Friend Sluggard," answered the hermit, "thou hast seen all that can concern thee of my housekeeping, and something more than he deserves who takes up his quarters by violence. Credit me, it is better to enjoy the good which God sends thee, than to be impertinently curious how it comes. Fill thy cup and welcome; and do not, I pray thee, by farther impertinent inquiries put me to shew that thou couldst hardly have made good thy lodging had I been earnest to oppose thee."

"By my faith," said the knight, "thou makest me more curious than ever! Thou art the most mysterious hermit I ever met; and I will know more of thee ere we part. As for thy threats, know, holy man, thou speakest to one whose trade it is to find out danger wherever it is to be met with."

"Sir Sluggish Knight, I drink to thee," said the hermit; "respecting thy valour much, but deeming wondrous slightly of thy discretion. If thou wilt take equal arms with me, I will give thee, in all friendship and brotherly love, such sufficing penance and complete absolution, that thou shalt not for the next twelve months sin the sin of excess and curiosity."

The knight pledged him, and desired him to name his weapons.

"There is none," replied the hermit, "from the scissors of Delilah, and the tenpenny nail of Jael, to the scimitar of Goliah, at which I am not a match for thee—But, if I am to make the election, what sayst thou, good friend, to these trinkets?"

Thus speaking, he opened another hutch, and took out from it a couple of broadswords and bucklers, such as were used by the yeomanry of the period. The knight, who watched his motions, observed that this second place of concealment was furnished with two or three good long-bows, a cross-bow, a bundle of bolts for the latter, and half-a-dozen sheaves of arrows for the former. A harp, and other matters of very uncanonical appearance, were also visible when this dark recess was opened.

"I promise thee, brother Clerk," said he, "I will ask thee no more offensive questions. The contents of that cupboard are an answer to all my inquiries; and I see a weapon there" (here he stooped and took out the harp) "on which I would more gladly prove my skill with thee, than at the sword and buckler."

"I hope, Sir Knight," said the hermit, "thou hast given no good reason for thy surname of the Sluggard. I do promise thee I suspect thee grievously. Nevertheless, thou art my guest, and I will not put thy manhood to the proof without thine own free will. Sit thee down, then, and fill thy cup; let us drink, sing, and be merry. If thou knowest ever a good lay, thou shalt be welcome to a nook of pasty at Copmanhurst so long as I serve the chapel of St Dunstan, which, please God, shall be till I change my gray covering for one of green turf. But come, fill a flagon, for it will crave some time to tune the harp; and nought pitches the voice and sharpens the ear like a cup of wine. For my part, I love to feel the grape at my very finger ends before they make the harp-strings tinkle."[1]

CHAPTER XVIII.

At eve, within yon studious nook,
I ope my brass-embossed book.
Portray'd with many a holy deed
Of martyrs crown'd with heavenly meed;
Then, as my taper waxes dim,
Chant, ere I sleep, my measured hymn.
* * * * *
Who but would cast his pomp away,
To take my staff and amice gray,
And to the world's tumultuous stage,
Prefer the peaceful HERMITAGE?

WARTON.

NOTWITHSTANDING the prescription of the genial hermit, with which his guest willingly complied, he found it no easy matter to bring the harp to harmony.

"Methinks, holy father," said he, "the instrument wants one string, and the rest have been somewhat misused."

"Ay, mark'st thou that?" replied the hermit; "that shews thee a master of the craft. Wine and wassail," he added, gravely casting up his eyes—"all the fault of wine and wassail!—I told Allan-a-Dale, the northern minstrel, that he would damage

[1] THE JOLLY HERMIT.—All readers, however slightly acquainted with black letter, must recognize in the Clerk of Copmanhurst, Friar Tuck, the buxom Confessor of Robin Hood's gang, the Curtal Friar of Fountain's Abbey.

the harp if he touched it after the seventh cup, but he would not be controlled—Friend, I drink to thy successful performance."

So saying, he took off his cup with much gravity, at the same time shaking his head at the intemperance of the Scottish harper.

The knight, in the meantime, had brought the strings into some order, and after a short prelude, asked his host whether he would choose a *sirvente* in the language of *oc*, or a *lai* in the langvage of *oui*, or a *virelai*, or a ballad in the vulgar English. [1]

"A ballad, a ballad," said the hermit, "against all the *ocs* and *ouis* of France. Downright English am I, Sir Knight, and downright English was my patron St Dunstan, and scorned *oc* and *oui*, as he would have scorned the parings of the devil's hoof —downright English alone shall be sung in this cell."

"I will assay, then," said the knight, "a ballad composed by a Saxon glee-man, whom I knew in Holy Land."

It speedily appeared, that if the knight was not a complete master of the minstrel art, his taste for it had at least been cultivated under the best instructors. Art had taught him to soften the faults of a voice which had little compass, and was naturally rough rather than mellow, and, in short, had done all that culture can do in supplying natural deficiencies. His performance, therefore, might have been termed very respectable by abler judges than the hermit, especially as the knight threw into the notes now a degree of spirit, and now of plaintive enthusiasm, which gave force and energy to the verses which he sung.

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN.

1.

High deeds achieved of knightly fame,
From Palestine the champion came;
The cross upon his shoulders borne,
Battle and blast had dimm'd and torn.
Each dint upon his batter'd shield
Was token of a foughten field;
And thus, beneath his lady's bower,
He sung, as fell the twilight hour:—

2.

"Joy to the fair!—thy knight behold,
Return'd from yonder land of gold;
No wealth he brings, nor wealth can need,
Save his good arms and battle-steed;
His spurs, to dash against a foe,
His lance and sword to lay him low;
Such all the trophies of his toil,
Such—and the hope of Tekla's smile!

3.

"Joy to the fair! whose constant knight
Her favour fired to feats of might;
Unnoted shall she not remain,
Where meet the bright and noble train;
Minstrel shall sing and herald tell—
'Mark yonder maid of beauty well,
'Tis she for whose bright eyes was won
The listed field at Askalon!'

4.

"'Note well her smile!—it edged the blade
Which fifty wives to widows made,
When, vain his strength and Mahound's spell,
Iconium's turban'd Soldan fell.
Seest thou her locks, whose sunny glow
Half shews, half shades, her neck of snow?
Twines not of them one golden thread,
But for its sake a Paynim bled.'"

5.

"Joy to the fair!—my name unknown,
Each deed, and all its praise thine own:
Then, oh! unbar this churlish gate,
The night dew falls, the hour is late.
Inured to Syria's glowing breath,
I feel the north breeze chill as death:
Let grateful love quell maiden shame,
And grant him bliss who brings thee fame."

[1] See Note D. *Minstrelsy.*

During this performance, the hermit demeaned himself much like a first-rate critic of the present day at a new opera. He reclined back upon his seat, with his eyes half shut; now, folding his hands and twisting his thumbs, he seemed absorbed in attention, and anon, balancing his expanded palms, he gently flourished them in time to the music. At one or two favourite cadences, he threw in a little assistance of his own, where the knight's voice seemed unable to carry the air so high as his worshipful taste approved. When the song was ended, the anchorite emphatically declared it a good one, and well sung.

"And yet," said he, "I think my Saxon countrymen had herded long enough with the Normans, to fall into the tone of their melancholy ditties. What took the honest knight from home? or what could he expect but to find his mistress agreeably engaged with a rival on his return, and his serenade, as they call it, as little regarded as the caterwauling of a cat in the gutter? Nevertheless, Sir Knight, I drink this cup to thee, to the success of all true lovers—I fear you are none," he added, on observing that the knight (whose brain began to be heated with these repeated draughts) qualified his flagon with the water pitcher.

"Why," said the knight, "did you not tell me that this water was from the well of your blessed patron, St Dunstan?"

"Ay, truly," said the hermit, "and many a hundred of pagans did he baptize there, but I never heard that he drank any of it. Every thing should be put to its proper use in this world. St Dunstan knew, as well as any one, the prerogatives of a jovial friar."

And so saying, he reached the harp, and entertained his guest with the following characteristic song, to a sort of derry-down chorus, appropriate to an old English ditty. [1]

THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR.

1.

I 'll give thee, good fellow, a twelvemonth or twain,
To search Europe through, from Byzantium to Spain;
But ne'er shall you find, should you search till you tire,
So happy a man as the Barefooted Friar.

2.

Your knight for his lady pricks forth in career,
And is brought home at even-song prick'd through with a spear
I confess him in haste—for his lady desires
No comfort on earth save the Barfeooted Friar's.

3.

Your monarch?—Pshaw! many a prince has been known
To barter his robes for our cowl and our gown,
But which of us e'er felt the idle desire
To exchange for a crown the gray hood of a Friar!

4.

The Friar has walk'd out, and where'er he has gone,
The land and its fatness is mark'd for his own;
He can roam where he lists, he can stop when he tires,
For every man's house is the Barefooted Friar's.

[1] It may be proper to remind the reader, that the chorus of "derry down" is supposed to be as ancient, not only as the times of the Heptarchy, but as those of the Druids, and to have furnished the chorus to the hymns of those venerable persons when they went to the wood to gather mistletoe.

5.

He 's expected at noon, and no wight till he comes
May profane the great chair, or the porridge of plums;
For the best of the cheer, and the seat by the fire,
Is the undenied right of the Barefooted Friar.

6.

He 's expected at night, and the pasty 's made hot,
They broach the brown ale, and they fill the black pot,
And the goodwife would wish the goodman in the mire,
Ere he lack'd a soft pillow, the Barefooted Friar.

7.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord, and the cope,
The dread of the devil and trust of the Pope;
For to gather life's roses, unscathed by the briar,
Is granted alone to the Barefooted Friar.

"By my troth," said the knight, "thou hast sung well and lustily, and in high praise of thine order. And, talking of the devil, Holy Clerk, are you not afraid he may pay you a visit during some of your uncanonical pastimes?"

"I uncanonical!" answered the hermit; "I scorn the charge — I scorn it with my heels! — I serve the duty of my chapel duly and truly — Two masses daily, morning and evening, primes, noons, and vespers, *aves*, *credos*, *paters* ——"

"Excepting moonlight nights, when the venison is in season," said his guest.

"*Exceptis excipiendis*," replied the hermit, "as our old abbot taught me to say, when impertinent laymen should ask me if I kept every punctilio of mine order."

"True, holy father," said the knight; "but the devil is apt to keep an eye on such exceptions; he goes about, thou knowest, like a roaring lion."

"Let him roar here if he dares," said the friar; "a touch of my cord will make him roar as loud as the tongs of St Dunstan himself did. I never feared man, and I as little fear the devil and his imps. Saint Dunstan, Saint Dubric, Saint Winibald, Saint Winifred, Saint Swibert, Saint Willick, not forgetting Saint Thomas a Kent, and my own poor merits to speed, I defy every devil of them, come cut and long tail. — But to let you into a secret, I never speak upon such subjects, my friend, until after morning vespers."

He changed the conversation; fast and furious grew the mirth of the parties, and many a song was exchanged betwixt them, when their revels were interrupted by a loud knocking at the door of the hermitage.

The occasion of this interruption we can only explain by resuming the adventures of another set of our characters; for, like old Ariosto, we do not pique ourselves upon continuing uniformly to keep company with any one personage of our drama.

CHAPTER XIX.

Away! our journey lies through dell and dingle,
Where the blithe fawn trips by its timid mother,
Where the broad oak, with intercepting boughs,
Chequers the sunbeam in the greensward alley —
Up and away! — for lovely paths are these
To tread, when the glad sun is on his throne;
Less pleasant, and less safe, when Cynthia's lamp
With doubtful glimmer lights the dreary forest.
Ettrick Forest.

When Cedric the Saxon saw his son drop down senseless in the lists at Ashby, his first impulse was to order him into the custody and care of his own attendants, but the words choked in his throat. He could not bring himself to acknowledge, in presence of such an assembly, the son whom he had renounced and disinherited. He ordered, however, Oswald to keep an eye upon him; and directed that officer, with two of his serfs, to convey Ivanhoe to Ashby as soon as the crowd had dispersed. Oswald, however, was anticipated in this good office. The crowd dispersed, indeed, but the knight was nowhere to be seen.

It was in vain that Cedric's cupbearer looked around for his young master — he saw the bloody spot on which he had lately sunk down, but himself he saw no longer; it seemed as if the fairies had conveyed him from the spot. Perhaps Oswald (for the Saxons were very superstitious) might have adopted some such hypothesis, to account for Ivanhoe's disappearance, had he not suddenly cast his eye upon a person attired like a squire, in whom he recognized the features of his fellow-servant Gurth. Anxious concerning his master's fate, and in despair at his sudden disappearance, the translated swineherd was searching for him every where, and had neglected, in doing so, the concealment on which his own safety depended. Oswald deemed it his duty to secure Gurth, as a fugitive of whose fate his master was to judge.

Renewing his inquiries concerning the fate of Ivanhoe, the only information which the cupbearer could collect from the bystanders was, that the knight had been raised with care by certain well-attired grooms, and placed in a litter belonging to a lady among the spectators, which had immediately transported him out of the press. Oswald, on receiving this intelligence, resolved to return to his master for farther instructions, carrying along with him Gurth, whom he considered in some sort as a deserter from the service of Cedric.

The Saxon had been under very intense and agonizing apprehensions concerning his son; for Nature had asserted her rights, in spite of the patriotic stoicism which laboured to disown her. But no sooner was he informed that Ivanhoe was in careful, and probably in friendly hands, than the paternal anxiety which had been excited by the dubiety of his fate, gave way anew to the feeling of injured pride and resentment, at what he termed Wilfred's filial disobedience. "Let him wander his way," said he — "let those leech his wounds for whose sake he encountered them. He is fitter to do the juggling tricks of the Norman chivalry than to maintain the fame and honour of his English ancestry with the glaive and brown-bill, the good old weapons of his country."

"If, to maintain the honour of ancestry," said Rowena, who was present, "it is sufficient to be wise in council and brave in execution — to be boldest among the bold, and gentlest among the gentle, I know no voice, save his father's ——"

"Be silent, Lady Rowena! — on this subject only I hear you not. Prepare yourself for the Prince's festival: we have been summoned thither with unwonted circumstance of honour and of courtesy, such as the haughty Normans have rarely used to our race since the fatal day of Hastings. Thither will I go, were it only to shew these proud Normans how little the fate of a son, who could defeat their bravest, can affect a Saxon."

"Thither," said Rowena, "do I NOT go; and I pray you to beware, lest what you mean for

courage and obstinacy, shall be accounted hardness of heart."

"Remain at home, then, ungrateful lady," answered Cedric; "thine is the hard heart, which can sacrifice the weal of an oppressed people to an idle and unauthorized attachment. I seek the noble Athelstane, and with him attend the banquet of John of Anjou."

He went accordingly to the banquet, of which we have already mentioned the principal events. Immediately upon retiring from the castle, the Saxon thanes, with their attendants, took horse; and it was during the bustle which attended their doing so, that Cedric, for the first time, cast his eyes upon the deserter Gurth. The noble Saxon had returned from the banquet, as we have seen, in no very placid humour, and wanted but a pretext for wreaking his anger upon some one. "The gyves!" he said, "the gyves!—Oswald—Hundibert!—Dogs and villains!—why leave ye the knave unfettered?"

Without daring to remonstrate, the companions of Gurth bound him with a halter, as the readiest cord which occurred. He submitted to the operation without remonstrance, except that, darting a reproachful look at his master, he said, "This comes of loving your flesh and blood better than mine own."

"To horse, and forward!" said Cedric.

"It is indeed full time," said the noble Athelstane; "for, if we ride not the faster, the worthy Abbot Waltheoff's preparations for a rere-supper[1] will be altogether spoiled."

The travellers, however, used such speed as to reach the convent of St Withold's before the apprehended evil took place. The Abbot, himself of ancient Saxon descent, received the noble Saxons with the profuse and exuberant hospitality of their nation, wherein they indulged to a late, or rather an early hour; nor did they take leave of their reverend host the next morning until they had shared with him a sumptuous refection.

As the cavalcade left the court of the monastery, an incident happened somewhat alarming to the Saxons, who, of all people of Europe, were most addicted to a superstitious observance of omens, and to whose opinions can be traced most of those notions upon such subjects, still to be found among our popular antiquities. For the Normans being a mixed race, and better informed according to the information of the times, had lost most of the superstitious prejudices which their ancestors had brought from Scandinavia, and piqued themselves upon thinking freely on such topics.

In the present instance, the apprehension of impending evil was inspired by no less respectable a prophet than a large lean black dog, which, sitting upright, howled most piteously as the foremost riders left the gate, and presently afterwards, barking wildly, and jumping to and fro, seemed bent upon attaching itself to the party.

"I like not that music, father Cedric," said Athelstane; for by this title of respect he was accustomed to address him.

"Nor I either, uncle," said Wamba; "I greatly fear we shall have to pay the piper."

"In my mind," said Athelstane, upon whose memory the Abbot's good ale (for Burton was already famous for that genial liquor) had made a favourable impression,—"in my mind we had better turn back, and abide with the Abbot until the afternoon. It is unlucky to travel where your path is crossed by a monk, a hare, or a howling dog, until you have eaten your next meal."

"Away!" said Cedric, impatiently: "the day is already too short for our journey. For the dog, I know it to be the cur of the runaway slave Gurth, a useless fugitive like its master."

So saying, and rising at the same time in his stirrups, impatient at the interruption of his journey, he lanched his javelin at poor Fangs—for Fangs it was, who, having traced his master thus far upon his stolen expedition, had here lost him, and was now, in his uncouth way, rejoicing at his reappearance. The javelin inflicted a wound upon the animal's shoulder, and narrowly missed pinning him to the earth; and Fangs fled howling from the presence of the enraged thane. Gurth's heart swelled within him; for he felt this meditated slaughter of his faithful adherent in a degree much deeper than the harsh treatment he had himself received. Having in vain attempted to raise his hand to his eyes, he said to Wamba, who, seeing his master's ill humour, had prudently retreated to the rear, "I pray thee, do me the kindness to wipe my eyes with the skirt of thy mantle; the dust offends me, and these bonds will not let me help myself one way or another."

Wamba did him the service he required, and they rode side by side for some time, during which Gurth maintained a moody silence. At length he could repress his feelings no longer.

"Friend Wamba," said he, "of all those who are fools enough to serve Cedric, thou alone hast dexterity enough to make thy folly acceptable to him. Go to him, therefore, and tell him that neither for love nor fear will Gurth serve him longer. He may strike the head from me—he may scourge me—he may load me with irons—but henceforth he shall never compel me either to love or to obey him. Go to him, then, and tell him that Gurth the son of Beowulph renounces his service."

"Assuredly," said Wamba, "fool as I am, I shall not do your fool's errand. Cedric hath another javelin stuck into his girdle, and thou knowest he does not always miss his mark."

"I care not," replied Gurth, "how soon he makes a mark of me. Yesterday he left Wilfred, my young master, in his blood. To-day he has striven to kill before my face the only other living creature that ever shewed me kindness. By St Edmund, St Dunstan, St Withold, St Edward the Confessor, and every other Saxon saint in the calendar," (for Cedric never swore by any that was not of Saxon lineage, and all his household had the same limited devotion,) "I will never forgive him!"

"To my thinking now," said the Jester, who was frequently wont to act as peace-maker in the family, "our master did not propose to hurt Fangs, but only to affright him. For, if you observed, he rose in his stirrups, as thereby meaning to overcast the mark; and so he would have done, but Fangs happening to bound up at the very moment, received a scratch, which I will be bound to heal with a penny's breadth of tar."

"If I thought so," said Gurth—"if I could but

[1] A rere-supper was a night-meal, and sometimes signified a collation, which was given at a late hour, after the regular supper had made its appearance.—L. T.

think so — but no — I saw the javelin was well aimed — I heard it whizz through the air with all the wrathful malevolence of him who cast it, and it quivered after it had pitched in the ground, as if with regret for having missed its mark. By the hog dear to St Anthony, I renounce him!"

And the indignant swineherd resumed his sullen silence, which no efforts of the Jester could again induce him to break.

Meanwhile Cedric and Athelstane, the leaders of the troop, conversed together on the state of the land, on the dissentions of the royal family, on the feuds and quarrels among the Norman nobles, and on the chance which there was that the oppressed Saxons might be able to free themselves from the yoke of the Normans, or at least to elevate themselves into national consequence and independence, during the civil convulsions which were likely to ensue. On this subject Cedric was all animation. The restoration of the independence of his race was the idol of his heart, to which he had willingly sacrificed domestic happiness and the interests of his son. But, in order to achieve this great revolution in favour of the native English, it was necessary that they should be united among themselves, and act under an acknowledged head. The necessity of choosing their chief from the Saxon blood royal was not only evident in itself, but had been made a solemn condition by those whom Cedric had intrusted with his secret plans and hopes. Athelstane had this quality at least; and though he had few mental accomplishments or talents to recommend him as a leader, he had still a goodly person, was no coward, had been accustomed to martial exercises, and seemed willing to defer to the advice of counsellors more wise than himself. Above all, he was known to be liberal and hospitable, and believed to be good-natured. But whatever pretensions Athelstane had to be considered as head of the Saxon confederacy, many of that nation were disposed to prefer to his the title of the Lady Rowena, who drew her descent from Alfred, and whose father, having been a chief renowned for wisdom, courage, and generosity, his memory was highly honoured by his oppressed countrymen.

It would have been no difficult thing for Cedric, had he been so disposed, to have placed himself at the head of a third party, as formidable at least as any of the others. To counterbalance their royal descent, he had courage, activity, energy, and, above all, that devoted attachment to the cause which had procured him the epithet of The Saxon, and his birth was inferior to none, excepting only that of Athelstane and his ward. These qualities, however, were unalloyed by the slightest shade of selfishness; and, instead of dividing yet farther his weakened nation by forming a faction of his own, it was a leading part of Cedric's plan to extinguish that which already existed, by promoting a marriage betwixt Rowena and Athelstane. An obstacle occurred to this his favourite project, in the mutual attachment of his ward and his son: and hence the original cause of the banishment of Wilfred from the house of his father.

This stern measure Cedric had adopted, in hopes that, during Wilfred's absence, Rowena might relinquish her preference, but in this hope he was disappointed; a disappointment which might be attributed in part to the mode in which his ward had been educated. Cedric, to whom the name of Alfred was as that of a deity, had treated the sole remaining scion of that great monarch with a degree of observance, such as, perhaps, was in those days scarce paid to an acknowledged princess. Rowena's will had been in almost all cases a law to his household; and Cedric himself, as if determined that her sovereignty should be fully acknowledged within that little circle at least, seemed to take a pride in acting as the first of her subjects. Thus trained in the exercise not only of free will, but despotic authority, Rowena was, by her previous education, disposed both to resist and to resent any attempt to control her affections, or dispose of her hand contrary to her inclinations, and to assert her independence in a case in which even those females who have been trained up to obedience and subjection, are not infrequently apt to dispute the authority of guardians and parents. The opinions which she felt strongly, she avowed boldly; and Cedric, who could not free himself from his habitual deference to her opinions, felt totally at a loss how to enforce his authority of guardian.

It was in vain that he attempted to dazzle her with the prospect of a visionary throne. Rowena, who possessed strong sense, neither considered his plan as practicable, nor as desirable, so far as she was concerned, could it have been achieved. Without attempting to conceal her avowed preference of Wilfred of Ivanhoe, she declared that, were that favoured knight out of question, she would rather take refuge in a convent, than share a throne with Athelstane, whom, having always despised, she now began, on account of the trouble she received on his account, thoroughly to detest.

Nevertheless, Cedric, whose opinion of women's constancy was far from strong, persisted in using every means in his power to bring about the proposed match, in which he conceived he was rendering an important service to the Saxon cause. The sudden and romantic appearance of his son in the lists at Ashby, he had justly regarded as almost a death's blow to his hopes. His paternal affection, it is true, had for an instant gained the victory over pride and patriotism; but both had returned in full force, and under their joint operation, he was now bent upon making a determined effort for the union of Athelstane and Rowena, together with expediting those other measures which seemed necessary to forward the restoration of Saxon independence.

On this last subject, he was now labouring with Athelstane, not without having reason, every now and then, to lament, like Hotspur, that he should have moved such a dish of skimmed milk to so honourable an action. Athelstane, it is true, was vain enough, and loved to have his ears tickled with tales of his high descent, and of his right by inheritance to homage and sovereignty. But his petty vanity was sufficiently gratified by receiving this homage at the hands of his immediate attendants, and of the Saxons who approached him. If he had the courage to encounter danger, he at least hated the trouble of going to seek it; and while he agreed in the general principles laid down by Cedric concerning the claim of the Saxons to independence, and was still more easily convinced of his own title to reign over them when that independence should be attained, yet when the means of asserting these rights came to be discussed, he

was still "Athelstane the Unready," slow, irresolute, procrastinating, and unenterprising. The warm and impassioned exhortations of Cedric had as little effect upon his impassive temper, as red-hot balls alighting in the water, which produce a little sound and smoke, and are instantly extinguished.

If, leaving this task, which might be compared to spurring a tired jade, or to hammering upon cold iron, Cedric fell back to his ward Rowena, he received little more satisfaction from conferring with her. For, as his presence interrupted the discourse between the lady and her favourite attendant upon the gallantry and fate of Wilfred, Elgitha failed not to revenge both her mistress and herself, by recurring to the overthrow of Athelstane in the lists, the most disagreeable subject which could greet the ears of Cedric. To this sturdy Saxon, therefore, the day's journey was fraught with all manner of displeasure and discomfort; so that he more than once internally cursed the tournament, and him who had proclaimed it, together with his own folly in ever thinking of going thither.

At noon, upon the motion of Athelstane, the travellers paused in a woodland shade by a fountain, to repose their horses and partake of some provisions, with which the hospitable Abbot had loaded a sumpter mule. Their repast was a pretty long one; and these several interruptions rendered it impossible for them to hope to reach Rotherwood without travelling all night, a conviction which induced them to proceed on their way at a more hasty pace than they had hitherto used.

CHAPTER XX.

> A train of armed men, some noble dame
> Escorting, (so their scatter'd words discover'd,
> As unperceived I hung upon their rear,)
> Are close at hand, and mean to pass the night
> Within the castle.
>
> *Orra, a Tragedy.*

The travellers had now reached the verge of the wooded country, and were about to plunge into its recesses, held dangerous at that time from the number of outlaws whom oppression and poverty had driven to despair, and who occupied the forests in such large bands as could easily bid defiance to the feeble police of the period. From these rovers, however, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, Cedric and Athelstane accounted themselves secure, as they had in attendance ten servants, besides Wamba and Gurth, whose aid could not be counted upon, the one being a jester and the other a captive. It may be added, that in travelling thus late through the forest, Cedric and Athelstane relied on their descent and character, as well as their courage. The outlaws, whom the severity of the forest laws had reduced to this roving and desperate mode of life, were chiefly peasants and yeomen of Saxon descent, and were generally supposed to respect the persons and property of their countrymen.

As the travellers journeyed on their way, they were alarmed by repeated cries for assistance; and when they rode up to the place from whence they came, they were surprised to find a horse-litter placed upon the ground, beside which sat a young woman, richly dressed in the Jewish fashion, while an old man, whose yellow cap proclaimed him to belong to the same nation, walked up and down with gestures expressive of the deepest despair, and wrung his hands, as if affected by some strange disaster.

To the inquiries of Athelstane and Cedric, the old Jew could for some time only answer by invoking the protection of all the patriarchs of the Old Testament successively against the sons of Ishmael, who were coming to smite them, hip and thigh, with the edge of the sword. When he began to come to himself out of this agony of terror, Isaac of York (for it was our old friend) was at length able to explain, that he had hired a body-guard of six men at Ashby, together with mules for carrying the litter of a sick friend. This party had undertaken to escort him as far as Doncaster. They had come thus far in safety; but having received information from a wood-cutter that there was a strong band of outlaws lying in wait in the woods before them, Isaac's mercenaries had not only taken flight, but had carried off with them the horses which bore the litter, and left the Jew and his daughter without the means either of defence or of retreat, to be plundered, and probably murdered, by the banditti, who they expected every moment would bring down upon them. "Would it but please your valours," added Isaac, in a tone of deep humiliation, "to permit the poor Jews to travel under your safeguard, I swear by the tables of our law, that never has favour been conferred upon a child of Israel since the days of our captivity, which shall be more gratefully acknowledged."

"Dog of a Jew!" said Athelstane, whose memory was of that petty kind which stores up trifles of all kinds, but particularly trifling offences, "dost not remember how thou didst beard us in the gallery at the tilt-yard? Fight or flee, or compound with the outlaws as thou dost list, ask neither aid nor company from us; and if they rob only such as thee, who rob all the world, I, for mine own share, shall hold them right honest folk."

Cedric did not assent to the severe proposal of his companion. "We shall do better," said he, "to leave them two of our attendants and two horses to convey them back to the next village. It will diminish our strength but little; and with your good sword, noble Athelstane, and the aid of those who remain, it will be light work for us to face twenty of those runagates."

Rowena, somewhat alarmed by the mention of outlaws in force, and so near them, strongly seconded the proposal of her guardian. But Rebecca, suddenly quitting her dejected posture, and making her way through the attendants to the palfrey of the Saxon lady, knelt down, and, after the Oriental fashion in addressing superiors, kissed the hem of Rowena's garment. Then rising, and throwing back her veil, she implored her, in the great name of the God whom they both worshipped, and by that revelation of the Law upon Mount Sinai, in which they both believed, that she would have compassion upon them, and suffer them to go forward under their safeguard. "It is not for myself that I pray this favour," said Rebecca; "nor is it even for that poor old man. I know, that to wrong and to spoil our nation is a light fault, if not a merit with the Christians; and what is it to us whether it be done in the city, in the

desert, or in the field? But it is in the name of one dear to many, and dear even to you, that I beseech you to let this sick person be transported with care and tenderness under your protection. For, if evil chance him, the last moment of your life would be imbittered with regret for denying that which I ask of you."

The noble and solemn air with which Rebecca made this appeal, gave it double weight with the fair Saxon.

"The man is old and feeble," she said to her guardian, "the maiden young and beautiful, their friend sick and in peril of his life — Jews though they be, we cannot as Christians leave them in this extremity. Let them unload two of the sumpter-mules, and put the baggage behind two of the serfs. The mules may transport the litter, and we have led horses for the old man and his daughter."

Cedric readily assented to what she proposed, and Athelstane only added the condition, "that they should travel in the rear of the whole party, where Wamba," he said, "might attend them with his shield of boar's brawn."

"I have left my shield in the tilt-yard," answered the Jester, "as has been the fate of many a better knight than myself."

Athelstane coloured deeply, for such had been his own fate on the last day of the tournament; while Rowena, who was pleased in the same proportion, as if to make amends for the brutal jest of her unfeeling suitor, requested Rebecca to ride by her side.

"It were not fit I should do so," answered Rebecca, with proud humility, "where my society might be held a disgrace to my protectress."

By this time the change of baggage was hastily achieved; for the single word "outlaws" rendered every one sufficiently alert, and the approach of twilight made the sound yet more impressive. Amid the bustle, Gurth was taken from horseback, in the course of which removal he prevailed upon the Jester to slack the cord with which his arms were bound. It was so negligently refastened, perhaps intentionally, on the part of Wamba, that Gurth found no difficulty in freeing his arms altogether from bondage, and then, gliding into the thicket, he made his escape from the party.

The bustle had been considerable, and it was some time before Gurth was missed; for, as he was to be placed for the rest of the journey behind a servant, every one supposed that some other of his companions had him under his custody, and when it began to be whispered among them that Gurth had actually disappeared, they were under such immediate expectation of an attack from the outlaws, that it was not held convenient to pay much attention to the circumstance.

The path upon which the party travelled was now so narrow, as not to admit, with any sort of convenience, above two riders abreast, and began to descend into a dingle, traversed by a brook whose banks were broken, swampy, and overgrown with dwarf willows. Cedric and Athelstane, who were at the head of their retinue, saw the risk of being attacked at this pass; but neither of them having had much practice in war, no better mode of preventing the danger occurred to them than that they should hasten through the defile as fast as possible. Advancing, therefore, without much order, they had just crossed the brook with a part of their followers, when they were assailed in front, flank, and rear at once, with an impetuosity to which, in their confused and ill-prepared condition, it was impossible to offer effectual resistance. The shout of "A white dragon! — a white dragon! — Saint George for merry England!" war cries adopted by the assailants, as belonging to their assumed character of Saxon outlaws, was heard on every side, and on every side enemies appeared with a rapidity of advance and attack which seemed to multiply their numbers.

Both the Saxon chiefs were made prisoners at the same moment, and each under circumstances expressive of his character. Cedric, the instant that an enemy appeared, lanched at him his remaining javelin, which, taking better effect than that which he had hurled at Fangs, nailed the man against an oak-tree that happened to be close behind him. Thus far successful, Cedric spurred his horse against a second, drawing his sword at the same time, and striking with such inconsiderate fury, that his weapon encountered a thick branch which hung over him, and he was disarmed by the violence of his own blow. He was instantly made prisoner, and pulled from his horse by two or three of the banditti who crowded around him. Athelstane shared his captivity, his bridle having been seized, and he himself forcibly dismounted, long before he could draw his weapon, or assume any posture of effectual defence.

The attendants, embarrassed with baggage, surprised and terrified at the fate of their masters, fell an easy prey to the assailants; while the Lady Rowena, in the centre of the cavalcade, and the Jew and his daughter in the rear, experienced the same misfortune.

Of all the train none escaped except Wamba, who shewed upon the occasion much more courage than those who pretended to greater sense. He possessed himself of a sword belonging to one of the domestics, who was just drawing it with a tardy and irresolute hand, laid it about him like a lion, drove back several who approached him, and made a brave, though ineffectual attempt to succour his master. Finding himself overpowered, the Jester at length threw himself from his horse, plunged into the thicket, and, favoured by the general confusion, escaped from the scene of action.

Yet the valiant Jester, as soon as he found himself safe, hesitated more than once whether he should not turn back and share the captivity of a master to whom he was sincerely attached.

"I have heard men talk of the blessings of freedom," he said to himself, "but I wish any wise man would teach me what use to make of it now that I have it."

As he pronounced these words aloud, a voice very near him called out in a low and cautious tone, "Wamba!" and, at the same time, a dog, which he recognized to be Fangs, jumped up and fawned upon him. "Gurth!" answered Wamba, with the same caution, and the swineherd immediately stood before him.

"What is the matter?" said he eagerly; "what mean these cries, and that clashing of swords?"

"Only a trick of the times," said Wamba; "they are all prisoners."

"Who are prisoners?" exclaimed Gurth, impatiently.

shaking his head; "we have been at our orisons all night."

"He is a monk of the church militant, I think," answered Locksley; "and there be more of them abroad. I tell thee, friar, thou must lay down the rosary and take up the quarterstaff; we shall need every one of our merry men, whether clerk or layman. — But," he added, taking him a step aside, "art thou mad? to give admittance to a knight thou dost not know? Hast thou forgot our articles?"

"Not know him!" replied the friar, boldly, "I know him as well as the beggar knows his dish."

"And what is his name, then?" demanded Locksley.

"His name," said the hermit — "his name is Sir Anthony of Scrablestone — as if I would drink with a man, and did not know his name!"

"Thou hast been drinking more than enough, friar," said the woodsman, "and, I fear, prating more than enough too."

"Good yeoman," said the knight, coming forward, "be not wroth with my merry host. He did but afford me the hospitality which I would have compelled from him if he had refused it."

"Thou compel!" said the friar; "wait but till I have changed this gray gown for a green cassock, and if I make not a quarterstaff ring twelve upon thy pate, I am neither true clerk nor good woodsman."

While he spoke thus, he stript off his gown, and appeared in a close black buckram doublet and drawers, over which he speedily did on a cassock of green, and hose of the same colour. "I pray thee truss my points," said he to Wamba, "and thou shalt have a cup of sack for thy labour."

"Gramercy for thy sack," said Wamba; "but think'st thou it is lawful for me to aid you to transmew thyself from a holy hermit into a sinful forester?"

"Never fear," said the hermit; "I will but confess the sins of my green cloak to my greyfriar's frock, and all shall be well again."

"Amen!" answered the Jester; "a broadcloth penitent should have a sackcloth confessor, and your frock may absolve my motley doublet into the bargain."

So saying, he accommodated the friar with his assistance in tying the endless number of points, as the laces which attached the hose to the doublet were then termed.

While they were thus employed, Locksley led the knight a little apart, and addressed him thus: — "Deny it not, Sir Knight — you are he who decided the victory to the advantage of the English against the strangers on the second day of the tournament at Ashby."

"And what follows, if you guess truly, good yeoman?" replied the knight.

"I should in that case hold you," replied the yeoman, "a friend to the weaker party."

"Such is the duty of a true knight at least," replied the Black Champion; "and I would not willingly that there were reason to think otherwise of me."

"But for my purpose," said the yeoman, "thou shouldst be as well a good Englishman as a good knight; for that which I have to speak of concerns, indeed, the duty of every honest man, but is more especially that of a true-born native of England."

"You can speak to no one," replied the knight, "to whom England, and the life of every Englishman, can be dearer than to me."

"I would willingly believe so," said the woodsman, "for never had this country such need to be supported by those who love her. Hear me, and I will tell thee of an enterprize, in which, if thou be'st really that which thou seemest, thou mayest take an honourable part. A band of villains, in the disguise of better men than themselves, have made themselves master of the person of a noble Englishman, called Cedric the Saxon, together with his ward, and his friend Athelstane of Coningsburgh, and have transported them to a castle in this forest, called Torquilstone. I ask of thee, as a good knight and a good Englishman, wilt thou aid in their rescue?"

"I am bound by my vow to do so," replied the knight; "but I would willingly know who you are, who request my assistance in their behalf?"

"I am," said the forester, "a nameless man; but I am the friend of my country, and of my country's friends — With this account of me you must for the present remain satisfied, the more especially since you yourself desire to continue unknown. Believe, however, that my word, when pledged, is as inviolate as if I wore golden spurs."

"I willingly believe it," said the knight; "I have been accustomed to study men's countenances, and I can read in thine honesty and resolution. I will, therefore, ask thee no farther questions, but aid thee in setting at freedom these oppressed captives; which done, I trust we shall part better acquainted, and well satisfied with each other."

"So," said Wamba to Gurth, — for the friar being now fully equipped, the Jester, having approached to the other side of the hut, had heard the conclusion of the conversation, — "So, we have got a new ally? — I trust the valour of the knight will be truer metal than the religion of the hermit, or the honesty of the yeoman; for this Locksley looks like a born deer-stealer, and the priest like a lusty hypocrite."

"Hold thy peace, Wamba," said Gurth; "it may all be as thou dost guess; but were the horned devil to rise and proffer me his assistance to set at liberty Cedric and the Lady Rowena, I fear I should hardly have religion enough to refuse the foul fiend's offer, and bid him get behind me."

The friar was now completely accoutred as a yeoman, with sword and buckler, bow and quiver, and a strong partisan over his shoulder. He left his cell at the head of the party, and, having carefully locked the door, deposited the key under the threshold.

"Art thou in condition to do good service, friar," said Locksley, "or does the brown bowl still run in thy head?"

"Not more than a draught of St Dunstan's fountain will allay," answered the priest; "something there is of a whizzing in my brain, and of instability in my legs, but you shall presently see both pass away."

So saying, he stepped to the stone basin, in which the waters of the fountain as they fell formed bubbles which danced in the white moonlight, and took so long a draught as if he had meant to exhaust the spring.

"When didst thou drink as deep a draught of

water before, Holy Clerk of Copmanhurst?" said the Black Knight.

"Never since my wine-butt leaked, and let out its liquor by an illegal vent," replied the friar, "and so left me nothing to drink but my patron's bounty here."

Then plunging his hands and head into the fountain, he washed from them all marks of the midnight revel.

Thus refreshed and sobered, the jolly priest twirled his heavy partisan round his head with three fingers, as if he had been balancing a reed, exclaiming at the same time, "Where be those false ravishers, who carry off wenches against their will? May the foul fiend fly off with me, if I am not man enough for a dozen of them."

"Swearest thou, Holy Clerk?" said the Black Knight.

"Clerk me no Clerks," replied the transformed priest; "by Saint George and the Dragon, I am no longer a shaveling than while my frock is on my back—When I am cased in my green cassock, I will drink, swear, and woo a lass, with any blithe forester in the West Riding."

"Come on, Jack Priest," said Locksley, "and be silent; thou art as noisy as a whole convent on a holy eve, when the Father Abbot has gone to bed. —Come on you, too, my masters, tarry not to talk of it—I say, come on, we must collect all our forces, and few enough we shall have, if we are to storm the Castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

"What! is it Front-de-Bœuf," said the Black Knight, "who has stopt on the king's highway the king's liege subjects?—Is he turned thief and oppressor?"

"Oppressor he ever was," said Locksley.

"And for thief," said the priest, "I doubt if ever he were even half so honest a man as many a thief of my acquaintance."

"Move on, priest, and be silent," said the yeoman; "it were better you led the way to the place of rendezvous, than say what should be left unsaid, both in decency and prudence."

CHAPTER XXII.

Alas, how many hours and years have past,
Since human forms have round this table sate,
Or lamp, or taper, on its surface gleam'd!
Methinks, I hear the sound of time long pass'd
Still murmuring o'er us, in the lofty void
Of these dark arches, like the ling'ring voices
Of those who long within their graves have slept.
Orra, a Tragedy.

While these measures were taking in behalf of Cedric and his companions, the armed men by whom the latter had been seized, hurried their captives along towards the place of security, where they intended to imprison them. But darkness came on fast, and the paths of the wood seemed but imperfectly known to the marauders. They were compelled to make several long halts, and once or twice to return on their road to resume the direction which they wished to pursue. The summer morn had dawned upon them ere they could travel in full assurance that they held the right path. But confidence returned with light, and the cavalcade now moved rapidly forward. Meanwhile, the following dialogue took place between the two leaders of the banditti.

"It is time thou shouldst leave us, Sir Maurice," said the Templar to De Bracy, "in order to prepare the second part of thy mystery. Thou art next, thou knowest, to act the Knight Deliverer."

"I have thought better of it," said De Bracy; "I will not leave thee till the prize is fairly deposited in Front-de-Bœuf's castle. There will I appear before the Lady Rowena in mine own shape, and trust that she will set down to the vehemence of my passion the violence of which I have been guilty."

"And what has made thee change thy plan, De Bracy?" replied the Knight Templar.

"That concerns thee nothing," answered his companion.

"I would hope, however, Sir Knight," said the Templar, "that this alteration of measures arises from no suspicion of my honourable meaning, such as Fitzurse endeavoured to instil into thee?"

"My thoughts are my own," answered De Bracy; "the fiend laughs, they say, when one thief robs another; and we know, that were he to spit fire and brimstone instead, it would never prevent a Templar from following his bent."

"Or the leader of a Free Company," answered the Templar, "from dreading at the hands of a comrade and friend, the injustice he does to all mankind."

"This is unprofitable and perilous recrimination," answered De Bracy; "suffice it to say, I know the morals of the Temple-Order, and I will not give thee the power of cheating me out of the fair prey for which I have run such risks."

"Psha," replied the Templar, "what hast thou to fear?—Thou knowest the vows of our order."

"Right well," said De Bracy, "and also how they are kept. Come, Sir Templar, the laws of gallantry have a liberal interpretation in Palestine, and this is a case in which I will trust nothing to your conscience."

"Hear the truth, then," said the Templar; "I care not for your blue-eyed beauty. There is in that train one who will make me a better mate."

"What! wouldst thou stoop to the waiting damsel?" said De Bracy.

"No, Sir Knight," said the Templar, haughtily. "To the waiting-woman will I not stoop. I have a prize among the captives as lovely as thine own."

"By the mass, thou meanest the fair Jewess!" said De Bracy.

"And if I do," said Bois-Guilbert, "who shall gainsay me?"

"No one that I know," said De Bracy, "unless it be your vow of celibacy, or a check of conscience for an intrigue with a Jewess."

"For my vow," said the Templar, "our Grand Master hath granted me a dispensation. And for my conscience, a man that has slain three hundred Saracens, need not reckon up every little failing, like a village girl at her first confession upon Good Friday eve."

"Thou knowest best thine own privileges," said De Bracy. "Yet, I would have sworn thy thoughts had been more on the old usurer's money bags, than on the black eyes of the daughter."

"I can admire both," answered the Templar; "besides, the old Jew is but half-prize. I must

share his spoils with Front-de-Bœuf, who will not lend us the use of his castle for nothing. I must have something that I can term exclusively my own by this foray of ours, and I have fixed on the lovely Jewess as my peculiar prize. But, now thou knowest my drift, thou wilt resume thine own original plan, wilt thou not?—Thou hast nothing, thou seest, to fear from my interference."

"No," replied de Bracy, "I will remain beside my prize. What thou sayest is passing true, but I like not the privileges acquired by the dispensation of the Grand Master, and the merit acquired by the slaughter of three hundred Saracens. You have too good a right to a free pardon, to render you very scrupulous about peccadilloes."

While this dialogue was proceeding, Cedric was endeavouring to wring out of those who guarded him an avowal of their character and purpose. "You should be Englishmen," said he; "and yet, sacred Heaven! you prey upon your countrymen as if you were very Normans. You should be my neighbours, and, if so, my friends; for which of my English neighbours have reason to be otherwise? I tell ye, yeomen, that even those among ye who have been branded with outlawry have had from me protection; for I have pitied their miseries, and curst the oppression of their tyrannic nobles. What, then, would you have of me? or in what can this violence serve ye?—Ye are worse than brute beasts in your actions, and will you imitate them in their very dumbness?"

It was in vain that Cedric expostulated with his guards, who had too many good reasons for their silence to be induced to break it either by his wrath or his expostulations. They continued to hurry him along, travelling at a very rapid rate, until, at the end of an avenue of huge trees, arose Torquilstone, now the hoary and ancient castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. It was a fortress of no great size, consisting of a donjon, or large and high square tower, surrounded by buildings of inferior height, which were encircled by an inner court-yard. Around the exterior wall was a deep moat, supplied with water from a neighbouring rivulet. Front-de-Bœuf, whose character placed him often at feud with his enemies, had made considerable additions to the strength of his castle, by building towers upon the outward wall, so as to flank it at every angle. The access, as usual in castles of the period, lay through an arched barbican, or outwork, which was terminated and defended by a small turret at each corner.

Cedric no sooner saw the turrets of Front-de-Bœuf's castle raise their gray and moss-grown battlements, glimmering in the morning sun above the woods by which they were surrounded, than he instantly augured more truly concerning the cause of his misfortune.

"I did injustice," he said, "to the thieves and outlaws of these woods, when I supposed such banditti to belong to their bands; I might as justly have confounded the foxes of these brakes with the ravening wolves of France. Tell me, dogs—is it my life or my wealth that your master aims at? Is it too much that two Saxons, myself and the noble Athelstane, should hold land in the country which was once the patrimony of our race?—Put us then to death, and complete your tyranny by taking our lives, as you began with our liberties. If the Saxon Cedric cannot rescue England, he is willing to die for her. Tell your tyrannical master, I do only beseech him to dismiss the Lady Rowena in honour and safety. She is a woman, and he need not dread her; and with us will die all who dare fight in her cause."

The attendants remained as mute to this address as to the former, and they now stood before the gate of the castle. De Bracy winded his horn three times, and the archers and cross-bow men, who had manned the wall upon seeing their approach, hastened to lower the draw-bridge and admit them. The prisoners were compelled by their guards to alight, and were conducted to an apartment where a hasty repast was offered them, of which none but Athelstane felt any inclination to partake. Neither had the descendant of the Confessor much time to do justice to the good cheer placed before them, for their guards gave him and Cedric to understand that they were to be imprisoned in a chamber apart from Rowena. Resistance was vain; and they were compelled to follow to a large room, which, rising on clumsy Saxon pillars, resembled those refectories and chapter-houses which may be still seen in the most ancient parts of our most ancient monasteries.

The Lady Rowena was next separated from her train, and conducted, with courtesy, indeed, but still without consulting her inclination, to a distant apartment. The same alarming distinction was conferred on Rebecca, in spite of her father's entreaties, who offered even money, in this extremity of distress, that she might be permitted to abide with him. "Base unbeliever," answered one of his guards, "when thou hast seen thy lair, thou wilt not wish thy daughter to partake it." And, without farther discussion, the old Jew was forcibly dragged off in a different direction from the other prisoners. The domestics, after being carefully searched and disarmed, were confined in another part of the castle; and Rowena was refused even the comfort she might have derived from the attendance of her handmaiden Elgitha.

The apartment in which the Saxon chiefs were confined,—for to them we turn our first attention,—although at present used as a sort of guard-room, had formerly been the great hall of the castle. It was now abandoned to meaner purposes, because the present lord, among other additions to the convenience, security, and beauty of his baronial residence, had erected a new and noble hall, whose vaulted roof was supported by lighter and more elegant pillars, and fitted up with that higher degree of ornament, which the Normans had already introduced into architecture.

Cedric paced the apartment, filled with indignant reflections on the past and on the present, while the apathy of his companion served, instead of patience and philosophy, to defend him against every thing save the inconvenience of the present moment; and so little did he feel even this last, that he was only from time to time roused to a reply by Cedric's animated and impassioned appeal to him.

"Yes," said Cedric, half speaking to himself, and half addressing himself to Athelstane, "it was in this very hall that my father feasted with Torquil Wolfganger, when he entertained the valiant and unfortunate Harold, then advancing against the Norwegians, who had united themselves to the rebel Tosti. It was in this hall that Harold returned the

magnanimous answer to the ambassador of his rebel brother. Oft have I heard my father kindle as he told the tale. The envoy of Tosti was admitted, when this ample room could scarce contain the crowd of noble Saxon leaders, who were quaffing the blood-red wine around their monarch."

"I hope," said Athelstane, somewhat moved by this part of his friend's discourse, "they will not forget to send us some wine and refections at noon —we had scarce a breathing-space allowed to break our fast, and I never have the benefit of my food when I eat immediately after dismounting from horseback, though the leeches recommend that practice."

Cedric went on with his story without noticing this interjectional observation of his friend.

"The envoy of Tosti," he said, "moved up the hall, undismayed by the frowning countenances of all around him, until he made his obeisance before the throne of King Harold.

'What terms,' he said, 'Lord King, hath thy brother Tosti to hope, if he should lay down his arms, and crave peace at thy hands?'

'A brother's love,' cried the generous Harold, 'and the fair earldom of Northumberland.'

'But should Tosti accept these terms,' continued the envoy, 'what lands shall be assigned to his faithful ally, Hardrada, King of Norway?'

'Seven feet of English ground,' answered Harold fiercely, 'or, as Hardrada is said to be a giant, perhaps we may allow him twelve inches more.'

"The hall rung with acclamations, and cup and horn was filled to the Norwegian, who should be speedily in possession of his English territory."

"I could have pledged him with all my soul," said Athelstane, "for my tongue cleaves to my palate."

"The baffled envoy," continued Cedric, pursuing with animation his tale, though it interested not the listener, "retreated, to carry Tosti and his ally the ominous answer of his injured brother. It was then that the distant towers of York, and the bloody streams of the Derwent,[1] beheld that direful conflict, in which, after displaying the most undaunted valour, the King of Norway, and Tosti, both fell, with ten thousand of their bravest followers. Who would have thought that upon the proud day when this battle was won, the very gale which waved the Saxon banners in triumph, was filling the Norman sails, and impelling them to the fatal shores of Sussex?—Who would have thought that Harold, within a few brief days, would himself possess no more of his kingdom, than the share which he allotted in his wrath to the Norwegian invader?—Who would have thought that you, noble Athelstane—that you, descended of Harold's blood, and that I, whose father was not the worst defender of the Saxon crown, should be prisoners to a vile Norman, in the very hall in which our ancestors held such high festival?"

"It is sad enough," replied Athelstane; "but I trust they will hold us to a moderate ransom—At any rate it cannot be their purpose to starve us outright; and yet, although it is high noon, I see no preparations for serving dinner. Look up at the window, noble Cedric, and judge by the sunbeams if it is not on the verge of noon."

"It may be so," answered Cedric; "but I cannot look on that stained lattice without its awakening other reflections than those which concern the passing moment, or its privations. When that window was wrought, my noble friend, our hardy fathers knew not the art of making glass, or of staining it—The pride of Wolfganger's father brought an artist from Normandy to adorn his hall with this new species of emblazonment, that breaks the golden light of God's blessed day into so many fantastic hues. The foreigner came here poor, beggarly, cringing, and subservient, ready to doff his cap to the meanest native of the household. He returned pampered and proud, to tell his rapacious countrymen of the wealth and the simplicity of the Saxon nobles—a folly, oh, Athelstane, foreboded of old, as well as foreseen, by those descendants of Hengist and his hardy tribes, who retained the simplicity of their manners. We made these strangers our bosom friends, our confidential servants; we borrowed their artists and their arts, and despised the honest simplicity and hardihood with which our brave ancestors supported themselves, and we became enervated by Norman arts long ere we fell under Norman arms. Far better was our homely diet, eaten in peace and liberty, than the luxurious dainties, the love of which hath delivered us as bondsmen to the foreign conqueror!"

"I should," replied Athelstane, "hold very humble diet a luxury at present; and it astonishes me, noble Cedric, that you can bear so truly in mind the memory of past deeds, when it appeareth you forget the very hour of dinner."

"It is time lost," muttered Cedric apart and impatiently, "to speak to him of aught else but that which concerns his appetite! The soul of Hardicanute hath taken possession of him, and he hath no pleasure save to fill, to swill, and to call for more.—Alas!" said he, looking at Athelstane with compassion, "that so dull a spirit should be lodged in so goodly a form! Alas! that such an enterprise as the regeneration of England should turn on a hinge so imperfect! Wedded to Rowena, indeed, her nobler and more generous soul may yet awake the better nature which is torpid within him. Yet how should this be, while Rowena, Athelstane, and I myself, remain the prisoners of this brutal marauder, and have been made so perhaps from a sense of the dangers which our liberty might bring to the usurped power of his nation?"

While the Saxon was plunged in these painful reflections, the door of their prison opened, and gave entrance to a sewer, holding his white rod of office. This important person advanced into the chamber with a grave pace, followed by four attendants, bearing in a table covered with dishes, the sight and smell of which seemed to be an instant compensation to Athelstane for all the inconvenience he had undergone. The persons who attended on the feast were masked and cloaked.

"What mummery is this?" said Cedric; "think you that we are ignorant whose prisoners we are, when we are in the castle of your master? Tell him," he continued, willing to use this opportunity to open a negotiation for his freedom—"Tell your master, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, that we know no reason he can have for withholding our liberty, excepting his unlawful desire to enrich himself at our expense. Tell him that we yield to his rapacity, as in similar circumstances we should do to that of

[1] See Note E. *Battle of Stamford.*

A literal robber. Let him name the ransom at which he rates our liberty, and it shall be paid, providing the exaction is suited to our means."

The sewer made no answer, but bowed his head.

"And tell Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said Athelstane, "that I send him my mortal defiance, and challenge him to combat with me, on foot or horseback, at any secure place, within eight days after our liberation; which, if he be a true knight, he will not, under these circumstances, venture to refuse or to delay."

"I shall deliver to the knight your defiance," answered the sewer; "meanwhile I leave you to your food."

The challenge of Athelstane was delivered with no good grace; for a large mouthful, which required the exercise of both jaws at once, added to a natural hesitation, considerably damped the effect of the bold defiance it contained. Still, however, his speech was hailed by Cedric as an incontestable token of reviving spirit in his companion, whose previous indifference had begun, notwithstanding his respect for Athelstane's descent, to wear out his patience. But he now cordially shook hands with him in token of his approbation, and was somewhat grieved when Athelstane observed, "that he would fight a dozen such men as Front-de-Bœuf, if, by so doing, he could hasten his departure from a dungeon where they put so much garlic into their pottage." Notwithstanding this intimation of a relapse into the apathy of sensuality, Cedric placed himself opposite to Athelstane, and soon shewed, that if the distresses of his country could banish the recollection of food while the table was uncovered, yet no sooner were the victuals put there, than he proved that the appetite of his Saxon ancestors had descended to him along with their other qualities.

The captives had not long enjoyed their refreshment, however, ere their attention was disturbed even from this most serious occupation by the blast of a horn winded before the gate. It was repeated three times, with as much violence as if it had been blown before an enchanted castle by the destined knight, at whose summons halls and towers, barbican and battlement, were to roll off like a morning vapour. The Saxons started from the table and hastened to the window. But their curiosity was disappointed; for these outlets only looked upon the court of the castle and the sound came from beyond its precincts. The summons, however, seemed of importance, for a considerable degree of bustle instantly took place in the castle.

CHAPTER XXIII.

My daughter — O my ducats — O my daughter!
——————— O my Christian ducats!
Justice — the Law — my ducats, and my daughter!
Merchant of Venice.

Leaving the Saxon chiefs to return to their banquet as soon as their ungratified curiosity should permit them to attend to the calls of their half-satiated appetite, we have to look in upon the yet more severe imprisonment of Isaac of York. The poor Jew had been hastily thrust into a dungeon-vault of the castle, the floor of which was deep beneath the level of the ground, and very damp, being lower than even the moat itself. The only light was received through one or two loop-holes far above the reach of the captive's hand. These apertures admitted, even at mid-day, only a dim and uncertain light, which was changed for utter darkness long before the rest of the castle had lost the blessing of day. Chains and shackles, which had been the portion of former captives, from whom active exertions to escape had been apprehended, hung rusted and empty on the walls of the prison, and in the rings of one of those sets of fetters there remained two mouldering bones, which seemed to have been once those of the human leg, as if the prisoner had been left not only to perish there, but to be consumed to a skeleton.

At one end of this ghastly apartment was a large fire-grate, over the top of which were stretched some transverse iron bars, half devoured with rust.

The whole appearance of the dungeon might have appalled a stouter heart than that of Isaac, who, nevertheless, was more composed under the imminent pressure of danger, than he had seemed to be while affected by terrors, of which the cause was as yet remote and contingent. The lovers of the chase say that the hare feels more agony during the pursuit of the greyhounds, than when she is struggling in their fangs.[1] And thus it is probable, that the Jews, by the very frequency of their fear on all occasions, had their minds in some degree prepared for every effort of tyranny which could be practised upon them; so that no aggression, when it had taken place, could bring with it that surprise which is the most disabling quality of terror. Neither was it the first time that Isaac had been placed in circumstances so dangerous. He had therefore experience to guide him, as well as hope, that he might again, as formerly, be delivered as a prey from the fowler. Above all, he had upon his side the unyielding obstinacy of his nation, and that unbending resolution, with which Israelites have been frequently known to submit to the uttermost evils which power and violence can inflict upon them, rather than gratify their oppressors by granting their demands.

In this humour of passive resistance, and with his garment collected beneath him to keep his limbs from the wet pavement, Isaac sat in a corner of his dungeon, where his folded hands, his dishevelled hair and beard, his furred cloak and high cap, seen by the wiry and broken light, would have afforded a study for Rembrandt, had that celebrated painter existed at the period. The Jew remained without altering his position, for nearly three hours, at the expiry of which steps were heard on the dungeon stair. The bolts screamed as they were withdrawn — the hinges creaked as the wicket opened, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, followed by the two Saracen slaves of the Templar, entered the prison.

Front-de-Bœuf, a tall and strong man, whose life had been spent in public war or in private feuds and broils, and who had hesitated at no means of extending his feudal power, had features corresponding to his character, and which strongly expressed the fiercer and more malignant passions of the mind. The scars with which his visage was seamed would, on features of a different cast, have excited the sympathy and veneration due to

[1] *Nota Bene.* — We by no means warrant the accuracy of this piece of natural history, which we give on the authority of the Wardour MS. — L. T.

the marks of honourable valour; but, in the peculiar case of Front-de-Bœuf, they only added to the ferocity of his countenance, and to the dread which his presence inspired. This formidable baron was clad in a leathern doublet, fitted close to his body, which was frayed and soiled with the stains of his armour. He had no weapon, excepting a poniard at his belt, which served to counterbalance the weight of the bunch of rusty keys that hung at his right side.

The black slaves who attended Front-de-Bœuf were stripped of their gorgeous apparel, and attired in jerkins and trousers of coarse linen, their sleeves being tucked up above the elbow, like those of butchers when about to exercise their function in the slaughter-house. Each had in his hand a small pannier; and, when they entered the dungeon, they stopt at the door until Front-de-Bœuf himself carefully locked and double-locked it. Having taken this precaution, he advanced slowly up the apartment towards the Jew, upon whom he kept his eye fixed, as if he wished to paralyze him with his glance, as some animals are said to fascinate their prey. It seemed indeed as if the sullen and malignant eye of Front-de-Bœuf possessed some portion of that supposed power over his unfortunate prisoner. The Jew sate with his mouth a-gape, and his eyes fixed on the savage baron with such earnestness of terror, that his frame seemed literally to shrink together, and to diminish in size while encountering the fierce Norman's fixed and baleful gaze. The unhappy Isaac was deprived not only of the power of rising to make the obeisance which his terror dictated, but he could not even doff his cap, or utter any word of supplication; so strongly was he agitated by the conviction that tortures and death were impending over him.

On the other hand, the stately form of the Norman appeared to dilate in magnitude, like that of the eagle, which ruffles up its plumage when about to pounce on its defenceless prey. He paused within three steps of the corner in which the unfortunate Jew had now, as it were, coiled himself up into the smallest possible space, and made a sign for one of the slaves to approach. The black satellite came forward accordingly, and, producing from his basket a large pair of scales and several weights, he laid them at the feet of Front-de-Bœuf, and again retired to the respectful distance, at which his companion had already taken his station.

The motions of these men were slow and solemn, as if there impended over their souls some preconception of horror and of cruelty. Front-de-Bœuf himself opened the scene by thus addressing his ill-fated captive.

"Most accursed dog of an accursed race," he said, awaking with his deep and sullen voice the sullen echoes of his dungeon vault, "seest thou these scales?"

The unhappy Jew returned a feeble affirmative.

"In these very scales shalt thou weigh me out," said the relentless Baron, "a thousand silver pounds, after the just measure and weight of the Tower of London."

"Holy Abraham!" returned the Jew, finding voice through the very extremity of his danger, "heard man ever such a demand?—Who ever heard, even in a minstrel's tale, of such a sum as a thousand pounds of silver?—What human sight was ever blessed with the vision of such a mass of treasure?—Not within the walls of York, ransack my house and that of all my tribe, wilt thou find the tithe of that huge sum of silver that thou speakest of."

"I am reasonable," answered Front-de-Bœuf, "and if silver be scant, I refuse not gold. At the rate of a mark of gold for each six pounds of silver, thou shalt free thy unbelieving carcass from such punishment as thy heart has never even conceived."

"Have mercy on me, noble knight!" exclaimed Isaac; "I am old, and poor, and helpless. It were unworthy to triumph over me—It is a poor deed to crush a worm."

"Old thou mayest be," replied the knight; "more shame to their folly who have suffered thee to grow gray in usury and knavery—Feeble thou mayest be, for when had a Jew either heart or hand—But rich it is well known thou art."

"I swear to you, noble knight," said the Jew, "by all which I believe, and by all which we believe in common——"

"Perjure not thyself," said the Norman, interrupting him, "and let not thine obstinacy seal thy doom, until thou hast seen and well considered the fate that awaits thee. Think not I speak to thee only to excite thy terror, and practise on the base cowardice thou hast derived from thy tribe. I swear to thee by that which thou dost NOT believe, by the gospel which our church teaches, and by the keys which are given her to bind and to loose, that my purpose is deep and peremptory. This dungeon is no place for trifling. Prisoners ten thousand times more distinguished than thou have died within these walls, and their fate hath never been known! But for thee is reserved a long and lingering death, to which theirs were luxury."

He again made a signal for the slaves to approach, and spoke to them apart, in their own language; for he also had been in Palestine, where, perhaps, he had learnt his lesson of cruelty. The Saracens produced from their baskets a quantity of charcoal, a pair of bellows, and a flask of oil. While the one struck a light with a flint and steel, the other disposed the charcoal in the large rusty grate which we have already mentioned, and exercised the bellows until the fuel came to a red glow.

"Seest thou, Isaac," said Front-de-Bœuf, "the range of iron bars above that glowing charcoal?[1]—on that warm couch thou shalt lie, stripped of thy clothes as if thou wert to rest on a bed of down. One of these slaves shall maintain the fire beneath thee, while the other shall anoint thy wretched limbs with oil, lest the roast should burn.—Now, choose betwixt such a scorching bed and the payment of a thousand pounds of silver; for, by the head of my father, thou hast no other option."

"It is impossible," exclaimed the miserable Jew—"it is impossible that your purpose can be real! The good God of nature never made a heart capable of exercising such cruelty!"

"Trust not to that, Isaac," said Front-de-Bœuf, "it were a fatal error. Dost thou think that I, who have seen a town sacked, in which thousands of my Christian countrymen perished by sword, by flood, and by fire, will blench from my purpose for the outcries or screams of one single wretched Jew?—or thinkest thou that these swarthy slaves, who

[1] See Note F. *The range of iron bars above that g'owing charcoal.*

have neither law, country, nor conscience, but their master's will — who use the poison, or the stake, or the poniard, or the cord, at his slightest wink — thinkest thou that *they* will have mercy, who do not even understand the language in which it is asked? — Be wise, old man; discharge thyself of a portion of thy superfluous wealth; repay to the hands of a Christian a part of what thou hast acquired by the usury thou hast practised on those of his religion. Thy cunning may soon swell out once more thy shrivelled purse, but neither leech nor medicine can restore thy scorched hide and flesh wert thou once stretched on these bars. Tell down thy ransom, I say, and rejoice that at such rate thou canst redeem thee from a dungeon, the secrets of which few have returned to tell. I waste no more words with thee — choose between thy dross and thy flesh and blood, and as thou choosest, so shall it be."

"So may Abraham, Jacob, and all the fathers of our people assist me," said Isaac, "I cannot make the choice, because I have not the means of satisfying your exorbitant demand!"

"Seize him and strip him, slaves," said the knight, "and let the fathers of his race assist him if they can."

The assistants, taking their directions more from the Baron's eye and his hand than his tongue, once more stepped forward, laid hands on the unfortunate Isaac, plucked him up from the ground, and, holding him between them, waited the hard-hearted Baron's farther signal. The unhappy Jew eyed their countenances and that of Front-de-Bœuf, in hope of discovering some symptoms of relenting; but that of the Baron exhibited the same cold, half-sullen, half-sarcastic smile which had been the prelude to his cruelty; and the savage eyes of the Saracens, rolling gloomily under their dark brows, acquiring a yet more sinister expression by the whiteness of the circle which surrounds the pupil, evinced rather the secret pleasure which they expected from the approaching scene, than any reluctance to be its directors or agents. The Jew then looked at the glowing furnace, over which he was presently to be stretched, and seeing no chance of his tormentor's relenting, his resolution gave way.

"I will pay," he said, "the thousand pounds of silver — That is," he added, after a moment's pause, "I will pay it with the help of my brethren; for I must beg as a mendicant at the door of our synagogue ere I make up so unheard-of a sum. — When and where must it be delivered?"

"Here," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "here it must be delivered — weighed it must be — weighed and told down on this very dungeon floor. — Thinkest thou I will part with thee until thy ransom is secure?"

"And what is to be my surety," said the Jew, "that I shall be at liberty after this ransom is paid?"

"The word of a Norman noble, thou pawnbroking slave," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "the faith of a Norman nobleman, more pure than the gold and silver of thee and all thy tribe."

"I crave pardon, noble lord," said Isaac timidly, "but wherefore should I rely wholly on the word of one who will trust nothing to mine?"

"Because thou canst not help it, Jew," said the knight sternly. "Wert thou now in thy treasure-chamber at York, and were I craving a loan of thy shekels, it would be thine to dictate the time of payment, and the pledge of security. This is *my* treasure-chamber. Here I have thee at advantage, nor will I again deign to repeat the terms on which I grant thee liberty."

The Jew groaned deeply.—"Grant me," he said, "at least with my own liberty, that of the companions with whom I travel. They scorned me as a Jew, yet they pitied my desolation, and because they tarried to aid me by the way, a share of my evil hath come upon them; moreover, they may contribute in some sort to my ransom."

"If thou meanest yonder Saxon churls," said Front-de-Bœuf, "their ransom will depend upon other terms than thine. Mind thine own concerns, Jew, I warn thee, and meddle not with those of others."

"I am, then," said Isaac, "only to be set at liberty, together with mine wounded friend?"

"Shall I twice recommend it," said Front-de-Bœuf, "to a son of Israel, to meddle with his own concerns, and leave those of others alone? — Since thou hast made thy choice, it remains but that thou payest down thy ransom, and that at a short day."

"Yet hear me," said the Jew — "for the sake of that very wealth which thou wouldst obtain at the expense of thy——" Here he stopt short, afraid of irritating the savage Norman. But Front-de-Bœuf only laughed, and himself filled up the blank at which the Jew had hesitated. "At the expense of my conscience, thou wouldst say, Isaac; speak it out — I tell thee, I am reasonable. I can bear the reproaches of a loser, even when that loser is a Jew. Thou wert not so patient, Isaac, when thou didst invoke justice against Jacques Fitzdotterel, for calling thee a usurious blood-sucker, when thy exactions had devoured his patrimony."

"I swear by the Talmud," said the Jew, "that your valour has been misled in that matter. Fitzdotterel drew his poniard upon me in mine own chamber, because I craved him for mine own silver. The term of payment was due at the Passover."

"I care not what he did," said Front-de-Bœuf, "the question is, when shall I have mine own? — when shall I have the shekels, Isaac?"

"Let my daughter Rebecca go forth to York," answered Isaac, "with your safe-conduct, noble knight, and so soon as man and horse can return, the treasure"——Here he groaned deeply, but added, after the pause of a few seconds, — "the treasure shall be told down on this very floor."

"Thy daughter!" said Front-de-Bœuf, as if surprised, — "By heavens, Isaac, I would I had known of this. I deemed that yonder black-browed girl had been thy concubine, and I gave her to be a handmaiden to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, after the fashion of patriarchs and heroes of the days of old, who set us in these matters a wholesome example."

The yell which Isaac raised at this unfeeling communication made the very vault to ring, and astounded the two Saracens so much that they let go their hold of the Jew. He availed himself of his enlargement to throw himself on the pavement, and clasp the knees of Front-de-Bœuf.

"Take all that you have asked," said he, "Sir Knight — take ten times more — reduce me to ruin and to beggary, if thou wilt, — nay, pierce me with thy poniard, broil me on that furnace, but spare my daughter, deliver her in safety and honour! — As

thou art born of woman, spare the honour of a helpless maiden — She is the image of my deceased Rachael, she is the last of six pledges of her love — Will you deprive a widowed husband of his sole remaining comfort? — Will you reduce a father to wish that his only living child were laid beside her dead mother, in the tomb of our fathers?"

"I would," said the Norman, somewhat relenting, "that I had known of this before. I thought your race had loved nothing save their money-bags."

"Think not so vilely of us, Jews though we be," said Isaac, eager to improve the moment of apparent sympathy; "the hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat loves its young — the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children!"

"Be it so," said Front-de-Bœuf; "I will believe it in future, Isaac, for thy very sake — but it aids us not now, I cannot help what has happened, or what is to follow; my word is passed to my comrade in arms, nor would I break it for ten Jews and Jewesses to boot. Besides, why shouldst thou think evil is to come to the girl, even if she became Bois-Guilbert's booty?"

"There will, there must!" exclaimed Isaac, wringing his hands in agony; "when did Templars breathe aught but cruelty to men, and dishonour to women?"

"Dog of an infidel," said Front-de-Bœuf, with sparkling eyes, and not sorry, perhaps, to seize a pretext for working himself into a passion, "blaspheme not the Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, but take thought instead to pay me the ransom thou hast promised, or wo betide thy Jewish throat!"

"Robber and villain!" said the Jew, retorting the insults of his oppressor with passion, which, however impotent, he now found it impossible to bridle, "I will pay thee nothing — not one silver penny will I pay thee, unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety and honour!"

"Art thou in thy senses, Israelite?" said the Norman sternly — "has thy flesh and blood a charm against heated iron and scalding oil?"

"I care not!" said the Jew, rendered desperate by paternal affection; "do thy worst. My daughter is my flesh and blood, dearer to me a thousand times than those limbs which thy cruelty threatens. No silver will I give thee, unless I were to pour it molten down thy avaricious throat—no, not a silver penny will I give thee, Nazarene, were it to save thee from the deep damnation thy whole life has merited! Take my life if thou wilt, and say, the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian."

"We shall see that," said Front-de-Bœuf; "for by the blessed rood, which is the abomination of thy accursed tribe, thou shalt feel the extremities of fire and steel! — Strip him, slaves, and chain him down upon the bars."

In spite of the feeble struggles of the old man, the Saracens had already torn from him his upper garment, and were proceeding totally to disrobe him, when the sound of a bugle, twice winded without the castle, penetrated even to the recesses of the dungeon, and immediately after loud voices were heard calling for Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. Unwilling to be found engaged in his hellish occupation, the savage Baron gave the slaves a signal to restore Isaac's garment, and, quitting the dungeon with his attendants, he left the Jew to thank God for his own deliverance, or to lament over his daughter's captivity, and probable fate, as his personal or parental feelings might prove strongest.

CHAPTER XXIV.

> Nay, if the gentle spirit of moving words
> Can no way change you to a milder form,
> I'll woo you, like a soldier, at arms' end,
> And love you 'gainst the nature of love, force you.
> *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

The apartment to which the Lady Rowena had been introduced was fitted up with some rude attempts at ornament and magnificence, and her being placed there might be considered as a peculiar mark of respect not offered to the other prisoners. But the wife of Front-de-Bœuf, for whom it had been originally furnished, was long dead, and decay and neglect had impaired the few ornaments with which her taste had adorned it. The tapestry hung down from the walls in many places, and in others was tarnished and faded under the effects of the sun, or tattered and decayed by age. Desolate, however, as it was, this was the apartment of the castle which had been judged most fitting for the accommodation of the Saxon heiress; and here she was left to meditate upon her fate, until the actors in this nefarious drama had arranged the several parts which each of them was to perform. This had been settled in a council held by Front-de-Bœuf, De Bracy, and the Templar, in which, after a long and warm debate concerning the several advantages which each insisted upon deriving from his peculiar share in this audacious enterprise, they had at length determined the fate of their unhappy prisoners.

It was about the hour of noon, therefore, when De Bracy, for whose advantage the expedition had been first planned, appeared to prosecute his views upon the hand and possessions of the Lady Rowena.

The interval had not entirely been bestowed in holding council with his confederates, for De Bracy had found leisure to decorate his person with all the foppery of the times. His green cassock and vizard were now flung aside. His long luxuriant hair was trained to flow in quaint tresses down his richly furred cloak. His beard was closely shaved, his doublet reached to the middle of his leg, and the girdle which secured it, and at the same time supported his ponderous sword, was embroidered and embossed with gold work. We have already noticed the extravagant fashion of the shoes at this period, and the points of Maurice de Bracy's might have challenged the prize of extravagance with the gayest, being turned up and twisted like the horns of a ram. Such was the dress of a gallant of the period; and, in the present instance, that effect was aided by the handsome person and good demeanour of the wearer, whose manners partook alike of the grace of a courtier, and the frankness of a soldier.

He saluted Rowena by doffing his velvet bonnet, garnished with a golden broach, representing St Michael trampling down the Prince of Evil. With this, he gently motioned the lady to a seat; and, as she still retained her standing posture, the knight ungloved his right hand, and motioned to conduct her thither. But Rowena declined, by her gesture,

the proffered compliment, and replied, "If I be in the presence of my jailor, Sir Knight — nor will circumstances allow me to think otherwise — it best becomes his prisoner to remain standing till she learns her doom."

"Alas! fair Rowena," returned De Bracy, "you are in presence of your captive, not your jailor; and it is from your fair eyes that De Bracy must receive that doom which you fondly expect from him."

"I know you not, sir," said the lady, drawing herself up with all the pride of offended rank and beauty; "I know you not — and the insolent familiarity with which you apply to me the jargon of a troubadour, forms no apology for the violence of a robber."

"To thyself, fair maid," answered De Bracy, in his former tone — "to thine own charms be ascribed whate'er I have done which passed the respect due to her, whom I have chosen queen of my heart, and loadstar of my eyes."

"I repeat to you, Sir Knight, that I know you not, and that no man wearing chain and spurs ought thus to intrude himself upon the presence of an unprotected lady."

"That I am unknown to you," said De Bracy, "is indeed my misfortune; yet let me hope that De Bracy's name has not been always unspoken, when minstrels or heralds have praised deeds of chivalry, whether in the lists or in the battle-field."

"To heralds and to minstrels, then, leave thy praise, Sir Knight," replied Rowena, "more suiting for their mouths than for thine own; and tell me which of them shall record in song, or in book of tourney, the memorable conquest of this night, a conquest obtained over an old man, followed by a few timid hinds; and its booty, an unfortunate maiden, transported against her will to the castle of a robber?"

"You are unjust, Lady Rowena," said the knight, biting his lips in some confusion, and speaking in a tone more natural to him than that of affected gallantry, which he had at first adopted; "yourself free from passion, you can allow no excuse for the frenzy of another, although caused by your own beauty."

"I pray you, Sir Knight," said Rowena, "to cease a language so commonly used by strolling minstrels, that it becomes not the mouth of knights or nobles. Certes, you constrain me to sit down, since you enter upon such commonplace terms, of which each vile crowder hath a stock that might last from hence to Christmas."

"Proud damsel," said De Bracy, incensed at finding his gallant style procured him nothing but contempt—"proud damsel, thou shalt be as proudly encountered. Know then, that I have supported my pretensions to your hand in the way that best suited thy character. It is meeter for thy humour to be wooed with bow and bill, than in set terms, and in courtly language."

"Courtesy of tongue," said Rowena, "when it is used to veil churlishness of deed, is but a knight's girdle around the breast of a base clown. I wonder not that the restraint appears to gall you — more it were for your honour to have retained the dress and language of an outlaw, than to veil the deeds of one under an affectation of gentle language and demeanour."

"You counsel well, lady," said the Norman; "and in the bold language which best justifies bold action, I tell thee, thou shalt never leave this castle, or thou shalt leave it as Maurice De Bracy's wife. I am not wont to be baffled in my enterprises, nor needs a Norman noble scrupulously to vindicate his conduct to the Saxon maiden whom he distinguishes by the offer of his hand. Thou art proud, Rowena, and thou art the fitter to be my wife. By what other means couldst thou be raised to high honour and to princely place, saving by my alliance? How else wouldst thou escape from the mean precincts of a country grange, where Saxons herd with the swine which form their wealth, to take thy seat, honoured as thou shouldst be, and shalt be, amid all in England that is distinguished by beauty, or dignified by power?"

"Sir Knight," replied Rowena, "the grange which you contemn hath been my shelter from infancy; and, trust me, when I leave it — should that day ever arrive — it shall be with one who has not learnt to despise the dwelling and manners in which I have been brought up."

"I guess your meaning, lady," said De Bracy, "though you may think it lies too obscure for my apprehension. But dream not, that Richard Cœur de Lion will ever resume his throne, far less that Wilfred of Ivanhoe, his minion, will ever lead thee to his footstool, to be there welcomed as the bride of a favourite. Another suitor might feel jealousy while he touched this string: but my firm purpose cannot be changed by a passion so childish and so hopeless. Know, lady, that this rival is in my power, and that it rests but with me to betray the secret of his being within the castle to Front-de-Bœuf, whose jealousy will be more fatal than mine."

"Wilfred here?" said Rowena, in disdain; "that is as true as that Front-de-Bœuf is his rival."

De Bracy looked at her steadily for an instant. "Wert thou really ignorant of this?" said he; "didst thou not know that Wilfred of Ivanhoe travelled in the litter of the Jew? — a meet conveyance for the crusader, whose doughty arm was to conquer the Holy Sepulchre!" And he laughed scornfully.

"And if he is here," said Rowena, compelling herself to a tone of indifference, though trembling with an agony of apprehension which she could not suppress, "in what is he the rival of Front-de-Bœuf? or what has he to fear beyond a short imprisonment, and an honourable ransom, according to the use of chivalry?"

"Rowena," said De Bracy, "art thou, too, deceived by the common error of thy sex, who think there can be no rivalry but that respecting their own charms? Knowest thou not there is a jealousy of ambition and of wealth, as well as of love; and that this our host, Front-de-Bœuf, will push from his road him who opposes his claim to the fair barony of Ivanhoe, as readily, eagerly, and unscrupulously, as if he were preferred to him by some blue-eyed damsel? But smile on my suit, lady, and the wounded champion shall have nothing to fear from Front-de-Bœuf, whom else thou mayest mourn for, as in the hands of one who has never shewn compassion."

"Save him, for the love of Heaven!" said Rowena, her firmness giving way under terror for her lover's impending fate.

"I can — I will — it is my purpose," said De

Bracy; "for when Rowena consents to be the bride of De Bracy, who is it shall dare to put forth a violent hand upon her kinsman — the son of her guardian — the companion of her youth? But it is thy love must buy his protection. I am not romantic fool enough to farther the fortune, or avert the fate, of one who is likely to be a successful obstacle between me and my wishes. Use thine influence with me in his behalf, and he is safe, — refuse to employ it, Wilfred dies, and thou thyself art not the nearer to freedom."

"Thy language," answered Rowena, "hath in its indifferent bluntness something which cannot be reconciled with the horrors it seems to express. I believe not that thy purpose is so wicked, or thy power so great."

"Flatter thyself, then, with that belief," said De Bracy, "until time shall prove it false. Thy lover lies wounded in this castle — thy preferred lover. He is a bar betwixt Front-De-Bœuf and that which Front-de-Bœuf loves better than either ambition or beauty. What will it cost beyond the blow of a poniard, or the thrust of a javelin, to silence his opposition for ever? Nay, were Front-de-Bœuf afraid to justify a deed so open, let the leech but give his patient a wrong draught — let the chamberlain, or the nurse who tends him, but pluck the pillow from his head, and Wilfred, in his present condition, is sped without the effusion of blood. Cedric also ——"

"And Cedric also," said Rowena, repeating his words; "my noble — my generous guardian! I deserved the evil I have encountered, for forgetting his fate even in that of his son!"

"Cedric's fate also depends upon thy determination," said De Bracy; "and I leave thee to form it."

Hitherto, Rowena had sustained her part in this trying scene with undismayed courage, but it was because she had not considered the danger as serious and imminent. Her disposition was naturally that which physiognomists consider as proper to fair complexions, mild, timid, and gentle; but it had been tempered, and, as it were, hardened by the circumstances of her education. Accustomed to see the will of all, even of Cedric himself, (sufficiently arbitrary with others,) give way before her wishes, she had acquired that sort of courage and self-confidence which arises from the habitual and constant deference of the circle in which we move. She could scarce conceive the possibility of her will being opposed, far less that of its being treated with total disregard.

Her haughtiness and habit of domination was, therefore, a fictitious character, induced over that which was natural to her, and it deserted her when her eyes were opened to the extent of her own danger, as well as that of her lover and her guardian; and when she found her will, the slightest expression of which was wont to command respect and attention, now placed in opposition to that of a man of a strong, fierce, and determined mind, who possessed the advantage over her, and was resolved to use it, she quailed before him.

After casting her eyes around, as if to look for the aid which was nowhere to be found, and after a few broken interjections, she raised her hands to heaven, and burst into a passion of uncontrolled vexation and sorrow. It was impossible to see so beautiful a creature in such extremity without feeling for her, and De Bracy was not unmoved though he was yet more embarrassed than touched He had, in truth, gone too far to recede; and yet, in Rowena's present condition, she could not be acted on either by argument or threats. He paced the apartment to and fro, now vainly exhorting the terrified maiden to compose herself, now hesitating concerning his own line of conduct.

If, thought he, I should be moved by the tears and sorrow of this disconsolate damsel, what should I reap but the loss of those fair hopes for which I have encountered so much risk, and the ridicule of Prince John and his jovial comrades? "And yet," he said to himself, "I feel myself ill framed for the part which I am playing. I cannot look on so fair a face while it is disturbed with agony, or on those eyes when they are drowned in tears. I would she had retained her original haughtiness of disposition, or that I had a larger share of Front-de-Bœuf's thrice-tempered hardness of heart!"

Agitated by these thoughts, he could only bid the unfortunate Rowena be comforted, and assure her, that as yet she had no reason for the excess of despair to which she was now giving way. But in this task of consolation De Bracy was interrupted by the horn, "hoarse-winded blowing far and keen," which had at the same time alarmed the other inmates of the castle, and interrupted their several plans of avarice and of licence. Of them all, perhaps, De Bracy least regretted the interruption; for his conference with the Lady Rowena had arrived at a point, where he found it equally difficult to prosecute or to resign his enterprise.

And here we cannot but think it necessary to offer some better proof than the incidents of an idle tale, to vindicate the melancholy representation of manners which has been just laid before the reader. It is grievous to think that those valiant barons, to whose stand against the crown the liberties of England were indebted for their existence, should themselves have been such dreadful oppressors, and capable of excesses contrary not only to the laws of England, but to those of nature and humanity. But, alas! we have only to extract from the industrious Henry one of those numerous passages which he has collected from contemporary historians, to prove that fiction itself can hardly reach the dark reality of the horrors of the period.

The description given by the author of the Saxon Chronicle of the cruelties exercised in the reign of King Stephen by the great barons and lords of castles, who were all Normans, affords a strong proof of the excesses of which they were capable when their passions were inflamed. "They grievously oppressed the poor people by building castles; and when they were built, they filled them with wicked men, or rather devils, who seized both men and women who they imagined had any money, threw them into prison, and put them to more cruel tortures than the martyrs ever endured. They suffocated some in mud, and suspended others by the feet, or the head, or the thumbs, kindling fires below them. They squeezed the heads of some with knotted cords till they pierced their brains, while they threw others into dungeons swarming with serpents, snakes, and toads." But it would be cruel to put the reader to the pain of perusing the remainder of this description.[1]

[1] Henry's Hist. edit. 1805, vol. vii. p. 346.

As another instance of these bitter fruits of conquest, and perhaps the strongest that can be quoted, we may mention, that the Princess Matilda, though a daughter of the King of Scotland, and afterwards both Queen of England, niece to Edgar Atheling, and mother to the Empress of Germany, the daughter, the wife, and the mother of monarchs, was obliged, during her early residence for education in England, to assume the veil of a nun, as the only means of escaping the licentious pursuit of the Norman nobles. This excuse she stated before a great council of the clergy of England, as the sole reason for her having taken the religious habit. The assembled clergy admitted the validity of the plea, and the notoriety of the circumstances upon which it was founded; giving thus an indubitable and most remarkable testimony to the existence of that disgraceful licence by which that age was stained. It was a matter of public knowledge, they said, that after the conquest of King William, his Norman followers, elated by so great a victory, acknowledged no law but their own wicked pleasure, and not only despoiled the conquered Saxons of their lands and their goods, but invaded the honour of their wives and of their daughters with the most unbridled licence; and hence it was then common for matrons and maidens of noble families to assume the veil, and take shelter in convents, not as called thither by the vocation of God, but solely to preserve their honour from the unbridled wickedness of man.

Such and so licentious were the times, as announced by the public declaration of the assembled clergy, recorded by Eadmer; and we need add nothing more to vindicate the probability of the scenes which we have detailed, and are about to detail, upon the more apocryphal authority of the Wardour MS.

CHAPTER XXV.

I 'll woo her as the lion woos his bride.
Douglas.

While the scenes we have described were passing in other parts of the castle, the Jewess Rebecca awaited her fate in a distant and sequestered turret. Hither she had been led by two of her disguised ravishers, and on being thrust into the little cell, she found herself in the presence of an old sibyl, who kept murmuring to herself a Saxon rhyme, as if to beat time to the revolving dance which her spindle was performing upon the floor. The hag raised her head as Rebecca entered, and scowled at the fair Jewess with the malignant envy with which old age and ugliness, when united with evil conditions, are apt to look upon youth and beauty.

"Thou must up and away, old house-cricket," said one of the men; "our noble master commands it—Thou must leave this chamber to a fairer guest."

"Ay," grumbled the hag, "even thus is service requited. I have known when my bare word would have cast the best man-at-arms among ye out of saddle and out of service; and now must I up and away at the command of every groom such as thou."

"Good Dame Urfried," said the other man, "stand not to reason on it, but up and away. Lord's hests must be listened to with a quick ear. Thou hast had thy day, old dame, but thy sun has long been set. Thou art now the very emblem of an old war-horse turned out on the barren heath—thou hast had thy paces in thy time, but now a broken amble is the best of them—Come, amble off with thee."

"Ill omens dog ye both!" said the old woman, "and a kennel be your burying-place! May the evil demon Zernebock tear me limb from limb, if I leave my own cell ere I have spun out the hemp on my distaff!"

"Answer it to our lord, then, old house-fiend," said the man, and retired; leaving Rebecca in company with the old woman, upon whose presence she had been thus unwillingly forced.

"What devil's deed have they now in the wind?" said the old hag, murmuring to herself, yet from time to time casting a sidelong and malignant glance at Rebecca; "but it is easy to guess—Bright eyes, black locks, and a skin like paper, ere the priest stains it with his black unguent—Ay, it is easy to guess why they send her to this lone turret, whence a shriek could no more be heard than at the depth of five hundred fathoms beneath the earth.—Thou wilt have owls for thy neighbours, fair one; and their screams will be heard as far, and as much regarded as thine own. Outlandish, too," she said, marking the dress and turban of Rebecca—"What country art thou of?—a Saracen? or an Egyptian?—Why dost not answer?—thou canst weep, canst thou not speak?"

"Be not angry, good mother," said Rebecca.

"Thou needst say no more," replied Urfried; "men know a fox by the train, and a Jewess by her tongue."

"For the sake of mercy," said Rebecca, "tell me what I am to expect as the conclusion of the violence which hath dragged me hither! Is it my life they seek, to atone for my religion? I will lay it down cheerfully."

"Thy life, minion?" answered the sibyl; "what would taking thy life pleasure them?—Trust me thy life is in no peril. Such usage shalt thou have as was once thought good enough for a noble Saxon maiden. And shall a Jewess, like thee, repine because she hath no better? Look at me—I was as young and twice as fair as thou, when Front-de-Bœuf, father of this Reginald, and his Normans, stormed this castle. My father and his seven sons defended their inheritance from story to story, from chamber to chamber—There was not a room, not a step of the stair, that was not slippery with their blood. They died—they died every man; and ere their bodies were cold, and ere their blood was dried, I had become the prey and the scorn of the conqueror!"

"Is there no help?—Are there no means of escape?" said Rebecca—"Richly, richly would I requite thine aid."

"Think not of it," said the hag; "from hence there is no escape but through the gates of death; and it is late, late," she added, shaking her gray head, "ere these open to us—Yet it is comfort to think that we leave behind us on earth those who shall be wretched as ourselves. Fare thee well, Jewess!—Jew or Gentile, thy fate would be the same; for thou hast to do with them that have neither scruple nor pity. Fare thee well, I say. My thread is spun out—thy task is yet to begin."

"Stay! stay! for Heaven's sake!" said Rebecca; "stay, though it be to curse and to revile me—thy presence is yet some protection."

"The presence of the mother of God were no protection," answered the old woman. "There she stands," pointing to a rude image of the Virgin Mary, "see if she can avert the fate that awaits thee."

She left the room as she spoke, her features writhed into a sort of sneering laugh, which made them seem even more hideous than their habitual frown. She locked the door behind her, and Rebecca might hear her curse every step for its steepness, as slowly and with difficulty she descended the turret-stair.

Rebecca was now to expect a fate even more dreadful than that of Rowena; for what probability was there that either softness or ceremony would be used towards one of her oppressed race, whatever shadow of these might be preserved towards a Saxon heiress? Yet had the Jewess this advantage, that she was better prepared by habits of thought, and by natural strength of mind, to encounter the dangers to which she was exposed. Of a strong and observing character, even from her earliest years, the pomp and wealth which her father displayed within his walls, or which she witnessed in the houses of other wealthy Hebrews, had not been able to blind her to the precarious circumstances under which they were enjoyed. Like Damocles at his celebrated banquet, Rebecca perpetually beheld, amid that gorgeous display, the sword which was suspended over the heads of her people by a single hair. These reflections had tamed and brought down to a pitch of sounder judgment a temper, which, under other circumstances, might have waxed haughty, supercilious, and obstinate.

From her father's example and injunctions, Rebecca had learnt to bear herself courteously towards all who approached her. She could not indeed imitate his excess of subservience, because she was a stranger to the meanness of mind, and to the constant state of timid apprehension, by which it was dictated; but she bore herself with a proud humility, as if submitting to the evil circumstances in which she was placed as the daughter of a despised race, while she felt in her mind the consciousness that she was entitled to hold a higher rank from her merit, than the arbitrary despotism of religious prejudice permitted her to aspire to.

Thus prepared to expect adverse circumstances, she had acquired the firmness necessary for acting under them. Her present situation required all her presence of mind, and she summoned it up accordingly.

Her first care was to inspect the apartment; but it afforded few hopes either of escape or protection. It contained neither secret passage nor trap-door, and unless where the door by which she had entered joined the main building, seemed to be circumscribed by the round exterior wall of the turret. The door had no inside bolt or bar. The single window opened upon an embattled space surmounting the turret, which gave Rebecca, at first sight, some hopes of escaping; but she soon found it had no communication with any other part of the battlements, being an isolated bartisan, or balcony, secured, as usual, by a parapet with embrasures, at which a few archers might be stationed, for defending the turret, and flanking with their shot the wall of the castle on that side.

There was therefore no hope but in passive fortitude, and in that strong reliance on Heaven natural to great and generous characters. Rebecca, however erroneously taught to interpret the promises of Scripture to the chosen people of Heaven, did not err in supposing the present to be their hour of trial, or in trusting that the children of Zion would be one day called in with the fulness of the Gentiles. In the meanwhile, all around her shewed that their present state was that of punishment and probation, and that it was their especial duty to suffer without sinning. Thus prepared to consider herself as the victim of misfortune, Rebecca had early reflected upon her own state, and schooled her mind to meet the dangers which she had probably to encounter.

The prisoner trembled, however, and changed colour, when a step was heard on the stair, and the door of the turret chamber slowly opened, and a tall man, dressed as one of those banditti to whom they owed their misfortune, slowly entered, and shut the door behind him; his cap, pulled down upon his brows, concealed the upper part of his face, and he held his mantle in such a manner as to muffle the rest. In this guise, as if prepared for the execution of some deed, at the thought of which he was himself ashamed, he stood before the affrighted prisoner; yet, ruffian as his dress bespoke him, he seemed at a loss to express what purpose had brought him thither, so that Rebecca, making an effort upon herself, had time to anticipate his explanation. She had already unclasped two costly bracelets and a collar, which she hastened to proffer to the supposed outlaw, concluding naturally that to gratify his avarice was to bespeak his favour.

"Take these," she said, "good friend, and for God's sake be merciful to me and my aged father! These ornaments are of value, yet are they trifling to what he would bestow to obtain our dismissal from this castle, free and uninjured."

"Fair flower of Palestine," replied the outlaw, "these pearls are orient, but they yield in whiteness to your teeth: the diamonds are brilliant, but they cannot match your eyes; and ever since I have taken up this wild trade, I have made a vow to prefer beauty to wealth."

"Do not do yourself such wrong," said Rebecca; "take ransom and have mercy!—Gold will purchase you pleasure,—to misuse us, could only bring thee remorse. My father will willingly satiate thy utmost wishes; and if thou wilt act wisely, thou mayest purchase with our spoils thy restoration to civil society—mayest obtain pardon for past errors, and be placed beyond the necessity of committing more."

"It is well spoken," replied the outlaw in French, finding it difficult probably to sustain, in Saxon, a conversation which Rebecca had opened in that language; "but know, bright lily of the vale of Baca! that thy father is already in the hands of a powerful alchemist, who knows how to convert into gold and silver even the rusty bars of a dungeon grate. The venerable Isaac is subjected to an alembic, which will distil from him all he holds dear, without any assistance from my requests or thy entreaty. Thy ransom must be paid by love and beauty, and in no other coin will I accept it."

"Thou art no outlaw," said Rebecca, in the same

language in which he addressed her; "no outlaw had refused such offers. No outlaw in this land uses the dialect in which thou hast spoken. Thou art no outlaw, but a Norman—a Norman, noble perhaps in birth—Oh, be so in thy actions, and cast off this fearful mask of outrage and violence!"

"And thou, who canst guess so truly," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, dropping the mantle from his face, "art no true daughter of Israel, but in all, save youth and beauty, a very witch of Endor. I am not an outlaw, then, fair rose of Sharon. And I am one who will be more prompt to hang thy neck and arms with pearls and diamonds, which so well become them, than to deprive thee of these ornaments."

"What wouldst thou have of me," said Rebecca, "if not my wealth?—We can have nought in common between us—you are a Christian—I am a Jewess.—Our union were contrary to the laws, alike of the church and the synagogue."

"It were so indeed," replied the Templar, laughing; "wed with a Jewess? *Despardieux!*—Not if she were the Queen of Sheba. And know, besides, sweet daughter of Zion, that were the most Christian king to offer me his most Christian daughter, with Languedoc for a dowery, I could not wed her. It is against my vow to love any maiden, otherwise than *par amours*, as I will love thee. I am a Templar. Behold the cross of my holy Order."

"Darest thou appeal to it," said Rebecca, "on an occasion like the present?"

"And if I do so," said the Templar, "it concerns not thee, who art no believer in the blessed sign of our salvation."

"I believe as my fathers taught," said Rebecca, "and may God forgive my belief if erroneous! But you, Sir Knight, what is *yours*, when you appeal without scruple to that which you deem most holy, even while you are about to transgress the most solemn of your vows as a knight, and as a man of religion?"

"It is gravely and well preached, O daughter of Sirach!" answered the Templar; "but, gentle Ecclesiastica, thy narrow Jewish prejudices make thee blind to our high privilege. Marriage were an enduring crime on the part of a Templar; but what lesser folly I may practise, I shall speedily be absolved from at the next Preceptory of our Order. Not the wisest of monarchs, not his father, whose examples you must needs allow are weighty, claimed wider privileges than we poor soldiers of the Temple of Zion have won by our zeal in its defence. The protectors of Solomon's Temple may claim licence by the example of Solomon."

"If thou readest the Scripture," said the Jewess, "and the lives of the saints, only to justify thine own licence and profligacy, thy crime is like that of him who extracts poison from the most healthful and necessary herbs."

The eyes of the Templar flashed fire at this reproof—"Hearken," he said, "Rebecca; I have hitherto spoken mildly to thee, but now my language shall be that of a conqueror. Thou art the captive of my bow and spear—subject to my will by the laws of all nations; nor will I abate an inch of my right, or abstain from taking by violence what thou refusest to entreaty or necessity."

"Stand back," said Rebecca—"stand back, and hear me ere thou offerest to commit a sin so deadly! My strength thou mayest indeed overpower, for God made women weak, and trusted their defence to man's generosity. But I will proclaim thy villainy, Templar, from one end of Europe to the other. I will owe to the superstition of thy brethren what their compassion might refuse me. Each Preceptory—each Chapter of thy Order, shall learn, that, like a heretic, thou hast sinned with a Jewess. Those who tremble not at thy crime, will hold thee accursed for having so far dishonoured the cross thou wearest, as to follow a daughter of my people."

"Thou art keen-witted, Jewess," replied the Templar, well aware of the truth of what she spoke, and that the rules of his Order condemned in the most positive manner, and under high penalties, such intrigues as he now prosecuted, and that, in some instances, even degradation had followed upon it—"thou art sharp-witted," he said; "but loud must be thy voice of complaint, if it is heard beyond the iron walls of this castle; within these, murmurs, laments, appeals to justice, and screams for help, die alike silent away. One thing only can save thee, Rebecca. Submit to thy fate—embrace our religion, and thou shalt go forth in such state, that many a Norman lady shall yield as well in pomp as in beauty to the favourite of the best lance among the defenders of the Temple."

"Submit to my fate!" said Rebecca—"and, sacred Heaven! to what fate?—embrace thy religion!—and what religion can it be that harbours such a villain?—*thou* the best lance of the Templars!—craven knight!—forsworn priest! I spit at thee, and I defy thee.—The God of Abraham's promise hath opened an escape to his daughter—even from this abyss of infamy!"

As she spoke, she threw open the latticed window which led to the bartisan, and in an instant after, stood on the very verge of the parapet, with not the slightest screen between her and the tremendous depth below. Unprepared for such a desperate effort, for she had hitherto stood perfectly motionless, Bois-Guilbert had neither time to intercept nor to stop her. As he offered to advance, she exclaimed, "Remain where thou art, proud Templar, or at thy choice advance!—one foot nearer, and I plunge myself from the precipice; my body shall be crushed out of the very form of humanity upon the stones of that court-yard ere it become the victim of thy brutality!"

As she spoke this, she clasped her hands and extended them towards heaven, as if imploring mercy on her soul before she made the final plunge. The Templar hesitated, and a resolution which had never yielded to pity or distress, gave way to his admiration of her fortitude. "Come down," he said, "rash girl!—I swear by earth, and sea, and sky, I will offer thee no offence."

"I will not trust thee, Templar," said Rebecca; "thou hast taught me better how to estimate the virtues of thine Order. The next Preceptory would grant thee absolution for an oath, the keeping of which concerned nought but the honour or the dishonour of a miserable Jewish maiden."

"You do me injustice," exclaimed the Templar fervently; "I swear to you by the name which I bear—by the cross on my bosom—by the sword on my side—by the ancient crest of my fathers do I swear, I will do thee no injury whatsoever! If not for thyself, yet for thy father's sake forbear!

I will be his friend, and in this castle he will need a powerful one."

"Alas!" said Rebecca, "I know it but too well—dare I trust thee?"

"May my arms be reversed, and my name dishonoured," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, "if thou shalt have reason to complain of me! Many a law, many a commandment have I broken, but my word never."

"I will then trust thee," said Rebecca, "thus far;" and she descended from the verge of the battlement, but remained standing close by one of the embrasures, or *machicolles*, as they were then called.—"Here," she said, "I take my stand. Remain where thou art, and if thou shalt attempt to diminish by one step the distance now between us, thou shalt see that the Jewish maiden will rather trust her soul with God, than her honour to the Templar!"

While Rebecca spoke thus, her high and firm resolve, which corresponded so well with the expressive beauty of her countenance, gave to her looks, air, and manner, a dignity that seemed more than mortal. Her glance quailed not, her cheek blanched not, for the fear of a fate so instant and so horrible; on the contrary, the thought that she had her fate at her command, and could escape at will from infamy to death, gave a yet deeper colour of carnation to her complexion, and a yet more brilliant fire to her eye. Bois-Guilbert, proud himself and high-spirited, thought he had never beheld beauty so animated and so commanding.

"Let there be peace between us, Rebecca," he said.

"Peace, if thou wilt," answered Rebecca—"Peace—but with this space between."

"Thou needst no longer fear me," said Bois-Guilbert.

"I fear thee not," replied she; "thanks to him that reared this dizzy tower so high, that nought could fall from it and live—thanks to him, and to the God of Israel!—I fear thee not."

"Thou dost me injustice," said the Templar; "by earth, sea, and sky, thou dost me injustice! I am not naturally that which you have seen me, hard, selfish, and relentless. It was woman that taught me cruelty, and on woman therefore I have exercised it; but not upon such as thou. Hear me, Rebecca—Never did knight take lance in his hand with a heart more devoted to the lady of his love than Brian de Bois-Guilbert. She, the daughter of a petty baron, who boasted for all his domains but a ruinous tower, and an unproductive vineyard, and some few leagues of the barren Landes of Bourdeaux, her name was known wherever deeds of arms were done, known wider than that of many a lady's that had a county for a dowery.—Yes," he continued, pacing up and down the little platform, with an animation in which he seemed to lose all consciousness of Rebecca's presence—"Yes, my deeds, my danger, my blood, made the name of Adelaide de Montemare known from the court of Castile to that of Byzantium. And how was I requited!—When I returned with my dear-bought honours, purchased by toil and blood, I found her wedded to a Gascon squire, whose name was never heard beyond the limits of his own paltry domain! Truly did I love her, and bitterly did I revenge me of her broken faith! But my vengeance has recoiled on myself. Since that day I have separated myself from life and its ties—my manhood must know no domestic home—must be soothed by no affectionate wife—My age must know no kindly hearth—My grave must be solitary, and no offspring must outlive me, to bear the ancient name of Bois-Guilbert. At the feet of my Superior I have laid down the right of self-action—the privilege of independence. The Templar, a serf in all but the name, can possess neither lands, nor goods, and lives, moves, and breathes, but at the will and pleasure of another."

"Alas!" said Rebecca, "what advantages could compensate for such an absolute sacrifice?"

"The power of vengeance, Rebecca," replied the Templar, "and the prospects of ambition."

"An evil recompense," said Rebecca, "for the surrender of the rights which are dearest to humanity."

"Say not so, maiden," answered the Templar; "revenge is a feast for the gods! And if they have reserved it, as priests tell us, to themselves, it is because they hold it an enjoyment too precious for the possession of mere mortals.—And ambition! it is a temptation which could disturb even the bliss of heaven itself."—He paused a moment, and then added, "Rebecca! she who could prefer death to dishonour, must have a proud and a powerful soul. Mine thou must be!—Nay, start not," he added, "it must be with thine own consent, and on thine own terms. Thou must consent to share with me hopes more extended than can be viewed from the throne of a monarch!—Hear me ere you answer, and judge ere you refuse.—The Templar loses, as thou hast said, his social rights, his power of free agency, but he becomes a member and a limb of a mighty body, before which thrones already tremble,—even as the single drop of rain which mixes with the sea becomes an individual part of that resistless ocean, which undermines rocks and ingulfs royal armadas. Such a swelling flood is that powerful league. Of this mighty Order I am no mean member, but already one of the Chief Commanders, and may well aspire one day to hold the batoon of Grand Master. The poor soldiers of the Temple will not alone place their foot upon the necks of kings—a hemp-sandall'd monk can do that. Our mailed step shall ascend their throne—our gauntlet shall wrench the sceptre from their gripe. Not the reign of your vainly-expected Messiah offers such power to your dispersed tribes as my ambition may aim at. I have sought but a kindred spirit to share it, and I have found such in thee."

"Sayest thou this to one of my people?" answered Rebecca. "Bethink thee——"

"Answer me not," said the Templar, "by urging the difference of our creeds; within our secret conclaves we hold these nursery tales in derision. Think not we long remained blind to the idiotical folly of our founders, who forswore every delight of life for the pleasure of dying martyrs by hunger, by thirst, and by pestilence, and by the swords of savages, while they vainly strove to defend a barren desert, valuable only in the eyes of superstition. Our Order soon adopted bolder and wider views, and found out a better indemnification for our sacrifices. Our immense possessions in every kingdom of Europe, our high military fame, which brings within our circle the flower of chivalry from

every Christian clime — these are dedicated to ends of which our pious founders little dreamed, and which are equally concealed from such weak spirits as embrace our Order on the ancient principles, and whose superstition makes them our passive tools. But I will not farther withdraw the veil of our mysteries. That bugle-sound announces something which may require my presence. Think on what I have said. — Farewell! — I do not say forgive me the violence I have threatened, for it was necessary to the display of thy character. Gold can be only known by the application of the touchstone. I will soon return, and hold farther conference with thee."

He re-entered the turret-chamber, and descended the stair, leaving Rebecca scarcely more terrified at the prospect of the death to which she had been so lately exposed, than at the furious ambition of the bold bad man in whose power she found herself so unhappily placed. When she entered the turret-chamber, her first duty was to return thanks to the God of Jacob for the protection which he had afforded her, and to implore its continuance for her and for her father. Another name glided into her petition — it was that of the wounded Christian, whom fate had placed in the hands of bloodthirsty men, his avowed enemies. Her heart indeed checked her, as if, even in communing with the Deity in prayer, she mingled in her devotions the recollection of one with whose fate hers could have no alliance — a Nazarene, and an enemy to her faith. But the petition was already breathed, nor could all the narrow prejudices of her sect induce Rebecca to wish it recalled.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A damn'd cramp piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life!
She Stoops to Conquer.

When the Templar reached the hall of the castle, he found De Bracy already there. "Your love-suit," said De Bracy, "hath, I suppose, been disturbed, like mine, by this obstreperous summons. But you have come later and more reluctantly, and therefore I presume your interview has proved more agreeable than mine."

"Has your suit, then, been unsuccessfully paid to the Saxon heiress?" said the Templar.

"By the bones of Thomas à Becket," answered De Bracy, "the Lady Rowena must have heard that I cannot endure the sight of women's tears."

"Away!" said the Templar; "thou a leader of a Free Company, and regard a woman's tears! A few drops sprinkled on the torch of love, make the flame blaze the brighter."

"Gramercy for the few drops of thy sprinkling," replied De Bracy; "but this damsel hath wept enough to extinguish a beacon-light. Never was such wringing of hands and such overflowing of eyes, since the days of St Niobe,[1] of whom Prior Aymer told us. A water-fiend hath possessed the fair Saxon."

"A legion of fiends have occupied the bosom of the Jewess," replied the Templar; "for, I think no single one, not even Apollyon himself, could have inspired such indomitable pride and resolution. — But where is Front-de-Bœuf? That horn is sounded more and more clamorously."

"He is negotiating with the Jew, I suppose," replied De Bracy, coolly; "probably the howls of Isaac have drowned the blast of the bugle. Thou mayst know, by experience, Sir Brian, that a Jew parting with his treasures on such terms as our friend Front-de-Bœuf is like to offer, will raise a clamour loud enough to be heard over twenty horns and trumpets to boot. But we will make the vassals call him."

They were soon after joined by Front-de-Bœuf, who had been disturbed in his tyrannic cruelty, in the manner with which the reader is acquainted, and had only tarried to give some necessary directions.

"Let us see the cause of this cursed clamour," said Front-de-Bœuf — "here is a letter, and, if I mistake not, it is in Saxon."

He looked at it, turning it round and round as if he had had really some hopes of coming at the meaning by inverting the position of the paper, and then handed it to De Bracy.

"It may be magic spells for aught I know," said De Bracy, who possessed his full proportion of the ignorance which characterized the chivalry of the period. "Our Chaplain attempted to teach me to write," he said, "but all my letters were formed like spear-heads and sword-blades, and so the old shaveling gave up the task."

"Give it me," said the Templar. "We have that of the priestly character, that we have some knowledge to enlighten our valour."

"Let us profit by your most reverend knowledge, then," said De Bracy; "what says the scroll?"

"It is a formal letter of defiance," answered the Templar; "but, by our Lady of Bethlehem, if it be not a foolish jest, it is the most extraordinary cartel that ever was sent across the drawbridge of a baronial castle."

"Jest!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "I would gladly know who dares jest with me in such a matter! — Read it, Sir Brian."

The Templar accordingly read it as follows: —

"I, Wamba, the son of Witless, Jester to a noble and free-born man, Cedric of Rotherwood, called the Saxon. — And I, Gurth, the son of Beowulph, the swineherd ——"

"Thou art mad," said Front-de-Bœuf, interrupting the reader.

"By St Luke, it is so set down," answered the Templar. Then resuming his task, he went on, — "I, Gurth, the son of Beowulph, swineherd unto the said Cedric, with the assistance of our allies and confederates, who make common cause with us in this our feud, namely, the good knight, called for the present, *Le Noir Faineant*, and the stout yeoman, Robert Locksley, called Cleave-the-wand, Do you, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, and your allies and accomplices whomsoever, to wit, that whereas you have, without cause given or feud declared, wrongfully and by mastery seized upon the person of our lord and master the said Cedric; also upon the person of a noble and freeborn damsel, the Lady Rowena of Hargottstandstede; also upon the person of a noble and freeborn man, Athelstane of Coningsburgh; also upon the persons of certain free-born men, their *cnichts;* also upon

[1] I wish the Prior had also informed them when Niobe was sainted. Probably during that enlightened period when

"Pan to Moses lent his pagan horn."

L. T.

certain serfs, their born bondsmen; also upon a certain Jew, named Isaac of York, together with his daughter, a Jewess, and certain horses and mules: Which noble persons, with their *cnichts* and slaves, and also with the horses and mules, Jew and Jewess beforesaid, were all in peace with his majesty, and travelling as liege subjects upon the king's highway; therefore we require and demand that the said noble persons, namely, Cedric of Rotherwood, Rowena of Hargottstandstede, Athelstane of Coningsburgh, with their servants, *cnichts*, and followers, also the horses and mules, Jew and Jewess aforesaid, together with all goods and chattels to them pertaining, be, within an hour after the delivery hereof, delivered to us, or to those whom we shall appoint to receive the same, and that untouched and unharmed in body and goods. Failing of which, we do pronounce to you, that we hold ye as robbers and traitors, and will wager our bodies against ye in battle, siege, or otherwise, and do our utmost to your annoyance and destruction. Wherefore may God have you in his keeping. — Signed by us upon the eve of St Withold's day, under the great trysting oak in the Hart-hill Walk, the above being written by a holy man, Clerk to God, Our Lady, and St Dunstan, in the Chapel of Copmanhurst."

At the bottom of this document was scrawled, in the first place, a rude sketch of a cock's head and comb, with a legend expressing this hieroglyphic to be the sign-manual of Wamba, son of Witless. Under this respectable emblem stood a cross, stated to be the mark of Gurth, the son of Beowulph. Then were written, in rough bold characters, the words, *Le Noir Faineant.* And, to conclude the whole, an arrow, neatly enough drawn, was described as the mark of the yeoman Locksley.

The knights heard this uncommon document read from end to end, and then gazed upon each other in silent amazement, as being utterly at a loss to know what it could portend. De Bracy was the first to break silence by an uncontrollable fit of laughter, wherein he was joined, though with more moderation, by the Templar. Front-de-Bœuf, on the contrary, seemed impatient of their ill-timed jocularity.

"I give you plain warning," he said, "fair sirs, that you had better consult how to bear yourselves under these circumstances, than give way to such misplaced merriment."

"Front-de-Bœuf has not recovered his temper since his late overthrow," said De Bracy to the Templar; "he is cowed at the very idea of a cartel, though it come but from a fool and a swineherd."

"By St Michael," answered Front-de-Bœuf, "I would thou couldst stand the whole brunt of this adventure thyself, De Bracy. These fellows dared not have acted with such inconceivable impudence, had they not been supported by some strong bands. There are enough of outlaws in this forest to resent my protecting the deer. I did but tie one fellow, who was taken redhanded and in the fact, to the horns of a wild stag, which gored him to death in five minutes, and I had as many arrows shot at me as there were lanched against yonder target at Ashby. — Here, fellow," he added, to one of his attendants, "hast thou sent out to see by what force this precious challenge is to be supported?"

"There are at least two hundred men assembled in the woods," answered a squire who was in attendance.

"Here is a proper matter!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "this comes of lending you the use of my castle; that cannot manage your undertaking quietly, but you must bring this nest of hornets about my ears!"

"Of hornets?" said De Bracy; "of stingless drones rather; a band of lazy knaves, who take to the wood, and destroy the venison rather than labour for their maintenance."

"Stingless!" replied Front-de-Bœuf; "fork-headed shafts of a cloth-yard in length, and these shot within the breadth of a French crown, are sting enough."

"For shame, Sir Knight!" said the Templar. "Let us summon our people, and sally forth upon them. One knight — ay, one man-at-arms, were enough for twenty such peasants."

"Enough, and too much," said De Bracy; "I should only be ashamed to couch lance against them."

"True," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "were they black Turks or Moors, Sir Templar, or the craven peasants of France, most valiant De Bracy; but these are English yeomen, over whom we shall have no advantage, save what we may derive from our arms and horses, which will avail us little in the glades of the forest. Sally, saidst thou? we have scarce men enough to defend the castle. The best of mine are at York; so is all your band, De Bracy; and we have scarcely twenty, besides the handful that were engaged in this mad business."

"Thou dost not fear," said the Templar, "that they can assemble in force sufficient to attempt the castle?"

"Not so, Sir Brian," answered Front-de-Bœuf. "These outlaws have indeed a daring captain; but without machines, scaling ladders, and experienced leaders, my castle may defy them."

"Send to thy neighbours," said the Templar; "let them assemble their people, and come to the rescue of three knights, besieged by a jester and a swineherd in the baronial castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf."

"You jest, Sir Knight," answered the baron; "but to whom should I send? — Malvoisin is by this time at York with his retainers, and so are my other allies; and so should I have been, but for this infernal enterprise."

"Then send to York, and recall our people," said De Bracy. "If they abide the shaking of my standard, or the sight of my Free Companions, I will give them credit for the boldest outlaws ever bent bow in green-wood."

"And who shall bear such a message?" said Front-de-Bœuf; "they will beset every path, and rip the errand out of his bosom. — I have it," he added, after pausing for a moment — "Sir Templar, thou canst write as well as read, and if we can but find the writing materials of my chaplain, who died a twelvemonth since in the midst of his Christmas carousals——"

"So please ye," said the squire, who was still in attendance, "I think old Urfried has them some where in keeping, for love of the confessor. He was the last man, I have heard her tell, who ever said aught to her, which man ought in courtesy to address to maid or matron."

"Go, search them out, Engelred," said Front-de-

Bœuf; "and then, Sir Templar, thou shalt return an answer to this bold challenge."

"I would rather do it at the sword's point than at that of the pen," said Bois-Guilbert; "but be it as you will."

He sat down accordingly, and indited, in the French language, an epistle of the following tenor:—

"Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, with his noble and knightly allies and confederates, receive no defiances at the hands of slaves, bondsmen, or fugitives. If the person calling himself the Black Knight have indeed a claim to the honours of chivalry, he ought to know that he stands degraded by his present association, and has no right to ask reckoning at the hands of good men of noble blood. Touching the prisoners we have made, we do in Christian charity require you to send a man of religion, to receive their confession, and reconcile them with God; since it is our fixed intention to execute them this morning before noon, so that their heads being placed on the battlements, shall shew to all men how lightly we esteem those who have bestirred themselves in their rescue. Wherefore, as above, we require you to send a priest to reconcile them to God, in doing which you shall render them the last earthly service."

This letter being folded, was delivered to the squire, and by him to the messenger who waited without, as the answer to that which he had brought.

The yeoman having thus accomplished his mission, returned to the head-quarters of the allies, which were for the present established under a venerable oak-tree, about three arrow-flights distant from the castle. Here Wamba and Gurth, with their allies the Black Knight and Locksley, and the jovial hermit, awaited with impatience an answer to their summons. Around, and at a distance from them, were seen many a bold yeoman, whose silvan dress and weather-beaten countenances shewed the ordinary nature of their occupation. More than two hundred had already assembled, and others were fast coming in. Those whom they obeyed as leaders were only distinguished from the others by a feather in the cap, their dress, arms, and equipments being in all other respects the same.

Besides these bands, a less orderly and a worse armed force, consisting of the Saxon inhabitants of the neighbouring township, as well as many bondsmen and servants from Cedric's extensive estate, had already arrived, for the purpose of assisting in his rescue. Few of these were armed otherwise than with such rustic weapons as necessity sometimes converts to military purposes. Boar-spears, scythes, flails, and the like, were their chief arms; for the Normans, with the usual policy of conquerors, were jealous of permitting to the vanquished Saxons the possession or the use of swords and spears. These circumstances rendered the assistance of the Saxons far from being so formidable to the besieged, as the strength of the men themselves, their superior numbers, and the animation inspired by a just cause, might otherwise well have made them. It was to the leaders of this motley army that the letter of the Templar was now delivered.

Reference was at first made to the chaplain for an exposition of its contents.

"By the crook of St Dunstan," said that worthy ecclesiastic, "which hath brought more sheep within the sheepfold than the crook of e'er another saint in Paradise, I swear that I cannot expound unto you this jargon, which, whether it be French or Arabic, is beyond my guess."

He then gave the letter to Gurth, who shook his head gruffly, and passed it to Wamba. The Jester looked at each of the four corners of the paper with such a grin of affected intelligence as a monkey is apt to assume upon similar occasions, then cut a caper, and gave the letter to Locksley.

"If the long letters were bows, and the short letters broad arrows, I might know something of the matter," said the honest yeoman; "but as the matter stands, the meaning is as safe, for me, as the stag that 's at twelve miles' distance."

"I must be clerk, then," said the Black Knight; and taking the letter from Locksley, he first read it over to himself, and then explained the meaning in Saxon to his confederates.

"Execute the noble Cedric!" exclaimed Wamba; "by the rood, thou must be mistaken, Sir Knight."

"Not I, my worthy friend," replied the Knight, "I have explained the words as they are here set down."

"Then, by St Thomas of Canterbury," replied Gurth, "we will have the castle, should we tear it down with our hands!"

"We have nothing else to tear it with," replied Wamba; "but mine are scarce fit to make mammocks of freestone and mortar."

"'Tis but a contrivance to gain time," said Locksley; "they dare not do a deed for which I could exact a fearful penalty."

"I would," said the Black Knight, "there were some one among us who could obtain admission into the castle, and discover how the case stands with the besieged. Methinks, as they require a confessor to be sent, this holy hermit might at once exercise his pious vocation, and procure us the information we desire."

"A plague on thee and thy advice!" said the good hermit; "I tell thee, Sir Slothful Knight, that when I doff my friar's frock, my priesthood, my sanctity, my very Latin, are put off along with it; and when in my green jerkin, I can better kill twenty deer than confess one Christian."

"I fear," said the Black Knight, "I fear greatly, there is no one here that is qualified to take upon him, for the nonce, this same character of father confessor?"

All looked on each other, and were silent.

"I see," said Wamba, after a short pause, "that the fool must be still the fool, and put his neck in the venture which wise men shrink from. You must know, my dear cousins and countrymen, that I wore russet before I wore motley, and was bred to be a friar, until a brain-fever came upon me and left me just wit enough to be a fool. I trust, with the assistance of the good hermit's frock, together with the priesthood, sanctity, and learning which are stitched into the cowl of it, I shall be found qualified to administer both worldly and ghostly comfort to our worthy master Cedric, and his companions in adversity."

"Hath he sense enough, think'st thou?" said the Black Knight, addressing Gurth.

"I know not," said Gurth; "but if he hath not, it will be the first time he hath wanted wit to turn his folly to account."

"On with the frock, then, good fellow," quoth the Knight, "and let thy master send us an account of their situation within the castle. Their numbers must be few, and it is five to one they may be accessible by a sudden and bold attack. Time wears — away with thee."

"And, in the meantime," said Locksley, "we will beset the place so closely, that not so much as a fly shall carry news from thence. So that, my good friend," he continued, addressing Wamba, "thou mayest assure these tyrants, that whatever violence they exercise on the persons of their prisoners, shall be most severely repaid upon their own."

"*Pax vobiscum*," said Wamba, who was now muffled in his religious disguise.

And so saying, he imitated the solemn and stately deportment of a friar, and departed to execute his mission.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The hottest horse will oft be cool,
The dullest will shew fire;
The friar will often play the fool,
The fool will play the friar.

Old Song.

When the Jester, arrayed in the cowl and frock of the hermit, and having his knotted cord twisted around his middle, stood before the portal of the castle of Front-de-Bœuf, the warder demanded of him his name and errand.

"*Pax vobiscum*," answered the Jester, "I am a poor brother of the Order of St Francis, who come hither to do my office to certain unhappy prisoners now secured within this castle."

"Thou art a bold friar," said the warder, "to come hither, where, saving our own drunken confessor, a cock of thy feather hath not crowed these twenty years."

"Yet, I pray thee, do mine errand to the lord of the castle," answered the pretended friar; "trust me it will find good acceptance with him, and the cock shall crow, that the whole castle shall hear him."

"Gramercy," said the warder; "but if I come to shame for leaving my post upon thine errand, I will try whether a friar's gray gown be proof against a gray-goose shaft."

With this threat he left his turret, and carried to the hall of the castle his unwonted intelligence, that a holy friar stood before the gate and demanded instant admission. With no small wonder he received his master's commands to admit the holy man immediately; and, having previously manned the entrance to guard against surprise, he obeyed, without farther scruple, the commands which he had received. The hairbrained self-conceit which had imboldened Wamba to undertake this dangerous office, was scarce sufficient to support him when he found himself in the presence of a man so dreadful, and so much dreaded, as Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, and he brought out his *pax vobiscum*, to which he, in a good measure, trusted for supporting his character, with more anxiety and hesitation than had hitherto accompanied it. But Front-de-Bœuf was accustomed to see men of all ranks tremble in his presence, so that the timidity of the supposed father did not give him any cause of suspicion. "Who and whence art thou, priest?" said he.

"*Pax vobiscum*," reiterated the Jester, "I am a poor servant of St Francis, who, travelling through this wilderness, have fallen among thieves, (as Scripture hath it,) *quidam viator incidit in latrones*, which thieves have sent me unto this castle in order to do my ghostly office on two persons condemned by your honourable justice."

"Ay, right," answered Front-de-Bœuf; "and canst thou tell me, holy father, the number of those banditti?"

"Gallant sir," answered the Jester, "*nomen illis legio*, their name is legion."

"Tell me in plain terms what numbers there are, or, priest, thy cloak and cord will ill protect thee."

"Alas!" said the supposed friar, "*cor meum eructavit*, that is to say, I was like to burst with fear! but I conceive they may be — what of yeomen — what of commons, at least five hundred men."

"What!" said the Templar, who came into the hall that moment, "muster the wasps so thick here? it is time to stifle such a mischievous brood." Then taking Front-de-Bœuf aside, "Knowest thou the priest?"

"He is a stranger from a distant convent," said Front-de-Bœuf; "I know him not."

"Then trust him not with thy purpose in words," answered the Templar. "Let him carry a written order to De Bracy's company of Free Companions, to repair instantly to their master's aid. In the meantime, and that the shaveling may suspect nothing, permit him to go freely about his task of preparing these Saxon hogs for the slaughter-house."

"It shall be so," said Front-de-Bœuf. And he forthwith appointed a domestic to conduct Wamba to the apartment where Cedric and Athelstane were confined.

The impatience of Cedric had been rather enhanced than diminished by his confinement. He walked from one end of the hall to the other, with the attitude of one who advances to charge an enemy, or to storm the breach of a beleaguered place, sometimes ejaculating to himself, sometimes addressing Athelstane, who stoutly and stoically awaited the issue of the adventure, digesting, in the meantime, with great composure, the liberal meal which he had made at noon, and not greatly interesting himself about the duration of his captivity, which he concluded would, like all earthly evils, find an end in Heaven's good time.

"*Pax vobiscum*," said the Jester, entering the apartment; "the blessing of St Dunstan, St Dennis, St Duthoc, and all other saints whatsoever, be upon ye and about ye."

"Enter freely," answered Cedric to the supposed friar; "with what intent art thou come hither?"

"To bid you prepare yourselves for death," answered the Jester.

"It is impossible!" replied Cedric, starting. "Fearless and wicked as they are, they dare not attempt such open and gratuitous cruelty!"

"Alas!" said the Jester, "to restrain them by their sense of humanity, is the same as to stop a runaway horse with a bridle of silk thread. Bethink thee, therefore, noble Cedric, and you also, gallant Athelstane, what crimes you have committed in the flesh; for this very day will ye be called to answer at a higher tribunal."

"Hearest thou this, Athelstane?" said Cedric; "we must rouse up our hearts to this last action, since better it is we should die like men, than live like slaves."

"I am ready," answered Athelstane, "to stand the worst of their malice, and shall walk to my death with as much composure as ever I did to my dinner."

"Let us then unto our holy gear, father," said Cedric.

"Wait yet a moment, good uncle," said the Jester, in his natural tone; "better look long before you leap in the dark."

"By my faith," said Cedric, "I should know that voice!"

"It is that of your trusty slave and Jester," answered Wamba; throwing back his cowl. "Had you taken a fool's advice formerly, you would not have been here at all. Take a fool's advice now, and you will not be here long."

"How meanest thou, knave?" answered the Saxon.

"Even thus," replied Wamba; "take thou this frock and cord, which are all the orders I ever had, and march quietly out of the castle, leaving me your cloak and girdle to take the long leap in thy stead."

"Leave thee in my stead!" said Cedric, astonished at the proposal; "why, they would hang thee, my poor knave."

"E'en let them do as they are permitted," said Wamba; "I trust — no disparagement to your birth — that the son of Witless may hang in a chain with as much gravity as the chain hung upon his ancestor the alderman."

"Well, Wamba," answered Cedric, "for one thing will I grant thy request. And that is, if thou wilt make the exchange of garments with Lord Athelstane instead of me."

"No, by St Dunstan," answered Wamba; "there were little reason in that. Good right there is, that the son of Witless should suffer to save the son of Hereward; but little wisdom there were in his dying for the benefit of one whose fathers were strangers to his."

"Villain," said Cedric, "the fathers of Athelstane were monarchs of England!"

"They might be whomsoever they pleased," replied Wamba; "but my neck stands too straight upon my shoulders to have it twisted for their sake. Wherefore, good my master, either take my proffer yourself, or suffer me to leave this dungeon as free as I entered."

"Let the old tree wither," continued Cedric, "so the stately hope of the forest be preserved. Save the noble Athelstane, my trusty Wamba! it is the duty of each who has Saxon blood in his veins. Thou and I will abide together the utmost rage of our injurious oppressors, while he, free and safe, shall arouse the awakened spirits of our countrymen to avenge us."

"Not so, father Cedric," said Athelstane, grasping his hand,—for, when roused to think or act, his deeds and sentiments were not unbecoming his high race—"Not so," he continued; "I would rather remain in this hall a week without food save the prisoner's stinted loaf, or drink save the prisoner's measure of water, than embrace the opportunity to escape which the slave's untaught kindness has purveyed for his master."

"You are called wise men, sirs," said the Jester, "and I a crazed fool; but, uncle Cedric, and cousin Athelstane, the fool shall decide this controversy for ye, and save ye the trouble of straining courtesies any farther. I am like John-a-Duck's mare, that will let no man mount her but John-a-Duck. I came to save my master, and if he will not consent — basta — I can but go away home again. Kind service cannot be chucked from hand to hand like a shuttlecock or stool-ball. I'll hang for no man but my own born master."

"Go, then, noble Cedric," said Athelstane, "neglect not this opportunity. Your presence without may encourage friends to our rescue — your remaining here would ruin us all."

"And is there any prospect, then, of rescue from without?" said Cedric, looking at the Jester.

"Prospect, indeed!" echoed Wamba; "let me tell you, when you fill my cloak, you are wrapt in a general's cassock. Five hundred men are there without, and I was this morning one of their chief leaders. My fool's cap was a casque, and my bauble a truncheon. Well, we shall see what good they will make by exchanging a fool for a wise man. Truly, I fear they will lose in valour what they may gain in discretion. And so farewell, master, and be kind to poor Gurth and his dog Fangs; and let my cockscomb hang in the hall at Rotherwood, in memory that I flung away my life for my master, like a faithful——fool."

The last word came out with a sort of double expression, betwixt jest and earnest. The tears stood in Cedric's eyes.

"Thy memory shall be preserved," he said, "while fidelity and affection have honour upon earth. But that I trust I shall find the means of saving Rowena, and thee, Athelstane, and thee, also, my poor Wamba, thou shouldst not overbear me in this matter."

The exchange of dress was now accomplished, when a sudden doubt struck Cedric.

"I know no language," he said, "but my own, and a few words of their mincing Norman. How shall I bear myself like a reverend brother?"

"The spell lies in two words," replied Wamba — "*Pax vobiscum* will answer all queries. If you go or come, eat or drink, bless or ban, *Pax vobiscum* carries you through it all. It is as useful to a friar as a broom-stick to a witch, or a wand to a conjuror. Speak it but thus, in a deep grave tone,— *Pax vobiscum!*— it is irresistible — Watch and ward, knight and squire, foot and horse, it acts as a charm upon them all. I think, if they bring me out to be hanged to-morrow, as is much to be doubted they may, I will try its weight upon the finisher of the sentence."

"If such prove the case," said his master, "my religious orders are soon taken — *Pax vobiscum*. I trust I shall remember the pass-word. Noble Athelstane, farewell; and farewell, my poor boy, whose heart might make amends for a weaker head — I will save you, or return and die with you. The royal blood of our Saxon kings shall not be spilt while mine beats in my veins; nor shall one hair fall from the head of the kind knave who risked himself for his master, if Cedric's peril can prevent it. — Farewell."

"Farewell, noble Cedric," said Athelstane; "remember it is the true part of a friar to accept refreshment, if you are offered any."

"Farewell, uncle," added Wamba; "and remember *Pax vobiscum.*"

Thus exhorted, Cedric sallied forth upon his expedition; and it was not long ere he had occasion to try the force of that spell which his Jester had recommended as omnipotent. In a low-arched and dusky passage, by which he endeavoured to work his way to the hall of the castle, he was interrupted by a female form.

"*Pax vobiscum!*" said the pseudo friar, and was endeavouring to hurry past, when a soft voice replied, "*Et vobis — quæso, domine reverendissime, pro misericordia vestra.*"

"I am somewhat deaf," replied Cedric, in good Saxon, and at the same time muttered to himself, "a curse on the fool and his *Pax vobiscum!* I have lost my javelin at the first cast."

It was, however, no unusual thing for a priest of those days to be deaf of his Latin ear, and this the person who now addressed Cedric knew full well.

"I pray you of dear love, reverend father," she replied in his own language, "that you will deign to visit with your ghostly comfort a wounded prisoner of this castle, and have such compassion upon him and us as thy holy office teaches — Never shall good deed so highly advantage thy convent."

"Daughter," answered Cedric, much embarrassed — "my time in this castle will not permit me to exercise the duties of mine office — I must presently forth — there is life and death upon my speed."

"Yet, father, let me entreat you by the vow you have taken on you," replied the suppliant, "not to leave the oppressed and endangered without counsel or succour."

"May the fiend fly away with me, and leave me in Ifrin with the souls of Odin and of Thor!" answered Cedric impatiently, and would probably have proceeded in the same tone of total departure from his spiritual character, when the colloquy was interrupted by the harsh voice of Urfried, the old crone of the turret.

"How, minion," said she to the female speaker, "is this the manner in which you requite the kindness which permitted thee to leave thy prison-cell yonder? — Puttest thou the reverend man to use ungracious language to free himself from the importunities of a Jewess?"

"A Jewess!" said Cedric, availing himself of the information to get clear of their interruption, — "Let me pass, woman! stop me not at your peril. I am fresh from my holy office, and would avoid pollution."

"Come this way, father," said the old hag, "thou art a stranger in this castle, and canst not leave it without a guide. Come hither, for I would speak with thee. — And you, daughter of an accursed race, go to the sick man's chamber, and tend him until my return; and wo betide you if you again quit it without my permission!"

Rebecca retreated. Her importunities had prevailed upon Urfried to suffer her to quit the turret, and Urfried had employed her services where she herself would most gladly have paid them, by the bedside of the wounded Ivanhoe. With an understanding awake to their dangerous situation, and prompt to avail herself of each means of safety which occurred, Rebecca had hoped something from the presence of a man of religion, who, she learned from Urfried, had penetrated into this godless castle. She watched the return of the supposed ecclesiastic, with the purpose of addressing him, and interesting him in favour of the prisoners; with what imperfect success the reader has been just acquainted.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Fond wretch! and what canst thou relate,
But deeds of sorrow, shame, and sin?
Thy deeds are proved — thou know'st thy fate —
But come, thy tale — begin — begin.
\- - - - - -
But I have griefs of other kind,
Troubles and sorrows more severe;
Give me to ease my tortured mind,
Lend to my woes a patient ear;
And let me, if I may not find
A friend to help — find one to hear.

Crabbe's Hall of Justice.

When Urfried had with clamours and menaces driven Rebecca back to the apartment from which she had sallied, she proceeded to conduct the unwilling Cedric into a small apartment, the door of which she heedfully secured. Then fetching from a cupboard a stoup of wine and two flagons, she placed them on the table, and said in a tone rather asserting a fact than asking a question, "Thou art Saxon, father — Deny it not," she continued, observing that Cedric hastened not to reply; "the sounds of my native language are sweet to mine ears, though seldom heard save from the tongues of the wretched and degraded serfs on whom the proud Normans impose the meanest drudgery of this dwelling. Thou art a Saxon, father — a Saxon, and, save as thou art a servant of God, a freeman. — Thine accents are sweet in mine ear."

"Do not Saxon priests visit this castle, then?" replied Cedric; "it were, methinks, their duty to comfort the outcast and oppressed children of the soil."

"They come not — or if they come, they better love to revel at the board of their conquerors," answered Urfried, "than to hear the groans of their countrymen — so, at least, report speaks of them — of myself I can say little. This castle, for ten years, has opened to no priest save the debauched Norman chaplain who partook the nightly revels of Front-de-Bœuf, and he has been long gone to render an account of his stewardship. — But thou art a Saxon — a Saxon priest, and I have one question to ask of thee."

"I am a Saxon," answered Cedric, "but unworthy, surely, of the name of priest. Let me begone on my way — I swear I will return, or send one of our fathers more worthy to hear your confession."

"Stay yet a while," said Urfried; "the accents of the voice which thou hearest now will soon be choked with the cold earth, and I would not descend to it like the beast I have lived. But wine must give me strength to tell the horrors of my tale." She poured out a cup, and drank it with a frightful avidity, which seemed desirous of draining the last drop in the goblet. "It stupifies," she said, looking upwards, as she finished her draught, "but it cannot cheer — Partake it, father, if you would hear my tale without sinking down upon the pavement." Cedric would have avoided pledging her in this ominous conviviality, but the sign which

she made to him expressed impatience and despair. He complied with her request, and answered her challenge in a large wine-cup; she then proceeded with her story, as if appeased by his complaisance.

"I was not born," she said, "father, the wretch that thou now seest me. I was free, was happy, was honoured, loved, and was beloved. I am now a slave, miserable and degraded — the sport of my masters' passions while I had yet beauty — the object of their contempt, scorn, and hatred, since it has passed away. — Dost thou wonder, father, that I should hate mankind, and, above all, the race that has wrought this change in me? Can the wrinkled decrepit hag before thee, whose wrath must vent itself in impotent curses, forget she was once the daughter of the noble Thane of Torquilstone, before whose frown a thousand vassals trembled?"

"Thou the daughter of Torquil Wolfganger!" said Cedric, receding as he spoke; "thou — thou — the daughter of that noble Saxon, my father's friend and companion in arms!"

"Thy father's friend!" echoed Urfried; "then Cedric called the Saxon stands before me, for the noble Hereward of Rotherwood had but one son, whose name is well known among his countrymen. But if thou art Cedric of Rotherwood, why this religious dress? — hast thou too despaired of saving thy country, and sought refuge from oppression in the shade of the convent?"

"It matters not who I am," said Cedric; "proceed, unhappy woman, with thy tale of horror and guilt! — Guilt there must be — there is guilt even in thy living to tell it."

"There is — there is," answered the wretched woman, "deep, black, damning guilt — guilt, that lies like a load at my breast — guilt, that all the penitential fires of hereafter cannot cleanse. — Yes, in these halls, stained with the noble and pure blood of my father and my brethren — in these very halls, to have lived the paramour of their murderer, the slave at once and the partaker of his pleasures, was to render every breath which I drew of vital air, a crime and a curse."

"Wretched woman!" exclaimed Cedric. "And while the friends of thy father — while each true Saxon heart, as it breathed a requiem for his soul, and those of his valiant sons, forgot not in their prayers the murdered Ulrica — while all mourned and honoured the dead, thou hast lived to merit our hate and execration — lived to unite thyself with the vile tyrant who murdered thy nearest and dearest — who shed the blood of infancy, rather than a male of the noble house of Torquil Wolfganger should survive — with him hast thou lived to unite thyself, and in the bands of lawless love!"

"In lawless bands, indeed, but not in those of love!" answered the hag; "love will sooner visit the regions of eternal doom, than those unhallowed vaults. — No, with that at least I cannot reproach myself — hatred to Front-de-Bœuf and his race governed my soul most deeply, even in the hour of his guilty endearments."

"You hated him, and yet you lived," replied Cedric; "wretch! was there no poniard — no knife — no bodkin! — Well was it for thee, since thou didst prize such an existence, that the secrets of a Norman castle are like those of the grave. For had I but dreamed of the daughter of Torquil living in foul communion with the murderer of her father, the sword of a true Saxon had found thee out even in the arms of thy paramour!"

"Wouldst thou indeed have done this justice to the name of Torquil?" said Ulrica, for we may now lay aside her assumed name of Urfried; "thou art then the true Saxon report speaks thee! for even within these accursed walls, where, as thou well sayest, guilt shrouds itself in inscrutable mystery, even there has the name of Cedric been sounded — and I, wretched and degraded, have rejoiced to think that there yet breathed an avenger of our unhappy nation. — I also have had my hours of vengeance — I have fomented the quarrels of our foes, heated drunken revelry into murderous broil — I have seen their blood flow — I have heard their dying groans! — Look on me, Cedric — are there not still left on this foul and faded face some traces of the features of Torquil?"

"Ask me not of them, Ulrica," replied Cedric, in a tone of grief mixed with abhorrence; "these traces form such a resemblance as arises from the grave of the dead, when a fiend has animated the lifeless corpse."

"Be it so," answered Ulrica; "yet were these fiendish features the mask of a spirit of light when they were able to set at variance the elder Front-de-Bœuf and his son Reginald! The darkness of hell should hide what followed, but revenge must lift the veil, and darkly intimate what it would raise the dead to speak aloud. Long had the smouldering fire of discord glowed between the tyrant father and his savage son — long had I nursed, in secret, the unnatural hatred — it blazed forth in an hour of drunken wassail, and at his own board fell my oppressor by the hand of his own son — such are the secrets these vaults conceal! — Rend asunder, ye accursed arches," she added, looking up towards the roof, "and bury in your fall all who are conscious of the hideous mystery!"

"And thou, creature of guilt and misery," said Cedric, "what became thy lot on the death of thy ravisher?"

"Guess it, but ask it not. — Here — here I dwelt, till age, premature age, has stamped its ghastly features on my countenance — scorned and insulted where I was once obeyed, and compelled to bound the revenge which had once such ample scope, to the efforts of petty malice of a discontented menial, or the vain or unheeded curses of an impotent hag — condemned to hear from my lonely turret the sounds of revelry in which I once partook, or the shrieks and groans of new victims of oppression."

"Ulrica," said Cedric, "with a heart which still, I fear, regrets the lost reward of thy crimes, as much as the deeds by which thou didst acquire that meed, how didst thou dare to address thee to one who wears this robe? Consider, unhappy woman, what could the sainted Edward himself do for thee, were he here in bodily presence? The royal Confessor was endowed by Heaven with power to cleanse the ulcers of the body, but only God himself can cure the leprosy of the soul."

"Yet, turn not from me, stern prophet of wrath," she exclaimed, "but tell me, if thou canst, in what shall terminate these new and awful feelings that burst on my solitude — Why do deeds, long since done, rise before me in new and irresistible horrors! What fate is prepared beyond the grave for her, to whom God has assigned on earth a lot of such unspeakable wretchedness? Better had I

turn to Woden, Hertha, and Zernebock — to Mista, and to Skogula, the Gods of our yet unbaptized ancestors, than endure the dreadful anticipations which have of late haunted my waking and my sleeping hours!"

"I am no priest," said Cedric, turning with disgust from this miserable picture of guilt, wretchedness, and despair; "I am no priest, though I wear a priest's garment."

"Priest or layman," answered Ulrica, "thou art the first I have seen for twenty years, by whom God was feared or man regarded; and dost thou bid me despair?"

"I bid thee repent," said Cedric. "Seek to prayer and penance, and mayst thou find acceptance! But I cannot, I will not, longer abide with thee."

"Stay yet a moment!" said Ulrica; "leave me not now, son of my father's friend, lest the demon who has governed my life should tempt me to avenge myself of thy hard-hearted scorn — Thinkest thou, if Front-de-Bœuf found Cedric the Saxon in his castle, in such a disguise, that thy life would be a long one? — Already his eye has been upon thee like a falcon on his prey."

"And be it so," said Cedric; "and let him tear me with beak and talons, ere my tongue say one word which my heart doth not warrant. I will die a Saxon — true in word, open in deed — I bid thee avaunt! — touch me not, stay me not! — The sight of Front-de-Bœuf himself is less odious to me than thou, degraded and degenerate as thou art."

"Be it so," said Ulrica, no longer interrupting him; "go thy way, and forget, in the insolence of thy superiority, that the wretch before thee is the daughter of thy father's friend. — Go thy way — if I am separated from mankind by my sufferings — separated from those whose aid I might most justly expect — not less will I be separated from them in my revenge! — No man shall aid me, but the ears of all men shall tingle to hear of the deed which I shall dare to do! — Farewell! — thy scorn has burst the last tie which seemed yet to unite me to my kind — a thought that my woes might claim the compassion of my people."

"Ulrica," said Cedric, softened by this appeal, "hast thou borne up and endured to live through so much guilt and so much misery, and wilt thou now yield to despair when thine eyes are opened to thy crimes, and when repentance were thy fitter occupation?"

"Cedric," answered Ulrica, "thou little knowest the human heart. To act as I have acted, to think as I have thought, requires the maddening love of pleasure, mingled with the keen appetite of revenge, the proud consciousness of power; draughts too intoxicating for the human heart to bear, and yet retain the power to prevent. Their force has long passed away—Age has no pleasures, wrinkles have no influence, revenge itself dies away in impotent curses. Then comes remorse, with all its vipers, mixed with vain regrets for the past, and despair for the future! — Then, when all other strong impulses have ceased, we become like the fiends in hell, who may feel remorse, but never repentance. — But thy words have awakened a new soul within me — Well hast thou said, all is possible for those who dare to die! — Thou hast shewn me the means of revenge, and be assured I will embrace them. It has hitherto shared this wasted bosom with other and with rival passions — henceforward it shall possess me wholly, and thou thyself shalt say, that, whatever was the life of Ulrica, her death well became the daughter of the noble Torquil. There is a force without beleaguering this accursed castle — hasten to lead them to the attack, and when thou shalt see a red flag wave from the turret on the eastern angle of the donjon, press the Normans hard — they will then have enough to do within, and you may win the wall in spite both of bow and mangonel. — Begone, I pray thee — follow thine own fate, and leave me to mine."

Cedric would have inquired farther into the purpose which she thus darkly announced, but the stern voice of Front-de-Bœuf was heard, exclaiming, "Where tarries this loitering priest? By the scallop-shell of Compostella, I will make a martyr of him, if he loiters here to hatch treason among my domestics?"

"What a true prophet," said Ulrica, "is an evil conscience! But heed him not — out and to thy people — Cry your Saxon onslaught, and let them sing their war-song of Rollo, if they will; vengeance shall bear a burden to it."

As she thus spoke, she vanished through a private door, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf entered the apartment. Cedric, with some difficulty, compelled himself to make obeisance to the haughty Baron, who returned his courtesy with a slight inclination of the head.

"Thy penitents, father, have made a long shrift — it is the better for them, since it is the last they shall ever make. Hast thou prepared them for death?"

"I found them," said Cedric, in such French as he could command, "expecting the worst, from the moment they knew into whose power they had fallen."

"How now, Sir Friar," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "thy speech, methinks, smacks of a Saxon tongue?"

"I was bred in the convent of St Withold of Burton," answered Cedric.

"Ay?" said the Baron; "it had been better for thee to have been a Norman, and better for my purpose too; but need has no choice of messengers. That St Withold's of Burton is a howlet's nest worth the harrying. The day will soon come that the frock shall protect the Saxon as little as the mail-coat."

"God's will be done," said Cedric, in a voice tremulous with passion, which Front-de-Bœuf imputed to fear.

"I see," said he, "thou dreamest already that our men-at-arms are in thy refectory and thy ale-vaults. But do me one cast of thy holy office, and, come what list of others, thou shalt sleep as safe in thy cell as a snail within his shell of proof."

"Speak your commands," said Cedric, with suppressed emotion.

"Follow me through this passage, then, that I may dismiss thee by the postern."

And as he strode on his way before the supposed friar, Front-de-Bœuf thus schooled him in the part which he desired he should act.

"Thou seest, Sir Friar, yon herd of Saxon swine, who have dared to environ this castle of Torquilstone — Tell them whatever thou hast a mind of the weakness of this fortalice, or aught else that can detain them before it for twenty-four hours.

Meantime bear thou this scroll — But soft — canst read, Sir Priest?"

"Not a jot I," answered Cedric, "save on my breviary; and then I know the characters, because I have the holy service by heart, praised be Our Lady and St Withold!"

"The fitter messenger for my purpose. — Carry thou this scroll to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin; say it cometh from me, and is written by the Templar Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and that I pray him to send it to York with all the speed man and horse can make. Meanwhile, tell him to doubt nothing, he shall find us whole and sound behind our battlement — Shame on it, that we should be compelled to hide thus by a pack of runagates, who are wont to fly even at the flash of our pennons and the tramp of our horses! I say to thee, priest, contrive some cast of thine art to keep the knaves where they are, until our friends bring up their lances. My vengeance is awake, and she is a falcon that slumbers not till she has been gorged."

"By my patron saint," said Cedric, with deeper energy than became his character, "and by every saint who has lived and died in England, your commands shall be obeyed! Not a Saxon shall stir from before these walls, if I have art and influence to detain them there."

"Ha!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "thou changest thy tone, Sir Priest, and speakest brief and bold, as if thy heart were in the slaughter of the Saxon herd; and yet thou art thyself of kindred to the swine?"

Cedric was no ready practiser of the art of dissimulation, and would at this moment have been much the better of a hint from Wamba's more fertile brain. But necessity, according to the ancient proverb, sharpens invention, and he muttered something under his cowl concerning the men in question being excommunicated outlaws both to church and to kingdom.

"*Despardieux*," answered Front-de-Bœuf, "thou hast spoken the very truth — I forgot that the knaves can strip a fat abbot, as well as if they had been born south of yonder salt channel. Was it not he of St Ives whom they tied to an oak-tree, and compelled to sing a mass while they were rifling his mails and his wallets? — No, by Our Lady — that jest was played by Gualtier of Middleton, one of our own companions-at-arms. But they were Saxons who robbed the chapel at St Bees of cup, candlestick, and chalice, were they not?"

"They were godless men," answered Cedric.

"Ay, and they drank out all the good wine and ale that lay in store for many a secret carousal, when ye pretend ye are but busied with vigils and primes! — Priest, thou art bound to revenge such sacrilege."

"I am indeed bound to vengeance," murmured Cedric; "Saint Withold knows my heart."

Front-de-Bœuf, in the meanwhile, led the way to a postern, where, passing the moat on a single plank, they reached a small barbican, or exterior defence, which communicated with the open field by a well-fortified sallyport.

"Begone, then; and if thou wilt do mine errand, and if thou return hither when it is done, thou shalt see Saxon flesh cheap as ever was hog's in the shambles of Sheffield. And, hark thee, thou seemest to be a jolly confessor — come hither after the onslaught, and thou shalt have as much Malvoisie as would drench thy whole convent."

"Assuredly we shall meet again," answered Cedric.

"Something in hand the whilst," continued the Norman; and, as they parted at the postern door, he thrust into Cedric's reluctant hand a gold byzant, adding "Remember, I will flay off both cowl and skin, if thou failest in thy purpose."

"And full leave will I give thee to do both," answered Cedric, leaving the postern, and striding forth over the free field with a joyful step, "if, when we meet next, I deserve not better at thine hand." — Turning then back towards the castle, he threw the piece of gold towards the donor, exclaiming at the same time, "False Norman, thy money perish with thee!"

Front-de-Bœuf heard the words imperfectly, but the action was suspicious — "Archers," he called to the warders on the outward battlements, "send me an arrow through yon monk's frock! — yet stay," he said, as his retainers were bending their bows, "it avails not — we must thus far trust him since we have no better shift. I think he dares not betray me — at the worst I can but treat with these Saxon dogs whom I have safe in kennel. — Ho! Giles jailer, let them bring Cedric of Rotherwood before me, and the other churl, his companion — him I mean of Coningsburgh — Athelstane there, or what call they him? Their very names are an encumbrance to a Norman knight's mouth, and have, as it were, a flavour of bacon — Give me a stoup of wine, as jolly Prince John said, that I may wash away the relish — place it in the armoury, and thither lead the prisoners."

His commands were obeyed; and, upon entering that Gothic apartment, hung with many spoils won by his own valour and that of his father, he found a flagon of wine on the massive oaken table, and the two Saxon captives under the guard of four of his dependents. Front-de-Bœuf took a long draught of wine, and then addressed his prisoners, — for the manner in which Wamba drew the cap over his face, the change of dress, the gloomy and broken light, and the Baron's imperfect acquaintance with the features of Cedric, (who avoided his Norman neighbours, and seldom stirred beyond his own domains,) prevented him from discovering that the most important of his captives had made his escape.

"Gallants of England," said Front-de-Bœuf, "how relish ye your entertainment at Torquilstone? — Are ye yet aware what your *surquedy* and *outrecuidance*[1] merit for scoffing at the entertainment of a Prince of the House of Anjou? — Have ye forgotten how ye requited the unmerited hospitality of the royal John? By God and St Dennis, an ye pay not the richer ransom, I will hang ye up by the feet from the iron bars of these windows, till the kites and hooded crows have made skeletons of you! — Speak out, ye Saxon dogs — what bid ye for your worthless lives? — How say you, you of Rotherwood?"

"Not a doit I," answered poor Wamba — "and for hanging up by the feet, my brain has been topsy-turvy, they say, ever since the biggin was bound first round my head; so turning me upside down may peradventure restore it again."

"Saint Genevieve!" said Front-de-Bœuf, "what have we got here?"

[1] *Surquedy* and *outrecuidance* — insolence and presumption.

And with the back of his hand he struck Cedric's cap from the head of the Jester, and throwing open his collar, discovered the fatal badge of servitude, the silver collar round his neck.

"Giles—Clement—dogs and varlets!" exclaimed the furious Norman, "what have you brought me here?"

"I think I can tell you," said De Bracy, who just entered the apartment. "This is Cedric's clown, who fought so manful a skirmish with Isaac of York about a question of precedence."

"I shall settle it for them both," replied Front-de-Bœuf; "they shall hang on the same gallows, unless his master and this boar of Coningsburgh will pay well for their lives. Their wealth is the least they can surrender; they must also carry off with them the swarms that are besetting the castle, subscribe a surrender of their pretended immunities, and live under us as serfs and vassals; too happy if, in the new world that is about to begin, we leave them the breath of their nostrils.—Go," said he to two of his attendants, "fetch me the right Cedric hither, and I pardon your error for once; the rather that you but mistook a fool for a Saxon franklin."

"Ay, but," said Wamba, "your chivalrous excellency will find there are more fools than franklins among us."

"What means the knave?" said Front-de-Bœuf, looking towards his followers, who, lingering and loath, faltered forth their belief, that if this were not Cedric who was there in presence, they knew not what was become of him.

"Saints of Heaven!" exclaimed De Bracy, "he must have escaped in the monk's garments!"

"Fiends of hell!" echoed Front-de-Bœuf, "it was then the boar of Rotherwood whom I ushered to the postern, and dismissed with my own hands!—And thou," he said to Wamba, "whose folly could overreach the wisdom of idiots yet more gross than thyself—I will give thee holy orders—I will shave thy crown for thee!—Here, let them tear the scalp from his head, and then pitch him headlong from the battlements—Thy trade is to jest, canst thou jest now?"

"You deal with me better than your word, noble knight," whimpered forth poor Wamba, whose habits of buffoonery were not to be overcome even by the immediate prospect of death; "if you give me the red cap you propose, out of a simple monk you will make a cardinal."

"The poor wretch," said De Bracy, "is resolved to die in his vocation.—Front-de-Bœuf, you shall not slay him. Give him to me to make sport for my Free Companions.—How sayest thou, knave? Wilt thou take heart of grace, and go to the wars with me?"

"Ay, with my master's leave," said Wamba "for, look you, I must not slip collar" (and he touched that which he wore) "without his permission."

"Oh, a Norman saw will soon cut a Saxon collar," said De Bracy.

"Ay, noble sir," said Wamba, "and thence goes the proverb—

> 'Norman saw on English oak,
> On English neck a Norman yoke;
> Norman spoon in English dish,
> And England ruled as Normans wish;
> Blithe world in England never will be more,
> Till England's rid of all the four.'"

"Thou dost well, De Bracy," said Front-de-Bœuf, "to stand there listening to a fool's jargon, when destruction is gaping for us! Seest thou not we are overreached, and that our proposed mode of communicating with our friends without, has been disconcerted by this same motley gentleman thou art so fond to brother? What views have we to expect but instant storm?"

"To the battlements then," said De Bracy? "when didst thou ever see me the graver for the thoughts of battle? Call the Templar yonder, and let him fight but half as well for his life as he has done for his Order—Make thou to the walls thyself with thy huge body—Let me do my poor endeavour in my own way, and I tell thee the Saxon outlaws may as well attempt to scale the clouds, as the castle of Torquilstone; or, if you will treat with the banditti, why not employ the mediation of this worthy franklin, who seems in such deep contemplation of the wine-flagon?—Here, Saxon," he continued, addressing Athelstane, and handing the cup to him, "rinse thy throat with that noble liquor, and rouse up thy soul to say what thou wilt do for thy liberty."

"What a man of mould may," answered Athelstane, "providing it be what a man of manhood ought.—Dismiss me free, with my companions, and I will pay a ransom of a thousand marks."

"And wilt moreover assure us the retreat of that scum of mankind who are swarming around the castle, contrary to God's peace and the king's?" said Front-de-Bœuf.

"In so far as I can," answered Athelstane, "I will withdraw them; and I fear not but that my father Cedric will do his best to assist me."

"We are agreed then," said Front-de-Bœuf—"thou and they are to be set at freedom, and peace is to be on both sides, for payment of a thousand marks. It is a trifling ransom, Saxon, and thou wilt owe gratitude to the moderation which accepts of it in exchange of your persons. But mark, this extends not to the Jew Isaac."

"Nor to the Jew Isaac's daughter," said the Templar, who had now joined them.

"Neither," said Front-de-Bœuf, "belong to this Saxon's company."

"I were unworthy to be called Christian, if they did," replied Athlestane: "deal with the unbelievers as ye list."

"Neither does the ransom include the Lady Rowena," said De Bracy. "It shall never be said I was scared out of a fair prize without striking a blow for it."

"Neither," said Front-de-Bœuf, "does our treaty refer to this wretched Jester, whom I retain, that I may make him an example to every knave who turns jest into earnest."

"The Lady Rowena," answered Athelstane, with the most steady countenance, "is my affianced bride. I will be drawn by wild horses before I consent to part with her. The slave Wamba has this day saved the life of my father Cedric—I will lose mine ere a hair of his head be injured."

"Thy affianced bride!—The Lady Rowena the affianced bride of a vassal like thee?" said De Bracy; "Saxon, thou dreamest that the days of thy seven kingdoms are returned again. I tell thee, the Princes of the House of Anjou confer not their wards on men of such lineage as thine."

"My lineage, proud Norman," replied Athel-

stane, "is drawn from a source more pure and ancient than that of a beggarly Frenchman, whose living is won by selling the blood of the thieves whom he assembles under his paltry standard. Kings were my ancestors, strong in war and wise in council, who every day feasted in their hall more hundreds than thou canst number individual followers whose names have been sung by minstrels, and their laws recorded by Wittenagemotes; whose bones were interred amid the prayers of saints, and over whose tombs minsters have been builded."

"Thou hast it, De Bracy," said Front-de-Bœuf, well pleased with the rebuff which his companion had received; "the Saxon hath hit thee fairly."

"As fairly as a captive can strike," said De Bracy, with apparent carelessness; "for he whose hands are tied should have his tongue at freedom. —But thy glibness of reply, comrade," rejoined he, speaking to Athelstane, "will not win the freedom of the Lady Rowena."

To this Athelstane, who had already made a longer speech than was his custom to do on any topic, however interesting, returned no answer. The conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a menial, who announced that a monk demanded admittance at the postern gate.

"In the name of Saint Bennet, the prince of these bull-beggars," said Front-de-Bœuf, "have we a real monk this time, or another impostor? Search him, slaves—for an ye suffer a second impostor to be palmed upon you, I will have your eyes torn out, and hot coals put into the sockets."

"Let me endure the extremity of your anger, my lord," said Giles, "if this be not a real shaveling. Your squire Jocelyn knows him well, and will vouch him to be brother Ambrose, a monk in attendance upon the Prior of Jorvaulx."

"Admit him," said Front-de-Bœuf; "most likely he brings us news from his jovial master. Surely the devil keeps holiday, and the priests are relieved from duty, that they are strolling thus wildly through the country. Remove these prisoners; and, Saxon, think on what thou hast heard."

"I claim," said Athelstane, "an honourable imprisonment, with due care of my board and of my couch, as becomes my rank, and as is due to one who is in treaty for ransom. Moreover, I hold him that deems himself the best of you, bound to answer to me with his body for this aggression on my freedom. This defiance hath already been sent to thee by thy sewer; thou underliest it, and art bound to answer me—There lies my glove."

"I answer not the challenge of my prisoner," said Front-de-Bœuf; "nor shalt thou, Maurice de Bracy.—Giles," he continued, "hang the franklin's glove upon the tine of yonder branched antlers: there shall it remain until he is a free man. Should he then presume to demand it, or to affirm he was unlawfully made my prisoner, by the belt of Saint Christopher, he will speak to one who hath never refused to meet a foe on foot or on horseback, alone or with his vassals at his back!"

The Saxon prisoners were accordingly removed, just as they introduced the monk Ambrose, who appeared to be in great perturbation.

"This is the real *Deus vobiscum*," said Wamba, as he passed the reverend brother; "the others were but counterfeits."

"Holy Mother!" said the monk, as he addressed the assembled knights, "I am at last safe and in Christian keeping!"

"Safe thou art," replied De Bracy; "and for Christianity, here is the stout Baron Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, whose utter abomination is a Jew; and the good Knight Templar, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose trade is to slay Saracens—If these are not good marks of Christianity, I know no other which they bear about them."

"Ye are friends and allies of our reverend father in God, Aymer, Prior of Jorvaulx," said the monk, without noticing the tone of De Bracy's reply; "ye owe him aid both by knightly faith and holy charity; for what saith the blessed Saint Augustin, in his treatise *De Civitate Dei*——"

"What saith the devil!" interrupted Front-de-Bœuf; "or rather what dost *thou* say, Sir Priest? We have little time to hear texts from the holy fathers."

"*Sancta Maria!*" ejaculated Father Ambrose, "how prompt to ire are these unhallowed laymen! —But be it known to you, brave knights, that certain murderous caitiffs, casting behind them fear of God, and reverence of his church, and not regarding the bull of the holy see, *Si quis, suadente Diabolo*——"

"Brother priest," said the Templar, "all this we know or guess at—tell us plainly, is thy master, the Prior, made prisoner, and to whom?"

"Surely," said Ambrose, "he is in the hands of the men of Belial, infesters of these woods, and contemners of the holy text, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets nought of evil.'"

"Here is a new argument for our swords, sirs," said Front-de-Bœuf, turning to his companions; "and so, instead of reaching us any assistance, the Prior of Jorvaulx requests aid at our hands? a man is well helped of these lazy churchmen when he hath most to do!—But speak out, priest, and say at once, what doth thy master expect from us!"

"So please you," said Ambrose, "violent hands having been imposed on my reverend superior, contrary to the holy ordinance which I did already quote, and the men of Belial having rifled his mails and budgets, and stripped him of two hundred marks of pure refined gold, they do yet demand of him a large sum besides, ere they will suffer him to depart from their uncircumcised hands. Wherefore the reverend father in God prays you, as his dear friends, to rescue him, either by paying down the ransom at which they hold him, or by force of arms, at your best discretion."

"The foul fiend quell the Prior!" said Front-de-Bœuf; "his morning's draught has been a deep one. When did thy master hear of a Norman baron unbuckling his purse to relieve a churchman, whose bags are ten times as weighty as ours?—And how can we do aught by valour to free him, that are cooped up here by ten times our number, and expect an assault every moment?"

"And that was what I was about to tell you," said the monk, "had your hastiness allowed me time. But, God help me, I am old, and these foul onslaughts distract an aged man's brain. Nevertheless, it is of verity that they assemble a camp and raise a bank against the walls of this castle."

"To the battlements!" cried De Bracy, "and let us mark what these knaves do without;" and

so saying, he opened a latticed window which led to a sort of bartisan, or projecting balcony, and immediately called from thence to those in the apartment — "Saint Dennis, but the old monk hath brought true tidings! — They bring forward mantelets and pavisses,[1] and the archers muster on the skirts of the wood like a dark cloud before a hail-storm."

Reginald Front-de-Bœuf also looked out upon the field, and immediately snatched his bugle; and, after winding a long and loud blast, commanded his men to their posts on the walls.

"De Bracy, look to the eastern side, where the walls are lowest — Noble Bois-Guilbert, thy trade hath well taught thee how to attack and defend, look thou to the western side — I myself will take post at the barbican. Yet, do not confine your exertions to any one spot, noble friends! — we must this day be every where, and multiply ourselves, were it possible, so as to carry by our presence succour and relief wherever the attack is hottest. Our numbers are few, but activity and courage may supply that defect, since we have only to do with rascal clowns."

"But, noble knights," exclaimed Father Ambrose, amidst the bustle and confusion occasioned by the preparations for defence, "will none of ye hear the message of the reverend father in God, Aymer, Prior of Jorvaulx? — I beseech thee to hear me, noble Sir Reginald!"

"Go patter thy petitions to Heaven," said the fierce Norman, "for we on earth have no time to listen to them. — Ho! there, Anselm! see that seething pitch and oil are ready to pour on the heads of these audacious traitors — Look that the cross-bow-men lack not bolts[2] — Fling abroad my banner with the old bull's head — the knaves shall soon find with whom they have to do this day!"

"But, noble sir," continued the monk, persevering in his endeavours to draw attention, "consider my vow of obedience, and let me discharge myself of my Superior's errand."

"Away with this prating dotard," said Front-de-Bœuf, "lock him up in the chapel, to tell his beads till the broil be over. It will be a new thing to the saints in Torquilstone to hear aves and paters; they have not been so honoured, I trow, since they were cut out of stone."

"Blaspheme not the holy saints, Sir Reginald," said De Bracy, "we shall have need of their aid to-day before yon rascal rout disband."

"I expect little aid from their hand," said Front-de-Bœuf, "unless we were to hurl them from the battlements on the heads of the villains. There is a huge lumbering Saint Christopher yonder, sufficient to bear a whole company to the earth."

The Templar had in the meantime been looking out on the proceedings of the besiegers, with rather more attention than the brutal Front-de-Bœuf, or his giddy companion.

"By the faith of mine order," he said, "these men approach with more touch of discipline than could have been judged, however they come by it. See ye how dexterously they avail themselves of every cover which a tree or bush affords, and shun exposing themselves to the shot of our cross-bows? I spy neither banner nor pennon among them, and yet will I gage my golden chain, that they are led on by some noble knight or gentleman, skilful in the practice of wars."

"I espy him," said De Bracy; "I see the waving of a knight's crest, and the gleam of his armour. See yon tall man in the black mail, who is busied marshalling the farther troop of the rascaille yeomen — By Saint Dennis, I hold him to be the same whom we called *Le Noir Faineant*, who overthrew thee, Front-de-Bœuf, in the lists at Ashby."

"So much the better," said Front-de-Bœuf, "that he comes here to give me my revenge. Some hilding fellow he must be, who dared not stay to assert his claim to the tourney prize which chance had assigned him. I should in vain have sought for him where knights and nobles seek their foes, and right glad am I he hath here shewn himself among yon villain yeomanry."

The demonstrations of the enemy's immediate approach cut off all farther discourse. Each knight repaired to his post, and at the head of the few followers whom they were able to muster, and who were in numbers inadequate to defend the whole extent of the walls, they awaited with calm determination the threatened assault.

CHAPTER XXIX.

> This wandering race, sever'd from other men,
> Boast yet their intercourse with human arts;
> The seas, the woods, the deserts which they haunt,
> Find them acquainted with their secret treasures;
> And unregarded herbs, and flowers, and blossoms,
> Display undream'd-of powers when gather'd by them.
>
> *The Jew.*

Our history must needs retrograde for the space of a few pages, to inform the reader of certain passages material to his understanding the rest of this important narrative. His own intelligence may indeed have easily anticipated that, when Ivanhoe sunk down, and seemed abandoned by all the world, it was the importunity of Rebecca which prevailed on her father to have the gallant young warrior transported from the lists to the house which for the time the Jews inhabited in the suburbs of Ashby.

It would not have been difficult to have persuaded Isaac to this step in any other circumstances, for his disposition was kind and grateful. But he had also the prejudices and scrupulous timidity of his persecuted people, and those were to be conquered.

"Holy Abraham!" he exclaimed, "he is a good youth, and my heart bleeds to see the gore trickle down his rich embroidered hacqueton, and his corslet of goodly price — but to carry him to our house! — damsel, hast thou well considered? — he is a Christian, and by our law we may not deal with the stranger and Gentile, save for the advantage of our commerce."

"Speak not so, my dear father," replied Rebecca; "we may not indeed mix with them in banquet

[1] Mantelets were temporary and moveable defences formed of planks, under cover of which the assailants advanced to the attack of fortified places of old. Pavisses were a species of large shields covering the whole person, employed on the same occasions.

[2] The bolt was the arrow peculiarly fitted to the cross-bow, as that of the long-bow was called a shaft. Hence the English proverb — "I will either make a shaft or bolt of it," signifying a determination to make one use or other of the thing spoken of.

and in jollity; but in wounds and in misery the Gentile becometh the Jew's brother."

"I would I knew what the Rabbi Jacob Ben Tudela would opine on it," replied Isaac;—"nevertheless, the good youth must not bleed to death. Let Seth and Reuben bear him to Ashby."

"Nay, let them place him in my litter," said Rebecca; "I will mount one of the palfreys."

"That were to expose thee to the gaze of those dogs of Ishmael and of Edom," whispered Isaac, with a suspicious glance towards the crowd of knights and squires. But Rebecca was already busied in carrying her charitable purpose into effect, and listed not what he said, until Isaac, seizing the sleeve of her mantle, again exclaimed, in a hurried voice—"Beard of Aaron!—what if the youth perish!—if he die in our custody, shall we not be held guilty of his blood, and be torn to pieces by the multitude?"

"He will not die, my father," said Rebecca, gently extricating herself from the grasp of Isaac—"he will not die, unless we abandon him; and if so, we are indeed answerable for his blood to God and to man."

"Nay," said Isaac, releasing his hold, "it grieveth me as much to see the drops of his blood, as if they were so many golden byzants from mine own purse; and I well know, that the lessons of Miriam, daughter of the Rabbi Manasses of Byzantium, whose soul is in Paradise, have made thee skilful in the art of healing, and that thou knowest the craft of herbs, and the force of elixirs. Therefore, do as thy mind giveth thee—thou art a good damsel, a blessing, and a crown, and a song of rejoicing unto me and unto my house, and unto the people of my fathers."

The apprehensions of Isaac, however, were not ill founded; and the generous and grateful benevolence of his daughter exposed her, on her return to Ashby, to the unhallowed gaze of Brian de Bois-Guilbert. The Templar twice passed and repassed them on the road, fixing his bold and ardent look on the beautiful Jewess; and we have already seen the consequences of the admiration which her charms excited, when accident threw her into the power of that unprincipled voluptuary.

Rebecca lost no time in causing the patient to be transported to their temporary dwelling, and proceeded with her own hands to examine and to bind up his wounds. The youngest reader of romances and romantic ballads, must recollect how often the females, during the dark ages, as they are called, were initiated into the mysteries of surgery, and how frequently the gallant knight submitted the wounds of his person to her cure, whose eyes had yet more deeply penetrated his heart.

But the Jews, both male and female, possessed and practised the medical science in all its branches, and the monarchs and powerful barons of the time frequently committed themselves to the charge of some experienced sage among this despised people, when wounded or in sickness. The aid of the Jewish physicians was not the less eagerly sought after, though a general belief prevailed among the Christians, that the Jewish Rabbins were deeply acquainted with the occult sciences, and particularly with the cabalistical art, which had its name and origin in the studies of the sages of Israel. Neither did the Rabbins disown such acquaintance with supernatural arts, which added nothing (for what could add aught?) to the hatred with which the nation was regarded, while it diminished the contempt with which that malevolence was mingled. A Jewish magician might be the subject of equal abhorrence with a Jewish usurer, but he could not be equally despised. It is besides probable, considering the wonderful cures they are said to have performed, that the Jews possessed some secrets of the healing art peculiar to themselves, and which, with the exclusive spirit arising out of their condition, they took great care to conceal from the Christians amongst whom they dwelt.

The beautiful Rebecca had been heedfully brought up in all the knowledge proper to her nation, which her apt and powerful mind had retained, arranged, and enlarged, in the course of a progress beyond her years, her sex, and even the age in which she lived. Her knowledge of medicine and of the healing art had been acquired under an aged Jewess, the daughter of one of their most celebrated doctors, who loved Rebecca as her own child, and was believed to have communicated to her secrets, which had been left to herself by her sage father at the same time, and under the same circumstances. The fate of Miriam had indeed been to fall a sacrifice to the fanaticism of the times; but her secrets had survived in her apt pupil.

Rebecca, thus endowed with knowledge as with beauty, was universally revered and admired by her own tribe, who almost regarded her as one of those gifted women mentioned in the sacred history. Her father himself, out of reverence for her talents, which involuntarily mingled itself with his unbounded affection, permitted the maiden a greater liberty than was usually indulged to those of her sex by the habits of her people, and was, as we have just seen, frequently guided by her opinion, even in preference to his own.

When Ivanhoe reached the habitation of Isaac, he was still in a state of unconsciousness, owing to the profuse loss of blood which had taken place during his exertions in the lists. Rebecca examined the wound, and having applied to it such vulnerary remedies as her art prescribed, informed her father that if fever could be averted, of which the great bleeding rendered her little apprehensive, and if the healing balsam of Miriam retained its virtue, there was nothing to fear for his guest's life, and that he might with safety travel to York with them on the ensuing day. Isaac looked a little blank at this annunciation. His charity would willingly have stopped short at Ashby, or at most would have left the wounded Christian to be tended in the house where he was residing at present, with an assurance to the Hebrew to whom it belonged, that all expenses should be duly discharged. To this, however, Rebecca opposed many reasons, of which we shall only mention two that had peculiar weight with Isaac. The one was, that she would on no account put the phial of precious balsam into the hands of another physician even of her own tribe, lest that valuable mystery should be discovered; the other, that this wounded knight, Wilfred of Ivanhoe, was an intimate favourite of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and that, in case the monarch should return, Isaac, who had supplied his brother John with treasure to prosecute his rebellious purposes, would stand in no small need of a powerful protector who enjoyed Richard's favour.

"Thou art speaking but sooth, Rebecca," said

Isaac, giving way to these weighty arguments—"it were an offending of Heaven to betray the secrets of the blessed Miriam; for the good which Heaven giveth, is not rashly to be squandered upon others, whether it be talents of gold and shekels of silver, or whether it be the secret mysteries of a wise physician—assuredly they should be preserved to those to whom Providence hath vouchsafed them. And him whom the Nazarenes of England call the Lion's Heart, assuredly it were better for me to fall into the hands of a strong lion of Idumea than into his, if he shall have got assurance of my dealings with his brother. Wherefore I will lend ear to thy counsel, and this youth shall journey with us unto York, and our house shall be as a home to him until his wounds shall be healed. And if he of the Lion Heart shall return to the land, as is now noised abroad, then shall this Wilfred of Ivanhoe be unto me as a wall of defence, when the king's displeasure shall burn high against thy father. And if he doth not return, this Wilfred may natheless repay us our charges when he shall gain treasure by the strength of his spear and of his sword, even as he did yesterday and this day also. For the youth is a good youth, and keepeth the day which he appointeth, and restoreth that which he borroweth, and succoureth the Israelite, even the child of my father's house, when he is encompassed by strong thieves and sons of Belial."

It was not until evening was nearly closed that Ivanhoe was restored to consciousness of his situation. He awoke from a broken slumber, under the confused impressions which are naturally attendant on the recovery from a state of insensibility. He was unable for some time to recall exactly to memory the circumstances which had preceded his fall in the lists, or to make out any connected chain of the events in which he had been engaged upon the yesterday. A sense of wounds and injury, joined to great weakness and exhaustion, was mingled with the recollection of blows dealt and received, of steeds rushing upon each other, overthrowing and overthrown—of shouts and clashing of arms, and all the heady tumult of a confused fight. An effort to draw aside the curtain of his couch was in some degree successful, although rendered difficult by the pain of his wound.

To his great surprise he found himself in a room magnificently furnished, but having cushions instead of chairs to rest upon, and in other respects partaking so much of Oriental costume, that he began to doubt whether he had not, during his sleep, been transported back again to the land of Palestine. The impression was increased, when, the tapestry being drawn aside, a female form, dressed in a rich habit, which partook more of the Eastern taste than that of Europe, glided through the door which it concealed, and was followed by a swarthy domestic.

As the wounded knight was about to address this fair apparition, she imposed silence by placing her slender finger upon her ruby lips, while the attendant, approaching him, proceeded to uncover Ivanhoe's side, and the lovely Jewess satisfied herself that the bandage was in its place, and the wound doing well. She performed her task with a graceful and dignified simplicity and modesty, which might, even in more civilized days, have served to redeem it from whatever might seem repugnant to female delicacy. The idea of so young and beautiful a person engaged in attendance on a sick-bed, or in dressing the wound of one of a different sex, was melted away and lost in that of a beneficent being contributing her effectual aid to relieve pain, and to avert the stroke of death. Rebecca's few and brief directions were given in the Hebrew language to the old domestic; and he, who had been frequently her assistant in similar cases, obeyed them without reply.

The accents of an unknown tongue, however harsh they might have sounded when uttered by another, had, coming from the beautiful Rebecca, the romantic and pleasing effect which fancy ascribes to the charms pronounced by some beneficent fairy, unintelligible, indeed, to the ear, but, from the sweetness of utterance, and benignity of aspect, which accompanied them, touching and affecting to the heart. Without making an attempt at farther question, Ivanhoe suffered them in silence to take the measures they thought most proper for his recovery; and it was not until these were completed, and his kind physician about to retire, that his curiosity could no longer be suppressed.—"Gentle maiden," he began in the Arabian tongue, with which his Eastern travels had rendered him familiar, and which he thought most likely to be understood by the turban'd and caftan'd damsel who stood before him—"I pray you, gentle maiden, of your courtesy——"

But here he was interrupted by his fair physician, a smile which she could scarce suppress dimpling for an instant a face, whose general expression was that of contemplative melancholy. "I am of England, Sir Knight, and speak the English tongue, although my dress and my lineage belong to another climate."

"Noble damsel,"—again the Knight of Ivanhoe began; and again Rebecca hastened to interrupt him.

"Bestow not on me, Sir Knight," she said, "the epithet of noble. It is well you should speedily know that your handmaiden is a poor Jewess, the daughter of that Isaac of York, to whom you were so lately a good and kind lord. It well becomes him, and those of his household, to render to you such careful tendance as your present state necessarily demands."

I know not whether the fair Rowena would have been altogether satisfied with the species of emotion with which her devoted knight had hitherto gazed on the beautiful features, and fair form, and lustrous eyes, of the lovely Rebecca; eyes whose brilliancy was shaded, and, as it were, mellowed, by the fringe of her long silken eye-lashes, and which a minstrel would have compared to the evening star darting its rays through a bower of jessamine. But Ivanhoe was too good a Catholic to retain the same class of feelings towards a Jewess. This Rebecca had foreseen, and for this very purpose she had hastened to mention her father's name and lineage; yet—for the fair and wise daughter of Isaac was not without a touch of female weakness—she could not but sigh internally when the glance of respectful admiration, not altogether unmixed with tenderness, with which Ivanhoe had hitherto regarded his unknown benefactress, was exchanged at once for a manner cold, composed, and collected, and fraught with no deeper feeling than that which expressed a grateful sense of courtesy received from an unexpected quarter, and from one of an inferior race.

It was not that Ivanhoe's former carriage expressed more than that general devotional homage which youth always pays to beauty; yet it was mortifying that one word should operate as a spell to remove poor Rebecca, who could not be supposed altogether ignorant of her title to such homage, into a degraded class, to whom it could not be honourably rendered.

But the gentleness and candour of Rebecca's nature imputed no fault to Ivanhoe for sharing in the universal prejudices of his age and religion. On the contrary, the fair Jewess, though sensible her patient now regarded her as one of a race of reprobation, with whom it was disgraceful to hold any beyond the most necessary intercourse, ceased not to pay the same patient and devoted attention to his safety and convalescence. She informed him of the necessity they were under of removing to York, and of her father's resolution to transport him thither, and tend him in his own house until his health should be restored. Ivanhoe expressed great repugnance to this plan, which he grounded on unwillingness to give farther trouble to his benefactors.

"Was there not," he said, "in Ashby, or near it, some Saxon franklin, or even some wealthy peasant, who would endure the burden of a wounded countryman's residence with him until he shoud be again able to bear his armour?—Was there no convent of Saxon endowment, where he could be received?—Or could he not be transported as far as Burton, where he was sure to find hospitality with Waltheoff the Abbot of St Withold's, to whom he was related?"

"Any, the worst of these harbourages," said Rebecca, with a melancholy smile, "would unquestionably be more fitting for your residence than the abode of a despised Jew; yet, Sir Knight, unless you would dismiss your physician, you cannot change your lodging. Our nation, as you well know, can cure wounds, though we deal not in inflicting them; and in our family, in particular, are secrets which have been handed down since the days of Solomon, and of which you have already experienced the advantages. No Nazarene—I crave your forgiveness, Sir Knight—no Christian leech, within the four seas of Britain, could enable you to bear your corslet within a month."

"And how soon wilt *thou* enable me to brook it?" said Ivanhoe, impatiently.

"Within eight days, if thou wilt be patient and conformable to my directions," replied Rebecca.

"By our Blessed Lady," said Wilfred, "if it be not a sin to name her here, it is no time for me or any true knight to be bedridden; and if thou accomplish thy promise, maiden, I will pay thee with my casque full of crowns, come by them as I may."

"I will accomplish my promise," said Rebecca, "and thou shalt bear thine armour on the eighth day from hence, if thou wilt grant me but one boon in the stead of the silver thou dost promise me."

"If it be within my power, and such as a true Christian knight may yield to one of thy people," replied Ivanhoe, "I will grant thy boon blithely and thankfully."

"Nay," answered Rebecca, "I will but pray of thee to believe henceforward that a Jew may do good service to a Christian, without desiring other guerdon than the blessing of the Great Father, who made both Jew and Gentile."

"It were sin to doubt it, maiden," replied Ivanhoe; "and I repose myself on thy skill without farther scruple or question, well trusting you will enable me to bear my corslet on the eighth day. And now, my kind leech, let me inquire of the news abroad. What of the noble Saxon Cedric and his household?—what of the lovely lady——" He stopt, as if unwilling to speak Rowena's name in the house of a Jew—"Of her, I mean, who was named Queen of the tournament?"

"And who was selected by you, Sir Knight, to hold that dignity, with judgment which was admired as much as your valour," replied Rebecca.

The blood which Ivanhoe had lost did not prevent a flush from crossing his cheek, feeling that he had incautiously betrayed his deep interest in Rowena by the awkward attempt he had made to conceal it.

"It was less of her I would speak," said he, "than of Prince John; and I would fain know somewhat of a faithful squire, and why he now attends me not?"

"Let me use my authority as a leech," answered Rebecca, "and enjoin you to keep silence, and avoid agitating reflections, whilst I apprize you of what you desire to know. Prince John hath broken off the tournament, and set forward in all haste towards York, with the nobles, knights, and churchmen of his party, after collecting such sums as they could wring, by fair means or foul, from those who are esteemed the wealthy of the land. It is said he designs to assume his brother's crown."

"Not without a blow struck in his defence," said Ivanhoe, raising himself upon the couch, "if there were but one true subject in England. I will fight for Richard's title with the best of them—ay, one to two, in his just quarrel!"

"But that you may be able to do so," said Rebecca, touching his shoulder with her hand, "you must now observe my directions and remain quiet."

"True, maiden," said Ivanhoe, "as quiet as these disquieted times will permit—And of Cedric and his household?"

"His steward came but brief while since," said the Jewess, "panting with haste, to ask my father for certain moneys, the price of wool the growth of Cedric's flocks, and from him I learned that Cedric and Athelstane of Coningsburgh had left Prince John's lodging in high displeasure, and were about to set forth on their return homeward."

"Went any lady with them to the banquet?" said Wilfred.

"The Lady Rowena," said Rebecca, answering the question with more precision than it had been asked—"The Lady Rowena went not to the Prince's feast, and, as the steward reported to us, she is now on her journey back to Rotherwood, with her guardian Cedric. And touching your faithful squire Gurth——"

"Ha!" exclaimed the knight, "knowest thou his name?—But thou dost," he immediately added, "and well thou mayest, for it was from thy hand, and, as I am now convinced, from thine own generosity of spirit, that he received but yesterday a hundred zecchins."

"Speak not of that," said Rebecca, blushing

deeply; "I see how easy it is for the tongue to betray what the heart would gladly conceal."

"But this sum of gold," said Ivanhoe, gravely, "my honour is concerned in repaying it to your father."

"Let it be as thou wilt," said Rebecca, "when eight days have passed away; but think not, and speak not now, of aught that may retard thy recovery."

"Be it so, kind maiden," said Ivanhoe; "It were most ungrateful to dispute thy commands. But one word of the fate of poor Gurth, and I have done with questioning thee."

"I grieve to tell thee, Sir Knight," answered the Jewess, "that he is in custody, by the order of Cedric."— And then observing the distress which her communication gave to Wilfred, she instantly added, "But the steward Oswald said, that if nothing occurred to renew his master's displeasure against him, he was sure that Cedric would pardon Gurth, a faithful serf, and one who stood high in favour, and who had but committed this error out of the love that he bore to Cedric's son. And he said, moreover, that he and his comrades, and especially Wamba the Jester, were resolved to warn Gurth to make his escape by the way, in case Cedric's ire against him could not be mitigated."

"Would to God they may keep their purpose!" said Ivanhoe; "but it seems as if I were destined to bring ruin on whomsoever hath shewn kindness to me. My king, by whom I was honoured and distinguished, thou seest that the brother most indebted to him is raising his arms to grasp his crown;—my regard hath brought restraint and trouble on the fairest of her sex;—and now my father in his mood may slay this poor bondsman, but for his love and loyal service to me — Thou seest, maiden, what an ill-fated wretch thou dost labour to assist; be wise, and let me go, ere the misfortunes which track my footsteps like slot-hounds, shall involve thee also in their pursuit."

"Nay," said Rebecca, "thy weakness and thy grief, Sir Knight, make thee miscalculate the purposes of Heaven. Thou hast been restored to thy country when it most needed the assistance of a strong hand and a true heart, and thou hast humbled the pride of thine enemies and those of thy king, when their horn was most highly exalted; and for the evil which thou sustained, seest thou not that Heaven has raised thee a helper and a physician, even among the most despised of the land?— Therefore, be of good courage, and trust that thou art preserved for some marvel which thine arm shall work before this people. Adieu— and having taken the medicine which I shall send thee by the hand of Reuben, compose thyself again to rest, that thou mayest be the more able to endure the journey on the succeeding day."

Ivanhoe was convinced by the reasoning, and obeyed the directions of Rebecca. The draught which Reuben administered was of a sedative and narcotic quality, and secured the patient sound and undisturbed slumbers. In the morning his kind physician found him entirely free from feverish symptoms, and fit to undergo the fatigue of a journey.

He was deposited in the horse-litter which had brought him from the lists, and every precaution taken for his travelling with ease. In one circumstance only even the entreaties of Rebecca were unable to secure sufficient attention to the accommodation of the wounded knight. Isaac, like the enriched traveller of Juvenal's tenth satire, had ever the fear of robbery before his eyes, conscious that he would be alike accounted fair game by the marauding Norman noble, and by the Saxon outlaw. He therefore journeyed at a great rate, and made short halts, and shorter repasts, so that he passed by Cedric and Athelstane who had several hours the start of him, but who had been delayed by their protracted feasting at the convent of Saint Withold's. Yet such was the virtue of Miriam's balsam, or such the strength of Ivanhoe's constitution, that he did not sustain from the hurried journey that inconvenience which his kind physician had apprehended.

In another point of view, however, the Jew's haste proved somewhat more than good speed. The rapidity with which he insisted on travelling, bred several disputes between him and the party whom he had hired to attend him as a guard. These men were Saxons, and not free by any means from the national love of ease and good living which the Normans stigmatized as laziness and gluttony. Reversing Shylock's position, they had accepted the employment in hopes of feeding upon the wealthy Jew, and were very much displeased when they found themselves disappointed, by the rapidity with which he insisted on their proceeding. They remonstrated also upon the risk of damage to their horses by these forced marches. Finally, there arose betwixt Isaac and his satellites a deadly feud, concerning the quantity of wine and ale to be allowed for consumption at each meal. And thus it happened, that when the alarm of danger approached, and that which Isaac feared was likely to come upon him, he was deserted by the discontented mercenaries on whose protection he had relied, without using the means necessary to secure their attachment.

In this deplorable condition the Jew, with his daughter and her wounded patient, were found by Cedric, as has already been noticed, and soon afterwards fell into the power of De Bracy and his confederates. Little notice was at first taken of the horse-litter, and it might have remained behind but for the curiosity of De Bracy, who looked into it under the impression that it might contain the object of his enterprise, for Rowena had not unveiled herself. But De Bracy's astonishment was considerable, when he discovered that the litter contained a wounded man, who, conceiving himself to have fallen into the power of Saxon outlaws, with whom his name might be a protection for himself and his friends, frankly avowed himself to be Wilfred of Ivanhoe.

The ideas of chivalrous honour, which, amidst his wildness and levity, never utterly abandoned De Bracy, prohibited him from doing the knight any injury in his defenceless condition, and equally interdicted his betraying him to Front-de-Bœuf, who would have had no scruples to put to death, under any circumstances, the rival claimant of the fief of Ivanhoe. On the other hand, to liberate a suitor preferred by the Lady Rowena, as the events of the tournament, and indeed Wilfred's previous banishment from his father's house, had made matter of notoriety, was a pitch far above the flight of De Bracy's generosity. A middle course betwixt good and evil was all which he found

himself capable of adopting, and he commanded two of his own squires to keep close by the litter, and to suffer no one to approach it. If questioned, they were directed by their master to say, that the empty litter of the Lady Rowena was employed to transport one of their comrades who had been wounded in the scuffle. On arriving at Torquilstone, while the Knight Templar and the lord of that castle were each intent upon their own schemes, the one on the Jew's treasure, and the other on his daughter, De Bracy's squires conveyed Ivanhoe, still under the name of a wounded comrade, to a distant apartment. This explanation was accordingly returned by these men to Front-de-Bœuf, when he questioned them why they did not make for the battlements upon the alarm.

"A wounded companion!" he replied in great wrath and astonishment. "No wonder that churls and yeomen wax so presumptuous as even to lay leauger before castles, and that clowns and swineherds send defiances to nobles, since men-at-arms have turned sick men's nurses, and Free Companions are grown keepers of dying folk's curtains, when the castle is about to be assailed.—To the battlements, ye loitering villains!" he exclaimed, raising his stentorian voice till the arches around rung again, "to the battlements, or I will splinter your bones with this truncheon!"

The men sulkily replied, "that they desired nothing better than to go to the battlements, providing Front-de-Bœuf would bear them out with their master, who had commanded them to tend the dying man."

"The dying man, knaves!" rejoined the Baron; "I promise thee we shall all be dying men an we stand not to it the more stoutly. But I will relieve the guard upon this caitiff companion of yours.—Here, Urfried—hag—fiend of a Saxon witch—hearest me not?—tend me this bed-ridden fellow, since he must needs be tended, whilst these knaves use their weapons.—Here be two arblasts, comrades, with windlaces and quarrells[1]—to the barbican with you, and see you drive each bolt through a Saxon brain."

The men, who, like most of their description, were fond of enterprise, and detested inaction, went joyfully to the scene of danger as they were commanded, and thus the charge of Ivanhoe was transferred to Urfried, or Ulrica. But she, whose brain was burning with remembrance of injuries and with hopes of vengeance, was readily induced to devolve upon Rebecca the care of her patient.

CHAPTER XXX.

Ascend the watch-tower yonder, valiant soldier,
Look on the field, and say how goes the battle.
SCHILLER'S *Maid of Orleans.*

A MOMENT of peril is often also a moment of open-hearted kindness and affection. We are thrown off our guard by the general agitation of our feelings, and betray the intensity of those, which, at more tranquil periods, our prudence at least conceals, if it cannot altogether suppress them. In finding herself once more by the side of Ivanhoe, Rebecca was astonished at the keen sensation of pleasure which she experienced, even at a time when all around them both was danger, if not despair. As she felt his pulse, and inquired after his health, there was a softness in her touch and in her accents, implying a kinder interest than she would herself have been pleased to have voluntarily expressed. Her voice faltered and her hand trembled, and it was only the cold question of Ivanhoe, "Is it you, gentle maiden?" which recalled her to herself, and reminded her the sensations which she felt were not and could not be mutual. A sigh escaped, but it was scarce audible; and the questions which she asked the knight concerning his state of health were put in the tone of calm friendship. Ivanhoe answered her hastily that he was, in point of health, as well, and better than he could have expected—"Thanks," he said, "dear Rebecca, to thy helpful skill."

"He calls me *dear* Rebecca," said the maiden to herself, "but it is in the cold and careless tone which ill suits the word. His war-horse—his hunting hound, are dearer to him than the despised Jewess!"

"My mind, gentle maiden," continued Ivanhoe, "is more disturbed by anxiety, than my body with pain. From the speeches of these men who were my warders just now, I learn that I am a prisoner, and, if I judge aright of the loud hoarse voice which even now despatched them hence on some military duty, I am in the castle of Front-de-Bœuf—If so, how will this end, or how can I protect Rowena and my father?"

"He names not the Jew or Jewess," said Rebecca, internally "yet what is our portion in him, and how justly am I punished by Heaven for letting my thoughts dwell upon him!" She hastened after this brief self-accusation to give Ivanhoe what information she could; but it amounted only to this, that the Templar Bois-Guilbert, and the Baron Front-de-Bœuf, were commanders within the castle; that it was beleaguered from without, but by whom she knew not. She added, that there was a Christian priest within the castle who might be possessed of more information.

"A Christian priest!" said the knight, joyfully; "fetch him hither, Rebecca, if thou canst—say a sick man desires his ghostly counsel—say what thou wilt, but bring him—something I must do or attempt, but how can I determine until I know how matters stand without?"

Rebecca, in compliance with the wishes of Ivanhoe, made that attempt to bring Cedric into the wounded Knight's chamber, which was defeated as we have already seen by the interference of Urfried, who had been also on the watch to intercept the supposed monk. Rebecca retired to communicate to Ivanhoe the result of her errand.

They had not much leisure to regret the failure of this source of intelligence, or to contrive by what means it might be supplied; for the noise within the castle, occasioned by the defensive preparations, which had been considerable for some time, now increased into tenfold bustle and clamour. The heavy, yet hasty step of the men-at-arms, traversed the battlements, or resounded on the narrow and winding passages and stairs which led to the various bartisans and points of defence. The voices of the knights were heard, animating their followers, or directing means of defence, while their commands

[1] The arblast was a cross-bow, the windlace the machine used in bending that weapon, and the quarrell, so called from its square or diamond-shaped head, was the bolt adapted to it.

were often drowned in the clashing of armour, or the clamorous shouts of those whom they addressed. Tremendous as these sounds were, and yet more terrible from the awful event which they presaged, there was a sublimity mixed with them, which Rebecca's high-toned mind could feel even in that moment of terror. Her eye kindled, although the blood fled from her cheeks; and there was a strong mixture of fear, and of a thrilling sense of the sublime, as she repeated, half whispering to herself half speaking to her companion, the sacred text, —"The quiver rattleth—the glittering spear and the shield—the noise of the captains and the shouting!"

But Ivanhoe was like the war-horse of that sublime passage, glowing with impatience at his inactivity, and with his ardent desire to mingle in the affray of which these sounds were the introduction. "If I could but drag myself," he said, "to yonder window, that I might see how this brave game is like to go—If I had but bow to shoot a shaft, or battle-axe to strike were it but a single blow for our deliverance!—It is in vain—it is in vain—I am alike nerveless and weaponless!"

"Fret not thyself, noble knight," answered Rebecca, "the sounds have ceased of a sudden—it may be they join not battle."

"Thou knowest nought of it," said Wilfred, impatiently; "this dead pause only shews that the men are at their posts on the walls, and expecting an instant attack; what we have heard was but the distant muttering of the storm—it will burst anon in all its fury.—Could I but reach yonder window!"

"Thou wilt but injure thyself by the attempt, noble knight," replied his attendant. Observing his extreme solicitude, she firmly added, "I myself will stand at the lattice, and describe to you as I can what passes without."

"You must not—you shall not!" exclaimed Ivanhoe; "each lattice, each aperture, will be soon a mark for the archers; some random shaft——"

"It shall be welcome!" murmured Rebecca, as with firm pace she ascended two or three steps, which led to the window of which they spoke.

"Rebecca, dear Rebecca!" exclaimed Ivanhoe, "this is no maiden's pastime—do not expose thyself to wounds and death, and render me for ever miserable for having given the occasion; at least, cover thyself with yonder ancient buckler, and shew as little of your person at the lattice as may be."

Following with wonderful promptitude the directions of Ivanhoe, and availing herself of the protection of the large ancient shield, which she placed against the lower part of the window, Rebecca, with tolerable security to herself, could witness part of what was passing without the castle, and report to Ivanhoe the preparations which the assailants were making for the storm. Indeed the situation which she thus obtained was peculiarly favourable for this purpose, because, being placed on an angle of the main building, Rebecca could not only see what passed beyond the precincts of the castle, but also commanded a view of the out-work likely to be the first object of the meditated assault. It was an exertior fortification of no great height or strength, intended to protect the postern-gate, through which Cedric had been recently dismissed by Front-de-Bœuf. The castle moat divided this species of barbican from the rest of the fortress, so that, in case of its being taken, it was easy to cut off the communication with the main building, by withdrawing the temporary bridge. In the out-work was a sallyport corresponding to the postern of the castle, and the whole was surrounded by a strong palisade. Rebecca could observe, from the number of men placed for the defence of this post, that the besieged entertained apprehensions for its safety; and from the mustering of the assailants in a direction nearly opposite to the outwork, it seemed no less plain that it had been selected as a vulnerable point of attack.

These appearances she hastily communicated to Ivanhoe, and added, "The skirts of the wood seem lined with archers, although only a few are advanced from its dark shadow."

"Under what banner?" asked Ivanhoe.

"Under no ensign of war which I can observe," answered Rebecca.

"A singular novelty," muttered the knight, "to advance to storm such a castle without pennon or banner displayed!—Seest thou who they be that act as leaders?"

"A knight, clad in sable armour, is the most conspicuous," said the Jewess; "he alone is armed from head to heel, and seems to assume the direction of all around him."

"What device does he bear on his shield?" replied Ivanhoe.

"Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on the black shield." [1]

"A fetterlock and shacklebolt azure," said Ivanhoe; "I know not who may bear the device, but well I ween it might now be mine own. Canst thou not see the motto?"

"Scarce the device itself at this distance," replied Rebecca; "but when the sun glances fair upon his shield, it shews as I tell you."

"Seem there no other leaders?" exclaimed the anxious inquirer.

"None of mark and distinction that I can behold from this station," said Rebecca; "but, doubtless, the other side of the castle is also assailed. They appear even now preparing to advance—God of Zion protect us!—What a dreadful sight!—Those who advance first bear huge shields, and defences made of plank; the others follow, bending their bows as they come on.—They raise their bows!—God of Moses, forgive the creatures thou hast made!"

Her description was here suddenly interrupted by the signal for assault, which was given by the blast of a shrill bugle, and at once answered by a flourish of the Norman trumpets from the battlements, which, mingled with the deep and hollow clang of the nakers, (a species of kettle-drum,) retorted in notes of defiance the challenge of the enemy. The shouts of both parties augmented the fearful din, the assailants crying, "Saint George for merry England!" and the Normans answering them with cries of "*En avant De Bracy!—Beau-seant! Beau-seant!—Front-de-Bœuf à la rescousse!*" according to the war-cries of their different commanders.

It was not, however, by clamour that the contest was to be decided, and the desperate efforts of the assailants were met by an equally vigorous defence

[1] See Note G. *Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on the black shield.*

on the part of the besieged. The archers, trained by their woodland pastimes to the most effective use of the long-bow, shot, to use the appropriate phrase of the time, so "wholly together," that no point at which a defender could shew the least part of his person, escaped their cloth-yard shafts. By this heavy discharge, which continued as thick and sharp as hail, while, notwithstanding, every arrow had its individual aim, and flew by scores together against each embrasure and opening in the parapets, as well as at every window where a defender either occasionally had post, or might be suspected to be stationed,—by this sustained discharge, two or three of the garrison were slain, and several others wounded. But, confident in their armour of proof, and in the cover which their situation afforded, the followers of Front-de-Bœuf, and his allies, shewed an obstinacy in defence proportioned to the fury of the attack, and replied with the discharge of their large cross-bows, as well as with their long-bows, slings, and other missile weapons, to the close and continued shower of arrows; and, as the assailants were necessarily but indifferently protected, did considerably more damage than they received at their hand. The whizzing of shafts and of missiles, on both sides, was only interrupted by the shouts which arose when either side inflicted or sustained some notable loss.

"And I must lie here like a bedridden monk," exclaimed Ivanhoe, "while the game that gives me freedom or death is played out by the hand of others!—Look from the window once again, kind maiden, but beware that you are not marked by the archers beneath—Look out once more, and tell me if they yet advance to the storm."

With patient courage, strengthened by the interval which she had employed in mental devotion, Rebecca again took post at the lattice, sheltering herself, however, so as not to be visible from beneath.

"What dost thou see, Rebecca?" again demanded the wounded knight.

"Nothing but the cloud of arrows flying so thick as to dazzle mine eyes, and to hide the bowmen who shoot them."

"That cannot endure," said Ivanhoe; "if they press not right on to carry the castle by pure force of arms, the archery may avail but little against stone walls and bulwarks. Look for the Knight of the Fetterlock, fair Rebecca, and see how he bears himself; for as the leader is, so will his followers be."

"I see him not," said Rebecca.

"Foul craven!" exclaimed Ivanhoe; "does he blench from the helm when the wind blows highest?"

"He blenches not! he blenches not!" said Rebecca, "I see him now; he leads a body of men close under the outer barrier of the barbican.[1]—They pull down the piles and palisades; they hew down the barriers with axes.—His high black plume floats abroad over the throng, like a raven over the field of the slain.—They have made a breach in the barriers—they rush in—they are thrust back!—Front-de-Bœuf heads the defenders; I see his gigantic form above the press. They throng again to the breach, and the pass is disputed hand to hand, and man to man. God of Jacob! it is the meeting of two fierce tides—the conflict of two oceans moved by adverse winds!"

She turned her head from the lattice, as if unable longer to endure a sight so terrible.

"Look forth again, Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, mistaking the cause of her retiring; "the archery must in some degree have ceased, since they are now fighting hand to hand.—Look again, there is now less danger."

Rebecca again looked forth, and almost immediately exclaimed, "Holy prophets of the law! Front-de-Bœuf and the Black Knight fight hand to hand on the breach, amid the roar of their followers, who watch the progress of the strife—Heaven strike with the cause of the oppressed and of the captive!" She then uttered a loud shriek, and exclaimed, "He is down!—he is down!"

"Who is down?" cried Ivanhoe; "for our dear Lady's sake, tell me which has fallen?"

"The Black Knight," answered Rebecca, faintly; then instantly again shouted with joyful eagerness—"But no—but no!—the name of the Lord of Hosts be blessed!—he is on foot again, and fights as if there were twenty men's strength in his single arm—His sword is broken—he snatches an axe from a yeoman—he presses Front-de-Bœuf with blow on blow—The giant stoops and totters like an oak under the steel of the woodman—he falls—he falls!"

"Front-de-Bœuf?" exclaimed Ivanhoe.

"Front-de-Bœuf!" answered the Jewess; "his men rush to the rescue, headed by the haughty Templar—their united force compels the champion to pause—They drag Front-de-Bœuf within the walls."

"The assailants have won the barriers, have they not?" said Ivanhoe.

"They have—they have!" exclaimed Rebecca—"and they press the besieged hard upon the outer wall; some plant ladders, some swarm like bees, and endeavour to ascend upon the shoulder of each other—down go stones, beams, and trunks of trees upon their heads, and as fast as they bear the wounded to the rear, fresh men supply their places in the assault—Great God! hast thou given men thine own image, that it should be thus cruelly defaced by the hands of their brethren!"

"Think not of that," said Ivanhoe; "this is no time for such thoughts—Who yield?—who push their way?"

"The ladders are thrown down," replied Rebecca, shuddering; "the soldiers lie grovelling under them like crushed reptiles—The besieged have the better."

"Saint George strike for us!" exclaimed the knight; "do the false yeomen give way?"

"No!" exclaimed Rebecca, "they bear themselves right yeomanly—the Black Knight approaches the postern with his huge axe—the thundering blows which he deals, you may hear them above all the din and shouts of the battle—Stones and beams are hailed down on the bold champion—he regards them no more than if they were thistle-down or feathers!"

"By Saint John of Acre," said Ivanhoe, raising

[1] Every Gothic castle and city had, beyond the outer-walls, a fortification composed of palisades, called the barriers, which were often the scene of severe skirmishes, as these must necessarily be carried before the walls themselves could be approached. Many of those valiant feats of arms which adorn the chivalrous pages of Froissart took place at the barriers of besieged places.

himself joyfully on his couch, "methought there was but one man in England that might do such a deed!"

"The postern gate shakes," continued Rebecca; "it crashes — it is splintered by his blows — they rush in — the outwork is won — Oh, God! — they hurl the defenders from the battlements — they throw them into the moat — Oh, men, if ye be indeed men, spare them that can resist no longer!"

"The bridge — the bridge which communicates with the castle — have they won that pass?" exclaimed Ivanhoe.

"No," replied Rebecca, "the Templar has destroyed the plank on which they crossed — few of the defenders escaped with him into the castle — the shrieks and cries which you hear tell the fate of the others — Alas! I see it is still more difficult to look upon victory than upon battle."

"What do they now, maiden?" said Ivanhoe; "look forth yet again — this is no time to faint at bloodshed."

"It is over for the time," answered Rebecca; "our friends strengthen themselves within the outwork which they have mastered, and it affords them so good a shelter from the foemen's shot, that the garrison only bestow a few bolts on it from interval to interval, as if rather to disquiet than effectually to injure them."

"Our friends," said Wilfred, "will surely not abandon an enterprize so gloriously begun and so happily attained. — O no! I will put my faith in the good knight whose axe hath rent heart-of-oak and bars of iron. — Singular," he again muttered to himself, "if there be two who can do a deed of such *derring-do!*[1] — a fetterlock, and a shacklebolt on a field-sable — what may that mean? — seest thou nought else, Rebecca, by which the Black Knight may be distinguished?"

"Nothing," said the Jewess; "all about him is black as the wing of the night raven. Nothing can I spy that can mark him farther — but having once seen him put forth his strength in battle, methinks I could know him again among a thousand warriors. He rushes to the fray as if he were summoned to a banquet. There is more than mere strength, there seems as if the whole soul and spirit of the champion were given to every blow which he deals upon his enemies. God assoilzie him of the sin of bloodshed! — it is fearful, yet magnificent, to behold how the arm and heart of one man can triumph over hundreds."

"Rebecca," said Ivanhoe, "thou hast painted a hero; surely they rest but to refresh their force, or to provide the means of crossing the moat — Under such a leader as thou hast spoken this knight to be, there are no craven fears, no cold-blooded delays, no yielding up a gallant emprize; since the difficulties which render it arduous, render it also glorious. I swear by the honour of my house — I vow by the name of my bright lady-love, I would endure ten years' captivity to fight one day by that good knight's side in such a quarrel as this!"

"Alas!" said Rebecca, leaving her station at the window, and approaching the couch of the wounded knight, "this impatient yearning after action — this struggling with and repining at your present weakness, will not fail to injure your returning health — How couldst thou hope to inflict wounds on others, ere that be healed which thou thyself hast received?"

"Rebecca," he replied, "thou knowest not how impossible it is for one trained to actions of chivalry, to remain passive as a priest, or a woman, when they are acting deeds of honour around him. The love of battle is the food upon which we live — the dust of the *mêlée* is the breath of our nostrils! We live not — we wish not to live longer than while we are victorious and renowned — Such, maiden, are the laws of chivalry to which we are sworn, and to which we offer all that we hold dear."

"Alas!" said the fair Jewess, "and what is it, valiant knight, save an offering of sacrifice to a demon of vain-glory, and a passing through the fire to Moloch? — What remains to you as the prize of all the blood you have spilled — of all the travail and pain you have endured — of all the tears which your deeds have caused, when death hath broken the strong man's spear, and overtaken the speed of his war-horse?"

"What remains?" cried Ivanhoe; "Glory, maiden, glory! which gilds our sepulchre and embalms our name."

"Glory?" continued Rebecca: "Alas! is the rusted mail which hangs as a hatchment over the champion's dim and mouldering tomb — is the defaced sculpture of the inscription which the ignorant monk can hardly read to the inquiring pilgrim — are these sufficient rewards for the sacrifice of every kindly affection, for a life spent miserably that ye may make others miserable? Or is there such virtue in the rude rhymes of a wandering bard, that domestic love, kindly affection, peace and happiness, are so wildly bartered, to become the hero of those ballads which vagabond minstrels sing to drunken churls over their evening ale?"

"By the soul of Hereward!" replied the knight impatiently, "thou speakest, maiden, of thou knowest not what. Thou wouldst quench the pure light of chivalry, which alone distinguishes the noble from the base, the gentle knight from the churl and the savage; which rates our life far, far beneath the pitch of our honour; raises us victorious over pain, toil, and suffering, and teaches us to fear no evil but disgrace. Thou art no Christian, Rebecca; and to thee are unknown those high feelings which swell the bosom of a noble maiden when her lover hath done some deed of emprize which sanctions his flame. Chivalry! — why, maiden, she is the nurse of pure and high affection — the stay of the oppressed, the redresser of grievances, the curb of the power of the tyrant — Nobility were but an empty name without her, and liberty finds the best protection in her lance and her sword."

"I am, indeed," said Rebecca, "sprung from a race whose courage was distinguished in the defence of their own land, but who warred not, even while yet a nation, save at the command of the Deity, or in defending their country from oppression. The sound of the trumpet wakes Judah no longer, and her despised children are now but the unresisting victims of hostile and military oppression. Well hast thou spoken, Sir Knight, — until the God of Jacob shall raise up for his chosen people a second Gideon, or a new Maccabeus, it ill beseemeth the Jewish damsel to speak of battle or of war."

The high-minded maiden concluded the argument in a tone of sorrow, which deeply expressed

[1] *Derring-do* — desperate courage.

her sense of the degradation of her people, imbittered perhaps by the idea that Ivanhoe considered her as one not entitled to interfere in a case of honour, and incapable of entertaining or expressing sentiments of honour and generosity.

"How little he knows this bosom," she said, "to imagine that cowardice or meanness of soul must needs be its guest, because I have censured the fantastic chivalry of the Nazarenes! Would to heaven that the shedding of mine own blood, drop by drop, could redeem the captivity of Judah! Nay, would to God it could avail to set free my father, and this his benefactor, from the chains of the oppressor! The proud Christian should then see whether the daughter of God's chosen people dared not to die as bravely as the vainest Nazarene maiden, that boasts her descent from some petty chieftain of the rude and frozen north!"

She then looked towards the couch of the wounded knight.

"He sleeps," she said; "nature exhausted by sufferance and the waste of spirits, his wearied frame embraces the first moment of temporary relaxation to sink into slumber. Alas! is it a crime that I should look upon him, when it may be for the last time?— When yet but a short space, and those fair features will be no longer animated by the bold and buoyant spirit which forsakes them not even in sleep!— When the nostril shall be distended, the mouth agape, the eyes fixed and bloodshot; and when the proud and noble knight may be trodden on by the lowest caitiff of this accursed castle, yet stir not when the heel is lifted up against him!— And my father!— oh, my father! evil is it with his daughter, when his gray hairs are not remembered because of the golden locks of youth!— What know I but that these evils are the messengers of Jehovah's wrath to the unnatural child, who thinks of a stranger's captivity before a parent's? who forgets the desolation of Judah, and looks upon the comeliness of a Gentile and a stranger?— But I will tear this folly from my heart, though every fibre bleed as I rend it away!"

She wrapped herself closely in her veil, and sat down at a distance from the couch of the wounded knight, with her back turned towards it, fortifying, or endeavouring to fortify her mind, not only against the impending evils from without, but also against those treacherous feelings which assailed her from within.

CHAPTER XXXI.

> Approach the chamber, look upon his bed;
> His is the passing of no peaceful ghost,
> Which, as the lark arises to the sky,
> 'Mid morning's sweetest breeze and softest dew,
> Is wing'd to heaven by good men's sighs and tears!—
> Anselm parts otherwise.
>
> *Old Play.*

During the interval of quiet which followed the first success of the besiegers, while the one party was preparing to pursue their advantage, and the other to strengthen their means of defence, the Templar and De Bracy held brief council together in the hall of the castle.

"Where is Front-de-Bœuf?" said the latter, who had superintended the defence of the fortress on the other side; "men say he hath been slain."

"He lives," said the Templar coolly, "lives as yet; but had he worn the bull's head of which he bears the name, and ten plates of iron to fence it withal, he must have gone down before yonder fatal axe. Yet a few hours, and Front-de-Bœuf is with his fathers—a powerful limb lopped off Prince John's enterprize."

"And a brave addition to the kingdom of Satan," said De Bracy; "this comes of reviling saints and angels, and ordering images of holy things and holy men to be flung down on the heads of these rascaille yeomen."

"Go to— thou art a fool," said the Templar; "thy superstition is upon a level with Front-de-Bœuf's want of faith; neither of you can render a reason for your belief or unbelief."

"Benedicite, Sir Templar," replied De Bracy, "I pray you to keep better rule with your tongue when I am the theme of it. By the Mother of Heaven, I am a better Christian man than thou and thy fellowship; for the *bruit* goeth shrewdly out, that the most holy Order of the Temple of Zion nurseth not a few heretics within its bosom, and that Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert is of the number."

"Care not for such reports," said the Templar; "but let us think of making good the castle.— How fought these villain yeomen on thy side?"

"Like fiends incarnate," said De Bracy. "They swarmed close up to the walls, headed, as I think, by the knave who won the prize at the archery, for I knew his horn and baldric. And this is old Fitzurse's boasted policy, encouraging these malapert knaves to rebel against us! Had I not been armed in proof, the villain had marked me down seven times with as little remorse as if I had been a buck in season. He told every rivet on my armour with a cloth-yard shaft, that rapped against my ribs with as little compunction as if my bones had been of iron.— But that I wore a shirt of Spanish mail under my plate-coat, I had been fairly sped."

"But you maintained your post?" said the Templar. "We lost the outwork on our part."

"That is a shrewd loss," said De Bracy; "the knaves will find cover there to assault the castle more closely, and may, if not well watched, gain some unguarded corner of a tower, or some forgotten window, and so break in upon us. Our numbers are too few for the defences of every point, and the men complain that they can no where shew themselves, but they are the mark for as many arrows as a parish-butt on a holyday even. Front-de-Bœuf is dying too, so we shall receive no more aid from his bull's head and brutal strength. How think you, Sir Brian, were we not better make a virtue of necessity, and compound with the rogues by delivering up our prisoners?"

"How?" exclaimed the Templar; "deliver up our prisoners, and stand an object alike of ridicule and execration, as the doughty warriors who dared by a night-attack to possess themselves of the persons of a party of defenceless travellers, yet could not make good a strong castle against a vagabond troop of outlaws, led by swineherds, jesters, and the very refuse of mankind— Shame on thy counsel, Maurice De Bracy!— The ruins of this castle shall bury both my body and my shame, ere I consent to such base and dishonourable composition."

"Let us to the walls, then," said De Bracy, carelessly; "that man never breathed, be he Turk or Templar, who held life at lighter rate than I do. But I trust there is no dishonour in wishing I had here some two scores of my gallant troop of Free Companions? — Oh, my brave lances! if ye knew but how hard your captain were this day bested, how soon would I see my banner at the head of your clump of spears! And how short while would these rabble villains stand to endure your encounter!"

"Wish for whom thou wilt," said the Templar, "but let us make what defence we can with the soldiers who remain — They are chiefly Front-de-Bœuf's followers, hated by the English for a thousand acts of insolence and oppression."

"The better," said De Bracy; "the rugged slaves will defend themselves to the last drop of their blood, ere they encounter the revenge of the peasants without. Let us up and be doing, then, Brian de Bois-Guilbert; and, live or die, thou shalt see Maurice de Bracy bear himself this day as a gentleman of blood and lineage."

"To the walls!" answered the Templar; and they both ascended the battlements to do all that skill could dictate, and manhood accomplish, in defence of the place. They readily agreed that the point of greatest danger was that opposite to the outwork, of which the assailants had possessed themselves. The castle, indeed, was divided from that barbican by the moat, and it was impossible that the besiegers could assail the postern door, with which the outwork corresponded, without surmounting that obstacle; but it was the opinion both of the Templar and De Bracy, that the besiegers, if governed by the same policy their leader had already displayed, would endeavour, by a formidable assault, to draw the chief part of the defenders' observation to this point, and take measures to avail themselves of every negligence which might take place in the defence elsewhere. To guard against such an evil, their numbers only permitted the knights to place sentinels from space to space along the walls in communication with each other, who might give the alarm whenever danger was threatened. Meanwhile, they agreed that De Bracy should command the defence at the postern, and the Templar should keep with him a score of men or thereabouts as a body of reserve, ready to hasten to any other point which might be suddenly threatened. The loss of the barbican had also this unfortunate effect, that, notwithstanding the superior heights of the castle walls, the besieged could not see from them, with the same precision as before, the operations of the enemy; for some straggling underwood approached so near the sallyport of the outwork, that the assailants might introduce into it whatever force they thought proper, not only under cover, but even without the knowledge of the defenders. Utterly uncertain, therefore, upon what point the storm was to burst, De Bracy and his companion were under the necessity of providing against every possible contingency, and their followers, however brave, experienced the anxious dejection of mind incident to men enclosed by enemies, who possessed the power of choosing their time and mode of attack.

Meanwhile, the lord of the beleaguered and endangered castle lay upon a bed of bodily pain and mental agony. He had not the usual resource of bigots in that superstitious period, most of whom were wont to atone for the crimes they were guilty of by liberality to the church, stupifying by this means their terrors by the idea of atonement and forgiveness; and although the refuge which success thus purchased, was no more like to the peace of mind which follows on sincere repentance, than the turbid stupefaction procured by opium resembles healthy and natural slumbers, it was still a state of mind preferable to the agonies of awakened remorse. But among the vices of Front-de-Bœuf, a hard and griping man, avarice was predominant; and he preferred setting church and churchmen at defiance, to purchasing from them pardon and absolution at the price of treasure and of manors. Nor did the Templar, an infidel of another stamp, justly characterize his associate, when he said Front-de-Bœuf could assign no cause for his unbelief and contempt for the established faith; for the Baron would have alleged that the church sold her wares too dear, that the spiritual freedom which she put up to sale was only to be bought like that of the chief captain of Jerusalem, "with a great sum," and Front-de-Bœuf preferred denying the virtue of the medicine, to paying the expense of the physician.

But the moment had now arrived when earth and all its treasures were gliding from before his eyes, and when the savage Baron's heart, though hard as a nether millstone, became appalled as he gazed forward into the waste darkness of futurity. The fever of his body aided the impatience and agony of his mind, and his death-bed exhibited a mixture of the newly awakened feelings of horror, combating with the fixed and inveterate obstinacy of his disposition,— a fearful state of mind, only to be equalled in those tremendous regions, where there are complaints without hope, remorse without repentance, a dreadful sense of present agony, and a presentiment that it cannot cease or be diminished!

"Where be these dog-priests now," growled the Baron, "who set such price on their ghostly mummery? — where be all those unshod Carmelites, for whom old Front-de-Bœuf founded the convent of St Anne, robbing his heir of many a fair rood of meadow, and many a fat field and close — where be the greedy hounds now? — Swilling, I warrant me, at the ale, or playing their juggling tricks at the bed-side of some miserly churl. — Me, the heir of their founder — me, whom their foundation binds them to pray for — me — ungrateful villains as they are! — they suffer to die like the houseless dog on yonder common, unshriven and unhouseled! — Tell the Templar to come hither — he is a priest, and may do something — But no! — as well confess myself to the devil as to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who recks neither of heaven nor of hell. — I have heard old men talk of prayer — prayer by their own voice — such need not to court or to bribe the false priest — But I — I dare not!"

"Lives Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said a broken and shrill voice close by his bedside, "to say there is that which he dares not!"

The evil conscience and the shaken nerves of Front-de-Bœuf heard, in this strange interruption to his soliloquy, the voice of one of those demons, who, as the superstition of the times believed, beset the beds of dying men, to distract their thoughts, and turn them from the meditations which con

cerned their eternal welfare. He shuddered and drew himself together; but, instantly summoning up his wonted resolution, he exclaimed, "Who is there?—what art thou, that darest to echo my words in a tone like that of the night-raven?—Come before my couch that I may see thee."

"I am thine evil angel, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," replied the voice.

"Let me behold thee, then, in thy bodily shape, if thou be'st indeed a fiend," replied the dying knight; "think not that I will blench from thee. By the eternal dungeon, could I but grapple with these horrors that hover round me, as I have done with mortal dangers, heaven or hell should never say that I shrunk from the conflict!"

"Think on thy sins, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," said the almost unearthly voice, "on rebellion, on rapine, on murder!—Who stirred up the licentious John to war against his gray-headed father—against his generous brother?"

"Be thou fiend, priest, or devil," replied Front-de-Bœuf, "thou liest in thy throat!—Not I stirred John to rebellion—not I alone—there were fifty knights and barons, the flower of the midland counties—better men never laid lance in rest—And must I answer for the fault done by fifty?—False fiend, I defy thee! Depart, and haunt my couch no more—let me die in peace if thou be mortal—if thou be a demon, thy time is not yet come."

"In peace thou shalt NOT die," repeated the voice; "even in death shalt thou think on thy murders—on the groans which this castle has echoed—on the blood that is ingrained in its floors!"

"Thou canst not shake me by thy petty malice," answered Front-de-Bœuf, with a ghastly and constrained laugh. "The infidel Jew—it was merit with heaven to deal with him as I did, else wherefore are men canonized who dip their hands in the blood of Saracens?—The Saxon porkers, whom I have slain, they were the foes of my country, and of my lineage, and of my liege lord.—Ho! ho! thou seest there is no crevice in my coat of plate—Art thou fled?—art thou silenced?"

"No, foul parricide!" replied the voice; "think of thy father!—think of his death!—think of his banquet-room flooded with his gore, and that poured forth by the hand of a son!"

"Ha!" answered the Baron, after a long pause, "an thou knowest that, thou art indeed the author of evil, and as omniscient as the monks call thee!—That secret I deemed locked in my own breast, and in that of one beside—the temptress, the partaker of my guilt.—Go, leave me, fiend! and seek the Saxon witch Ulrica, who alone could tell thee what she and I alone witnessed—Go, I say, to her, who washed the wounds, and straighted the corpse, and gave to the slain man the outward show of one parted in time and in the course of nature—Go to her, she was my temptress, the foul provoker, the more foul rewarder of the deed—let her, as well as I, taste of the tortures which anticipate hell!"

"She already tastes them," said Ulrica, stepping before the couch of Front-de-Bœuf; "she hath long drunken of this cup, and its bitterness is now sweetened to see that thou dost partake it.—Grind not thy teeth, Front-de-Bœuf—roll not thine eyes—clench not thy hand, nor shake it at me with that gesture of menace!—The hand which, like that of thy renowned ancestor who gained thy name, could have broken with one stroke the skull of a mountain-bull, is now unnerved and powerless as mine own!"

"Vile murderous hag!" replied Front-de-Bœuf; "detestable screech-owl! it is then thou who art come to exult over the ruins thou hast assisted to lay low?"

"Ay, Reginald Front-de-Bœuf," answered she, "it is Ulrica!—it is the daughter of the murdered Torquil Wolfganger!—it is the sister of his slaughtered sons!—it is she who demands of thee, and of thy father's house, father and kindred, name and fame—all that she has lost by the name of Front-de-Bœuf!—Think of my wrongs, Front-de-Bœuf, and answer me if I speak not truth. Thou hast been my evil angel, and I will be thine—I will dog thee till the very instant of dissolution!"

"Detestable fury!" exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf, "that moment shalt thou never witness—Ho! Giles, Clement, and Eustace! Saint Maur, and Stephen! seize this damned witch, and hurl her from the battlements headlong—she has betrayed us to the Saxon!—Ho! Saint Maur! Clement! false-hearted knaves, where tarry ye?"

"Call on them again, valiant Baron," said the hag, with a smile of grisly mockery; "summon thy vassals around thee, doom them that loiter to the scourge and the dungeon—But know, mighty chief," she continued, suddenly changing her tone, "thou shalt have neither answer, nor aid, nor obedience at their hands.—Listen to these horrid sounds," for the din of the recommenced assault and defence now rung fearfully loud from the battlements of the castle; "in that war-cry is the downfall of thy house—The blood-cemented fabric of Front-de-Bœuf's power totters to the foundation, and before the foes he most despised!—The Saxon, Reginald!—the scorned Saxon assails thy walls!—Why liest thou here, like a worn-out hind, when the Saxon storms thy place of strength?"

"Gods and fiends!" exclaimed the wounded knight; "O, for one moment's strength, to drag myself to the *mêlée*, and perish as becomes my name!"

"Think not of it, valiant warrior!" replied she; "thou shalt die no soldier's death, but perish like the fox in his den, when the peasants have set fire to the cover around it."

"Hateful hag! thou liest," exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf; "my followers bear them bravely—my walls are strong and high—my comrades in arms fear not a whole host of Saxons, were they headed by Hengist and Horsa!—The war-cry of the Templar and of the Free Companions rises high over the conflict! And by mine honour, when we kindle the blazing beacon, for joy of our defence, it shall consume thee, body and bones; and I shall live to hear thou art gone from earthly fires to those of that hell which never sent forth an incarnate fiend more utterly diabolical!"

"Hold thy belief," replied Ulrica, "till the proof reach thee—But no!" she said, interrupting herself, "thou shalt know, even now, the doom, which all thy power, strength, and courage is unable to avoid, though it is prepared for thee by this feeble hand. Markest thou the smouldering and suffocating vapour which already eddies in sable folds through the chamber?—Didst thou think it was

but the darkening of thy bursting eyes — the difficulty of thy cumbered breathing? — No! Front-de-Bœuf, there is another cause — Rememberest thou the magazine of fuel that is stored beneath these apartments?"

"Woman!" he exclaimed with fury, "thou hast not set fire to it? — By heaven, thou hast, and the castle is in flames!"

"They are fast rising at least," said Ulrica, with frightful composure; "and a signal shall soon wave to warn the besiegers to press hard upon those who would extinguish them. — Farewell, Front-de-Bœuf! — May Mista, Skogula, and Zernebock, gods of the ancient Saxons — fiends, as the priests now call them — supply the place of comforters at your dying bed, which Ulrica now relinquishes! — But know, if it will give thee comfort to know it, that Ulrica is bound to the same dark coast with thyself, the companion of thy punishment as the companion of thy guilt. And now, parricide, farewell for ever! — May each stone of this vaulted roof find a tongue to echo that title into thine ear!"

So saying, she left the apartment; and Front-de-Bœuf could hear the crash of the ponderous key as she locked and double-locked the door behind her, thus cutting off the most slender chance of escape. In the extremity of agony he shouted upon his servants and allies — "Stephen and Saint Maur! — Clement and Giles! — I burn here unaided! — To the rescue — to the rescue, brave Bois-Guilbert, valiant De Bracy! — It is Front-de-Bœuf who calls! — It is your master, ye traitor squires! — Your ally — your brother in arms, ye perjured and faithless knights! — all the curses due to traitors upon your recreant heads, do you abandon me to perish thus miserably! — They hear me not — they cannot hear me — my voice is lost in the din of battle. — The smoke rolls thicker and thicker — the fire has caught upon the floor below — O, for one draught of the air of heaven, were it to be purchased by instant annihilation!" And in the mad frenzy of despair, the wretch now shouted with the shouts of the fighters, now muttered curses on himself, on mankind, and on Heaven itself. — "The red fire flashes through the thick smoke!" he exclaimed; "the demon marches against me under the banner of his own element — Foul spirit, avoid! — I go not with thee without my comrades — all, all are thine, that garrison these walls — Thinkest thou Front-de-Bœuf will be singled out to go alone? — No — the infidel Templar — the licentious De Bracy — Ulrica, the foul murdering strumpet — the men who aided my enterprizes — the dog Saxons and accursed Jews, who are my prisoners — all, all shall attend me — a goodly fellowship as ever took the downward road — Ha, ha, ha!" and he laughed in his frenzy till the vaulted roof rang again. "Who laughed there?" exclaimed Front-de-Bœuf, in altered mood, for the noise of the conflict did not prevent the echoes of his own mad laughter from returning upon his ear — "who laughed there? — Ulrica, was it thou? — Speak, witch, and I forgive thee — for, only thou or the fiend of hell himself could have laughed at such a moment. Avaunt — avaunt! ——"

But it were impious to trace any farther the picture of the blasphemer and parricide's death-bed.

CHAPTER XXXII.

> Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,
> Or close the wall up with our English dead
> ——— And you, good yeomen,
> Whose limbs were made in England, shew us here
> The mettle of your pasture — let us swear
> That you are worth your breeding.
>
> *King Henry V.*

Cedric, although not greatly confident in Ulrica's message, omitted not to communicate her promise to the Black Knight and Locksley. They were well pleased to find they had a friend within the place, who might, in the moment of need, be able to facilitate their entrance, and readily agreed with the Saxon that a storm, under whatever disadvantages, ought to be attempted, as the only means of liberating the prisoners now in the hands of the cruel Front-de-Bœuf.

"The royal blood of Alfred is endangered," said Cedric.

"The honour of a noble lady is in peril," said the Black Knight.

"And, by the Saint Christopher at my baldric," said the good yeoman, "were there no other cause than the safety of that poor faithful knave, Wamba, I would jeopard a joint ere a hair of his head were hurt."

"And so would I," said the Friar; "what, sirs! I trust well that a fool — I mean, d'ye see me, sirs, a fool that is free of his guild and master of his craft, and can give as much relish and flavour to a cup of wine as ever a flitch of bacon can — I say, brethren, such a fool shall never want a wise clerk to pray for or fight for him at a strait, while I can say a mass or flourish a partisan."

And with that he made his heavy halberd to play around his head as a shepherd boy flourishes his little crook.

"True, Holy Clerk," said the Black Knight, "true as if Saint Dunstan himself had said it. — And now, good Locksley, were it not well that noble Cedric should assume the direction of this assault?"

"Not a jot I," returned Cedric; "I have never been wont to study either how to take or how to hold out those abodes of tyrannic power, which the Normans have erected in this groaning land. I will fight among the foremost; but my honest neighbours well know I am not a trained soldier in the discipline of wars, or the attack of strongholds."

"Since it stands thus with the noble Cedric," said Locksley, "I am most willing to take on me the direction of the archery; and ye shall hang me up on my own trysting-tree, an the defenders be permitted to shew themselves over the walls without being stuck with as many shafts as there are cloves in a gammon of bacon at Christmas."

"Well said, stout yeoman," answered the Black Knight; "and if I be thought worthy to have a charge in these matters, and can find among these brave men so many as are willing to follow a true English knight, for so I may surely call myself, I am ready, with such skill as my experience has taught me, to lead them to the attack of these walls."

The parts being thus distributed to the leaders, they commenced the first assault, of which the reader has already heard the issue.

When the barbican was carried, the Sable Knight

sent notice of the happy event to Locksley, requesting him, at the same time, to keep such a strict observation on the castle as might prevent the defenders from combining their force for a sudden sally, and recovering the outwork which they had lost. This the knight was chiefly desirous of avoiding, conscious that the men whom he led, being hasty and untrained volunteers, imperfectly armed and unaccustomed to discipline, must, upon any sudden attack, fight at great disadvantage with the veteran soldiers of the Norman knights, who were well provided with arms both defensive and offensive; and who, to match the zeal and high spirit of the besiegers, had all the confidence which arises from perfect discipline and the habitual use of weapons.

The knight employed the interval in causing to be constructed a sort of floating bridge, or long raft, by means of which he hoped to cross the moat in despite of the resistance of the enemy. This was a work of some time, which the leaders the less regretted, as it gave Ulrica leisure to execute her plan of diversion in their favour, whatever that might be.

When the raft was completed, the Black Knight addressed the besiegers:—"It avails not waiting here longer, my friends; the sun is descending to the west—and I have that upon my hands which will not permit me to tarry with you another day. Besides, it will be a marvel if the horsemen come not upon us from York, unless we speedily accomplish our purpose. Wherefore, one of ye go to Locksley, and bid him commence a discharge of arrows on the opposite side of the castle, and move forward as if about to assault it; and you, true English hearts, stand by me, and be ready to thrust the raft endlong over the moat whenever the postern on our side is thrown open. Follow me boldly across, and aid me to burst yon sallyport in the main wall of the castle. As many of you as like not this service, or are but ill armed to meet it, do you man the top of the outwork, draw your bow-strings to your ears, and mind you quell with your shot whatever shall appear to man the rampart—Noble Cedric, wilt thou take the direction of those which remain?"

"Not so, by the soul of Hereward!" said the Saxon; "lead I cannot; but may posterity curse me in my grave, if I follow not with the foremost wherever thou shalt point the way—The quarrel is mine, and well it becomes me to be in the van of the battle."

"Yet, bethink thee, noble Saxon," said the knight, "thou hast neither hauberk, nor corslet, nor aught but that light helmet, target, and sword."

"The better!" answered Cedric; "I shall be the lighter to climb these walls. And,—forgive the boast, Sir Knight,—thou shalt this day see the naked breast of a Saxon as boldly presented to the battle as ever ye beheld the steel corslet of a Norman."

"In the name of God, then," said the knight, "fling open the door, and lanch the floating bridge."

The portal, which led from the inner-wall of the barbican to the moat, and which corresponded with a sallyport in the main wall of the castle, was now suddenly opened; the temporary bridge was then thrust forward, and soon flashed in the waters, extending its length between the castle and outwork, and forming a slippery and precarious passage for two men abreast to cross the moat. Well aware of the importance of taking the foe by surprise, the Black Knight, closely followed by Cedric, threw himself upon the bridge, and reached the opposite side. Here he began to thunder with his axe upon the gate of the castle, protected in part from the shot and stones cast by the defenders, by the ruins of the former drawbridge, which the Templar had demolished in his retreat from the barbican, leaving the counterpoise still attached to the upper part of the portal. The followers of the knight had no such shelter; two were instantly shot with crossbow bolts, and two more fell into the moat; the others retreated back into the barbican.

The situation of Cedric and of the Black Knight was now truly dangerous, and would have been still more so, but for the constancy of the archers in the barbican, who ceased not to shower their arrows upon the battlements, distracting the attention of those by whom they were manned, and thus affording a respite to their two chiefs from the storm of missiles which must otherwise have overwhelmed them. But their situation was eminently perilous, and was becoming more so with every moment.

"Shame on ye all!" cried De Bracy to the soldiers around him; "do ye call yourselves crossbowmen, and let these two dogs keep their station under the walls of the castle?—Heave over the coping stones from the battlement, an better may not be—Get pickaxe and levers, and down with that huge pinnacle!" pointing to a heavy piece of stone carved-work that projected from the parapet.

At this moment the besiegers caught sight of the red flag upon the angle of the tower which Ulrica had described to Cedric. The good yeoman Locksley was the first who was aware of it, as he was hasting to the outwork, impatient to see the progress of the assault.

"Saint George!" he cried, "Merry Saint George for England!—To the charge, bold yeomen!—why leave ye the good knight and noble Cedric to storm the pass alone?—make in, mad priest, shew thou canst fight for thy rosary—make in, brave yeomen!—the castle is ours, we have friends within—See yonder flag, it is the appointed signal—Torquilstone is ours!—Think of honour, think of spoil—One effort, and the place is ours!"

With that he bent his good bow, and sent a shaft right through the breast of one of the men-at-arms, who, under De Bracy's direction, was loosening a fragment from one of the battlements to precipitate on the heads of Cedric and the Black Knight. A second soldier caught from the hands of the dying man the iron crow, with which he heaved at and had loosened the stone pinnacle, when, receiving an arrow through his head-piece, he dropped from the battlements into the moat a dead man. The men-at-arms were daunted, for no armour seemed proof against the shot of this tremendous archer.

"Do you give ground, base knaves!" said De Bracy; "*Mount joye Saint Dennis!*—Give me the lever."

And, snatching it up, he again assailed the loosened pinnacle, which was of weight enough, if thrown down, not only to have destroyed the remnant of the drawbridge, which sheltered the two foremost assailants, but also to have sunk the rude float of planks over which they had crossed. All saw the

danger, and the boldest, even the stout Friar himself, avoided setting foot on the raft. Thrice did Locksley bend his shaft against De Bracy, and thrice did his arrow bound back from the knight's armour of proof.

"Curse on thy Spanish steel-coat!" said Locksley, "had English smith forged it, these arrows had gone through, an as if it had been silk or sendal." He then began to call out, "Comrades! friends! noble Cedric! bear back, and let the ruin fall."

His warning voice was unheard, for the din which the knight himself occasioned by his strokes upon the postern would have drowned twenty war-trumpets. The faithful Gurth indeed sprung forward on the planked bridge, to warn Cedric of his impending fate, or to share it with him. But his warning would have come too late; the massive pinnacle already tottered, and De Bracy, who still heaved at his task, would have accomplished it, had not the voice of the Templar sounded close in his ear.

"All is lost, De Bracy, the castle burns."

"Thou art mad to say so!" replied the knight.

"It is all in a light flame on the western side. I have striven in vain to extinguish it."

With the stern coolness which formed the basis of his character, Brian de Bois-Guilbert communicated this hideous intelligence, which was not so calmly received by his astonished comrade.

"Saints of Paradise!" said De Bracy; "what is to be done? I vow to Saint Nicholas of Limoges a candlestick of pure gold——"

"Spare thy vow," said the Templar, "and mark me. Lead thy men down, as if to a sally; throw the postern-gate open—There are but two men who occupy the float, fling them into the moat, and push across for the barbican. I will charge from the main gate, and attack the barbican on the outside; and if we can regain that post, be assured we shall defend ourselves until we are relieved, or at least till they grant us fair quarter."

"It is well thought upon," said De Bracy; "I will play my part—Templar, thou wilt not fail me?"

"Hand and glove, I will not!" said Bois-Guilbert. "But haste thee, in the name of God!"

De Bracy hastily drew his men together, and rushed down to the postern-gate, which he caused instantly to be thrown open. But scarce was this done ere the portentous strength of the Black Knight forced his way inward in despite of De Bracy and his followers. Two of the foremost instantly fell, and the rest gave way notwithstanding all their leader's efforts to stop them.

"Dogs!" said De Bracy, "will ye let *two* men win our only pass for safety?"

"He is the devil!" said a veteran man-at-arms, bearing back from the blows of their sable antagonist.

"And if he be the devil," replied De Bracy, "would you fly from him into the mouth of hell?—the castle burns behind us, villains!—let despair give you courage, or let me forward, I will cope with this champion myself."

And well and chivalrous did De Bracy that day maintain the fame he had acquired in the civil wars of that dreadful period. The vaulted passage to which the postern gave entrance, and in which these two redoubted champions were now fighting hand to hand, rung with the furious blows which they dealt each other, De Bracy with his sword, the Black Knight with his ponderous axe. At length the Norman received a blow, which, though its force was partly parried by his shield, for otherwise never more would De Bracy have again moved limb, descended yet with such violence on his crest, that he measured his length on the paved floor.

"Yield thee, De Bracy," said the Black Champion, stooping over him, and holding against the bars of his helmet the fatal poniard with which the knights despatched their enemies, (and which was called the dagger of mercy,)—"yield thee, Maurice de Bracy, rescue or no rescue, or thou art but a dead man."

"I will not yield," replied De Bracy, faintly, "to an unknown conqueror. Tell me thy name, or work thy pleasure on me—it shall never be said that Maurice de Bracy was prisoner to a nameless churl."

The Black Knight whispered something into the ear of the vanquished.

"I yield me to be true prisoner, rescue or no rescue," answered the Norman, exchanging his tone of stern and determined obstinacy for one of deep though sullen submission.

"Go to the barbican," said the victor, in a tone of authority, "and there wait my farther orders."

"Yet first, let me say," said De Bracy, "what it imports thee to know. Wilfred of Ivanhoe is wounded and a prisoner, and will perish in the burning castle without present help."

"Wilfred of Ivanhoe!" exclaimed the Black Knight—"prisoner, and perish!—The life of every man in the castle shall answer it if a hair of his head be singed—Shew me his chamber!"

"Ascend yonder winding stair," said De Bracy; "it leads to his apartment—Wilt thou not accept my guidance?" he added, in a submissive voice.

"No. To the barbican, and there wait my orders. I trust thee not, De Bracy."

During this combat and the brief conversation which ensued, Cedric, at the head of a body of men, among whom the Friar was conspicuous, had pushed across the bridge as soon as they saw the postern open, and drove back the dispirited and despairing followers of De Bracy, of whom some asked quarter, some offered vain resistance, and the greater part fled towards the court-yard. De Bracy himself arose from the ground, and cast a sorrowful glance after his conqueror. "He trusts me not," he repeated; "but have I deserved his trust?" He then lifted his sword from the floor, took off his helmet in token of submission, and, going to the barbican, gave up his sword to Locksley, whom he met by the way.

As the fire augmented, symptoms of it became soon apparent in the chamber where Ivanhoe was watched and tended by the Jewess, Rebecca. He had been awakened from his brief slumber by the noise of the battle; and his attendant, who had, at his anxious desire, again placed herself at the window to watch and report to him the fate of the attack, was for some time prevented from observing either, by the increase of the smouldering and stifling vapour. At length the volumes of smoke which rolled into the apartment—the cries for water, which were heard even above the din of the battle, made them sensible of the progress of this new danger.

"The castle burns," said Rebecca; "it burns!—What can we do to save ourselves?"

"Fly, Rebecca, and save thine own life," said Ivanhoe, "for no human aid can avail me."

"I will not fly," answered Rebecca; "we will be saved or perish together—And yet, great God!—my father, my father!—what will be his fate?"

At this moment the door of the apartment flew open, and the Templar presented himself,—a ghastly figure, for his gilded armour was broken and bloody, and the plume was partly shorn away, partly burnt from his casque. "I have found thee," said he to Rebecca; "thou shalt prove I will keep my word to share weal and wo with thee—There is but one path to safety, I have cut my way through fifty dangers to point it to thee—up, and instantly follow me."[1]

"Alone," answered Rebecca, "I will not follow thee. If thou wert born of woman—if thou hast but a touch of human charity in thee—if thy heart be not hard as thy breastplate—save my aged father—save this wounded knight!"

"A knight," answered the Templar, with his characteristic calmness, "a knight, Rebecca, must encounter his fate, whether it meet him in the shape of sword or flame—and who recks how or where a Jew meets with his?"

"Savage warrior," said Rebecca, "rather will I perish in the flames than accept safety from thee!"

"Thou shalt not choose, Rebecca—once didst thou foil me, but never mortal did so twice."

So saying, he seized on the terrified maiden, who filled the air with her shrieks, and bore her out of the room in his arms in spite of her cries, and without regarding the menaces and defiance which Ivanhoe thundered against him. "Hound of the Temple—stain to thine Order—set free the damsel! Traitor of Bois-Guilbert, it is Ivanhoe commands thee!—Villain, I will have thy heart's blood!"

"I had not found thee, Wilfred," said the Black Knight, who at that instant entered the apartment, "but for thy shouts."

"If thou be'st true knight," said Wilfred, "think not of me—pursue yon ravisher—save the Lady Rowena—look to the noble Cedric?"

"In their turn," answered he of the fetterlock, "but thine is first."

And seizing upon Ivanhoe, he bore him off with as much ease as the Templar had carried off Rebecca, rushed with him to the postern, and having there delivered his burden to the care of two yeomen, he again entered the castle to assist in the rescue of the other prisoners.

One turret was now in bright flames, which flashed out furiously from window and shot-hole. But in other parts, the great thickness of the walls and the vaulted roofs of the apartments, resisted the progress of the flames, and there the rage of man still triumphed, as the scarce more dreadful element held mastery elsewhere; for the besiegers pursued the defenders of the castle from chamber to chamber, and satiated in their blood the vengeance which had long animated them against the soldiers of the tyrant Front-de-Bœuf. Most of the garrison resisted to the uttermost—few of them asked quarter—none received it. The air was filled with groans and clashing of arms—the floors were slippery with the blood of despairing and expiring wretches.

Through this scene of confusion, Cedric rushed in quest of Rowena, while the faithful Gurth, following him closely through the *mêlée*, neglected his own safety while he strove to avert the blows that were aimed at his master. The noble Saxon was so fortunate as to reach his ward's apartment just as she had abandoned all hope of safety, and, with a crucifix clasped in agony to her bosom, sat in expectation of instant death. He committed her to the charge of Gurth, to be conducted in safety to the barbican, the road to which was now cleared of the enemy, and not yet interrupted by the flames. This accomplished, the loyal Cedric hastened in quest of his friend Athelstane, determined, at every risk to himself, to save that last scion of Saxon royalty. But ere Cedric penetrated as far as the old hall in which he had himself been a prisoner, the inventive genius of Wamba had procured liberation for himself and his companion in adversity.

When the noise of the conflict announced that it was at the hottest, the Jester began to shout, with the utmost power of his lungs, "Saint George and the dragon!—Bonny Saint George for merry England!—The castle is won!" And these sounds he rendered yet more fearful, by banging against each other two or three pieces of rusty armour which lay scattered around the hall.

A guard, which had been stationed in the outer, or anteroom, and whose spirits were already in a state of alarm, took fright at Wamba's clamour, and leaving the door open behind them, ran to tell the Templar that foemen had entered the old hall. Meantime the prisoners found no difficulty in making their escape into the anteroom, and from thence into the court of the castle, which was now the last scene of contest. Here sat the fierce Templar, mounted on horseback, surrounded by several of the garrison both on horse and foot, who had united their strength to that of this renowned leader, in order to secure the last chance of safety and retreat which remained to them. The drawbridge had been lowered by his orders, but the passage was beset; for the archers, who had hitherto only annoyed the castle on that side by their missiles, no sooner saw the flames breaking out, and the bridge lowered, than they thronged to the entrance, as well to prevent the escape of the garrison, as to secure their own share of booty ere the castle should be burnt down. On the other hand, a party of the besiegers who had entered by the postern were now issuing out into the court-yard, and attacking with fury the remnant of the defenders, who were thus assaulted on both sides at once.

Animated, however, by despair, and supported by the example of their indomitable leader, the remaining soldiers of the castle fought with the utmost valour; and, being well armed, succeeded more than once in driving back the assailants, though much inferior in numbers. Rebecca, placed on horseback before one of the Templar's Saracen slaves, was in the midst of the little party; and Bois-Guilbert, notwithstanding the confusion of the bloody fray, shewed every attention to her safety. Repeatedly he was by her side, and, neglecting his own defence, held before her the fence of his trian-

[1] The author has some idea that this passage is imitated from the appearance of Philidaspes, before the divine Mandane, when the city of Babylon is on fire, and he proposes to carry her from the flames. But the theft, if there be one, would be rather too severely punished by the penance of searching for the original passage through the interminable volumes of the Grand Cyrus.

gular steel-plated shield; and anon starting from his position by her, he cried his war-cry, dashed forward, struck to earth the most forward of the assailants, and was on the same instant once more at her bridle rein.

Athelstane, who, as the reader knows, was slothful, but not cowardly, beheld the female form whom the Templar protected thus sedulously, and doubted not that it was Rowena whom the knight was carrying off in despite of all resistance which could be offered.

"By the soul of Saint Edward," he said, "I will rescue her from yonder over-proud knight, and he shall die by my hand!"

"Think what you do!" cried Wamba; "the hasty hand catches frog for fish — by my bauble, yonder is none of my lady Rowena — see but her long dark locks! — Nay, an ye will not know black from white, ye may be leader, but I will be no follower — no bones of mine shall be broken unless I know for whom. — And you without armour too! — Bethink you, silk bonnet never kept out steel blade — Nay, then, if wilful will to water, wilful must drench. — *Deus vobiscum*, most doughty Athelstane!" — he concluded, loosening the hold which he had hitherto kept upon the Saxon's tunic.

To snatch a mace from the pavement, on which it lay beside one whose dying grasp had just relinquished it — to rush on the Templar's band, and to strike in quick succession to the right and left, levelling a warrior at each blow, was, for Athelstane's great strength, now animated with unusual fury, but the work of a single moment; he was soon within two yards of Bois-Guilbert, whom he defied in his loudest tone.

"Turn, false-hearted Templar! let go her whom thou art unworthy to touch — turn, limb of a band of murdering and hypocritical robbers!"

"Dog!" said the Templar, grinding his teeth, "I will teach thee to blaspheme the holy Order of the Temple of Zion!" and with these words, half-wheeling his steed, he made a demi-courbette towards the Saxon, and rising in the stirrups, so as to take full advantage of the descent of the horse, he discharged a fearful blow upon the head of Athelstane.

Well said Wamba, that silken bonnet keeps out no steel blade. So trenchant was the Templar's weapon, that it shore asunder, as it had been a willow twig, the tough and plaited handle of the mace, which the ill-fated Saxon reared to parry the blow, and, descending on his head, levelled him with the earth.

"*Ha! Beau-seant!*" exclaimed Bois-Guilbert, "thus be it to the maligners of the Temple-knights!" Taking advantage of the dismay which was spread by the fall of Athelstane, and calling aloud, "Those who would save themselves, follow me!" he pushed across the drawbridge, dispersing the archers who would have intercepted them. He was followed by his Saracens, and some five or six men-at-arms, who had mounted their horses. The Templar's retreat was rendered perilous by the numbers of arrows shot off at him and his party; but this did not prevent him from galloping round to the barbican, of which, according to his previous plan, he supposed it possible De Bracy might have been in possession.

"De Bracy! De Bracy!" he shouted, "art thou there?"

"I am here," replied De Bracy, "but I am a prisoner."

"Can I rescue thee?" cried Bois-Guilbert.

"No," replied De Bracy; "I have rendered me, rescue or no rescue. I will be true prisoner. Save thyself — there are hawks abroad — put the seas betwixt you and England — I dare not say more."

"Well," answered the Templar, "an thou wilt tarry there, remember I have redeemed word and glove. Be the hawks where they will, methinks the walls of the Preceptory of Templestowe will be cover sufficient, and thither will I, like heron to her haunt."

Having thus spoken, he galloped off with his followers.

Those of the castle who had not gotten to horse, still continued to fight desperately with the besiegers, after the departure of the Templar, but rather in despair of quarter than that they entertained any hope of escape. The fire was spreading rapidly through all parts of the castle, when Ulrica, who had first kindled it, appeared on a turret, in the guise of one of the ancient furies, yelling forth a war-song, such as was of yore raised on the field of battle by the scalds of the yet heathen Saxons. Her long dishevelled gray hair flew back from her uncovered head; the inebriating delight of gratified vengeance contended in her eyes with the fire of insanity; and she brandished the distaff which she held in her hand, as if she had been one of the Fatal Sisters, who spin and abridge the thread of human life. Tradition has preserved some wild strophes of the barbarous hymn which she chanted wildly amid that scene of fire and of slaughter:—

1.

Whet the bright steel,
Sons of the White Dragon!
Kindle the torch,
Daughter of Hengist!
The steel glimmers not for the carving of the banquet.
It is hard, broad, and sharply pointed;
The torch goeth not to the bridal chamber,
It steams and glitters blue with sulphur.
Whet the steel, the raven croaks!
Light the torch, Zernebock is yelling!
Whet the steel, sons of the Dragon!
Kindle the torch, daughter of Hengist!

2.

The black cloud is low over the thane's castle,
The eagle screams — he rides on its bosom.
Scream not, gray rider of the sable cloud,
Thy banquet is prepared!
The maidens of Valhalla look forth,
The race of Hengist will send them guests.
Shake your black tresses, maidens of Valhalla!
And strike your loud timbrels for joy!
Many a haughty step bends to your halls,
Many a helmed head.

3.

Dark sits the evening upon the thane's castle,
The black clouds gather round;
Soon shall they be red as the blood of the valiant!
The destroyer of forests shall shake his red crest against them,
He, the bright consumer of palaces,
Broad waves he his blazing banner,
Red, wide, and dusky,
Over the strife of the valiant:
His joy is in the clashing swords and broken bucklers;
He loves to lick the hissing blood as it bursts warm from the wound!

4.

All must perish!
The sword cleaveth the helmet;
The strong armour is pierced by the lance;
Fire devoureth the dwelling of princes,
Engines break down the fences of the battle.
All must perish!

The race of Hengist is gone —
The name of Horsa is no more!
Shrink not then from your doom, sons of the sword!
Let your blades drink blood like wine;
Feast ye in the banquet of slaughter,
By the light of the blazing halls!
Strong be your swords while your blood is warm,
And spare neither for pity nor fear,
For vengeance hath but an hour;
Strong hate itself shall expire!
I also must perish. [1]

The towering flames had now surmounted every obstruction, and rose to the evening skies one huge and burning beacon, seen far and wide through the adjacent country. Tower after tower crashed down, with blazing roof and rafter; and the combatants were driven from the court-yard. The vanquished, of whom very few remained, scattered and escaped into the neighbouring wood. The victors, assembling in large bands, gazed with wonder, not unmixed with fear, upon the flames, in which their own ranks and arms glanced dusky red. The maniac figure of the Saxon Ulrica was for a long time visible on the lofty stand she had chosen, tossing her arms abroad with wild exultation, as if she reigned empress of the conflagration which she had raised. At length, with a terrific crash, the whole turret gave way, and she perished in the flames which had consumed her tyrant. An awful pause of horror silenced each murmur of the armed spectators, who, for the space of several minutes, stirred not a finger, save to sign the cross. The voice of Locksley was then heard, "Shout, yeomen! — the den of tyrants is no more! Let each bring his spoil to our chosen place of rendezvous at the Trysting-tree in the Harthill-walk; for there at break of day will we make just partition among our own bands, together with our worthy allies in this great deed of vengeance."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Trust me each state must have its policies:
Kingdoms have edicts, cities have their charters;
Even the wild outlaw, in his forest-walk,
Keeps yet some touch of civil discipline;
For not since Adam wore his verdant apron,
Hath man with man in social union dwelt,
But laws were made to draw that union closer.
Old Play.

The daylight had dawned upon the glades of the oak forest. The green boughs glittered with all their pearls of dew. The hind led her fawn from the covert of high fern to the more open walks of the greenwood; and no huntsman was there to watch or intercept the stately hart, as he paced at the head of the antler'd herd.

The outlaws were all assembled around the Trysting-tree in the Harthill-walk, where they had spent the night in refreshing themselves after the fatigues of the siege, some with wine, some with slumber, many with hearing and recounting the events of the day, and computing the heaps of plunder which their success had placed at the disposal of their Chief.

The spoils were indeed very large; for, notwithstanding that much was consumed, a great deal of plate, rich armour, and splendid clothing, had been secured by the exertions of the dauntless outlaws, who could be appalled by no danger when such rewards were in view. Yet so strict were the laws of their society, that no one ventured to appropriate any part of the booty, which was brought into one common mass to be at the disposal of their leader.

The place of rendezvous was an aged oak; not however the same to which Locksley had conducted Gurth and Wamba in the earlier part of the story, but one which was the centre of a silvan amphitheatre, within half a mile of the demolished castle of Torquilstone. Here Locksley assumed his seat — a throne of turf erected under the twisted branches of the huge oak, and the silvan followers were gathered around him. He assigned to the Black Knight a seat at his right hand, and to Cedric a place upon his left.

"Pardon my freedom, noble sirs," he said, "but in these glades I am monarch — they are my kingdom; and these my wild subjects would reck but little of my power, were I, within my own dominions, to yield place to mortal man. — Now, sirs, who hath seen our chaplain? where is our curtal Friar? A mass amongst Christian men best begins a busy morning." — No one had seen the Clerk of Copmanhurst. — "Over gods forbode!" said the outlaw Chief, "I trust the jolly priest hath but abidden by the wine-pot a thought too late. Who saw him since the castle was ta'en?"

"I," quoth the Miller, "marked him busy about the door of a cellar, swearing by each saint in the calendar he would taste the smack of Front-de-Bœuf's Gascoigne wine."

"Now, the saints, as many as there be of them," said the Captain, "forefend, lest he has drunk too deep of the wine-butts, and perished by the fall of the castle! — Away, Miller! — take with you enow of men, seek the place where you last saw him — throw water from the moat on the scorching ruins — I will have them removed stone by stone ere I lose my curtal Friar."

The numbers who hastened to execute this duty, considering that an interesting division of spoil was about to take place, shewed how much the troop had at heart the safety of their spiritual father.

"Meanwhile, let us proceed," said Locksley; "for when this bold deed shall be sounded abroad, the bands of De Bracy, of Malvoisin, and other allies of Front-de-Bœuf, will be in motion against us, and it were well for our safety that we retreat from the vicinity. — Noble Cedric," he said, turning to the Saxon, "that spoil is divided into two portions; do thou make choice of that best suits thee, to recompense thy people who were partakers with us in this adventure."

"Good yeoman," said Cedric, "my heart is oppressed with sadness. The noble Athelstane of Coningsburgh is no more — the last sprout of the sainted Confessor! Hopes have perished with him which can never return! — A sparkle hath been quenched by his blood, which no human breath can again rekindle! My people, save the few who are now with me, do but tarry my presence to transport his honoured remains to their last mansion. The Lady Rowena is desirous to return to Rotherwood, and must be escorted by a sufficient force. I should, therefore, ere now, have left this place; and I waited — not to share the booty, for, so help me God and Saint Withold! as neither I nor any of mine will touch the value of a liard, —

[1] See Note II. *Ulrica's Death Song.*

I waited but to render my thanks to thee and to thy bold yeomen, for the life and honour ye have saved."

"Nay, but," said the chief Outlaw, "we did but half the work at most — take of the spoil what may reward your own neighbours and followers."

"I am rich enough to reward them from mine own wealth," answered Cedric.

"And some," said Wamba, "have been wise enough to reward themselves; they do not march off empty-handed altogether. We do not all wear motley."

"They are welcome," said Locksley; "our laws bind none but ourselves."

"But thou, my poor knave," said Cedric, turning about and embracing his Jester, "how shall I reward thee, who feared not to give thy body to chains and death instead of mine! — All forsook me, when the poor fool was faithful!"

A tear stood in the eye of the rough Thane as he spoke — a mark of feeling which even the death of Athelstane had not extracted; but there was something in the half-instinctive attachment of his clown, that waked his nature more keenly than even grief itself.

"Nay," said the Jester, extricating himself from his master's caress, "if you pay my service with the water of your eye, the Jester must weep for company, and then what becomes of his vocation? — But, uncle, if you would indeed pleasure me, I pray you to pardon my playfellow Gurth, who stole a week from your service to bestow it on your son."

"Pardon him!" exclaimed Cedric; "I will both pardon and reward him. Kneel down, Gurth." — The swineherd was in an instant at his master's feet — "THEOW and ESNE[1] art thou no longer," said Cedric, touching him with a wand; "FOLKFREE and SACLESS[2] art thou in town and from town, in the forest as in the field. A hide of land I give to thee in my steads of Walburgham, from me and mine to thee and thine aye and for ever; and God's malison on his head who this gainsays!"

No longer a serf, but a freeman and a landholder, Gurth sprung upon his feet, and twice bounded aloft to almost his own height from the ground.

"A smith and a file," he cried, "to do away the collar from the neck of a freeman! — Noble master! doubled is my strength by your gift, and doubly will I fight for you! — There is a free spirit in my breast — I am a man changed to myself and all around. — Ha, Fangs!" he continued, — for that faithful cur, seeing his master thus transported, began to jump upon him, to express his sympathy, — "knowest thou thy master still?"

"Ay," said Wamba, "Fangs and I still know thee, Gurth, though we must needs abide by the collar; it is only thou art likely to forget both us and thyself."

"I shall forget myself indeed ere I forget thee, true comrade," said Gurth; "and were freedom fit for thee, Wamba, the master would not let thee want it."

"Nay," said Wamba, "never think I envy thee, brother Gurth; the serf sits by the hall-fire when the freeman must forth to the field of battle — And what saith Oldhelm of Malmsbury — Better a fool at a feast than a wise man at a fray."

[1] Thrall and bondsman. [2] A lawful freeman.

The tramp of horses was now heard, and the Lady Rowena appeared, surrounded by several riders, and a much stronger party of footmen, who joyfully shook their pikes and clashed their brown-bills for joy of her freedom. She herself, richly attired, and mounted on a dark chestnut palfrey, had recovered all the dignity of her manner, and only an unwonted degree of paleness shewed the sufferings she had undergone. Her lovely brow, though sorrowful, bore on it a cast of reviving hope for the future, as well as of grateful thankfulness for the past deliverance — She knew that Ivanhoe was safe, and she knew that Athelstane was dead. The former assurance filled her with the most sincere delight; and if she did not absolutely rejoice at the latter, she might be pardoned for feeling the full advantage of being freed from farther persecution on the only subject in which she had ever been contradicted by her guardian Cedric.

As Rowena bent her steed towards Locksley's seat, that bold yeoman, with all his followers, rose to receive her, as if by general instinct of courtesy. The blood rose to her cheeks, as, courteously waving her hand, and bending so low that her beautiful and loose tresses were for an instant mixed with the flowing mane of her palfrey, she expressed in few but apt words her obligations and her gratitude to Locksley and her other deliverers. — "God bless you, brave men," she concluded, "God and Our Lady bless you and requite you for gallantly periling yourselves in the cause of the oppressed! — If any of you should hunger, remember Rowena has food — if you should thirst, she has many a butt of wine and brown ale — and if the Normans drive ye from these walks, Rowena has forests of her own, where her gallant deliverers may range at full freedom, and never ranger ask whose arrow hath struck down the deer."

"Thanks, gentle lady," said Locksley; "thanks from my company and myself. But to have saved you requites itself. We who walk the greenwood do many a wild deed, and the Lady Rowena's deliverance may be received as an atonement."

Again bowing from her palfrey, Rowena turned to depart; but pausing a moment, while Cedric, who was to attend her, was also taking his leave, she found herself unexpectedly close by the prisoner De Bracy. He stood under a tree in deep meditation, his arms crossed upon his breast, and Rowena was in hopes that she might pass him unobserved. He looked up, however, and, when aware of her presence, a deep flush of shame suffused his handsome countenance. He stood a moment most irresolute; then, stepping forward, took her palfrey by the rein, and bent his knee before her.

"Will the Lady Rowena deign to cast an eye on a captive knight — on a dishonoured soldier?"

"Sir Knight," answered Rowena, "in enterprises such as yours, the real dishonour lies not in failure, but in success."

"Conquest, lady, should soften the heart," answered De Bracy; "let me but know that the Lady Rowena forgives the violence occasioned by an ill-fated passion, and she shall soon learn that De Bracy knows how to serve her in nobler ways."

"I forgive you, Sir Knight," said Rowena, "as a Christian."

"That means," said Wamba, "that she does not forgive him at all."

"But I can never forgive the misery and desolation your madness has occasioned," continued Rowena.

"Unloose your hold on the lady's rein," said Cedric, coming up. "By the bright sun above us, but it were shame, I would pin thee to the earth with my javelin — but be well assured, thou shalt smart, Maurice de Bracy, for thy share in this foul deed."

"He threatens safely who threatens a prisoner," said De Bracy; "but when had a Saxon any touch of courtesy?"

Then retiring two steps backward, he permitted the lady to move on.

Cedric, ere they departed, expressed his peculiar gratitude to the Black Champion, and earnestly entreated him to accompany him to Rotherwood.

"I know," he said, "that ye errant knights desire to carry your fortunes on the point of your lance, and reck not of lands or goods; but war is a changeful mistress, and a home is sometimes desirable even to the champion whose trade is wandering. Thou hast earned one in the halls of Rotherwood, noble knight. Cedric has wealth enough to repair the injuries of fortune, and all he has is his deliverer's — Come, therefore, to Rotherwood, not as a guest, but as a son or brother."

"Cedric has already made me rich," said the Knight, — "he has taught me the value of Saxon virtue. To Rotherwood will I come, brave Saxon, and that speedily; but, as now, pressing matters of moment detain me from your halls. Peradventure, when I come hither, I will ask such a boon as will put even thy generosity to the test."

"It is granted ere spoken out," said Cedric, striking his ready hand into the gauntleted palm of the Black Knight, — "it is granted already, were it to affect half my fortune."

"Gage not thy promise so lightly," said the Knight of the Fetterlock; "yet well I hope to gain the boon I shall ask. Meanwhile, adieu."

"I have but to say," added the Saxon, "that, during the funeral rites of the noble Athelstane, I shall be an inhabitant of the halls of his castle of Coningsburgh — They will be open to all who choose to partake of the funeral banqueting; and, I speak in name of the noble Edith, mother of the fallen prince, they will never be shut against him who laboured so bravely, though unsuccessfully, to save Athelstane from Norman chains and Norman steel."

"Ay, ay," said Wamba, who had resumed his attendance on his master, "rare feeding there will be — pity that the noble Athelstane cannot banquet at his own funeral. — But he," continued the Jester, lifting up his eyes gravely, "is supping in Paradise, and doubtless does honour to the cheer."

"Peace, and move on," said Cedric, his anger at this untimely jest being checked by the recollection of Wamba's recent services. Rowena waved a graceful adieu to him of the Fetterlock — the Saxon bade God speed him, and on they moved through a wide glade of the forest.

They had scarce departed, ere a sudden procession moved from under the greenwood branches, swept slowly round the silvan amphitheatre, and took the same direction with Rowena and her followers. The priests of a neighbouring convent, in expectation of the ample donation, or *soul-scat*, which Cedric had propined, attended upon the car in which the body of Athelstane was laid, and sang hymns as it was sadly and slowly borne on the shoulders of his vassals to his castle of Coningsburgh, to be there deposited in the grave of Hengist, from whom the deceased derived his long descent. Many of his vassals had assembled at the news of his death, and followed the bier with all the external marks, at least, of dejection and sorrow. Again the outlaws arose, and paid the same rude and spontaneous homage to death, which they had so lately rendered to beauty — the slow chant and mournful step of the priests, brought back to their remembrance such of their comrades as had fallen in the yesterday's affray. But such recollections dwell not long with those who lead a life of danger and enterprise, and ere the sound of the death-hymn had died on the wind, the outlaws were again busied in the distribution of their spoil.

"Valiant knight," said Locksley to the Black Champion, "without whose good heart and mighty arm our enterprise must altogether have failed, will it please you to take from that mass of spoil whatever may best serve to pleasure you, and to remind you of this my Trysting-tree?"

"I accept the offer," said the Knight, "as frankly as it is given; and I ask permission to dispose of Sir Maurice de Bracy at my own pleasure."

"He is thine already," said Locksley, "and well for him! else the tyrant had graced the highest bough of this oak, with as many of his Free-Companions as we could gather, hanging thick as acorns around him. — But he is thy prisoner, and he is safe, though he had slain my father."

"De Bracy," said the Knight, "thou art free — depart. He whose prisoner thou art scorns to take mean revenge for what is past. But beware of the future, lest a worse thing befall thee. — Maurice de Bracy, I say BEWARE!"

De Bracy bowed low and in silence, and was about to withdraw, when the yeomen burst at once into a shout of execration and derision. The proud knight instantly stopped, turned back, folded his arms, drew up his form to its full height, and exclaimed, "Peace, ye yelping curs! who open upon a cry which ye followed not when the stag was at bay — De Bracy scorns your censure as he would disdain your applause. To your brakes and caves, ye outlawed thieves! and be silent when aught knightly or noble is but spoken within a league of your fox-earths."

This ill-timed defiance might have procured for De Bracay a volley of arrows, but for the hasty and imperative interference of the outlaw Chief. Meanwhile the knight caught a horse by the rein, for several which had been taken in the stables of Front-de-Bœuf stood accoutred around, and were a valuable part of the booty. He threw himself upon the saddle, and galloped off through the wood.

When the bustle occasioned by this incident was somewhat composed, the chief Outlaw took from his neck the rich horn and baldric which he had recently gained at the strife of archery near Ashby.

"Noble knight," he said to him of the Fetterlock, "if you disdain not to grace by your acceptance a bugle which an English yeoman has once worn, this will I pray you to keep as a memorial of your gallant bearing — and if ye have aught to do, and, as happeneth oft to a gallant knight, ye chance to be hard bested in any forest between Trent and

Tees, wind three mots[1] upon the horn thus, *Wa-su-hoa!* and it may well chance ye shall find helpers and rescue."

He then gave breath to the bugle, and winded once and again the call which he described, until the knight had caught the notes.

"Gramercy for the gift, bold yeoman," said the Knight; "and better help than thine and thy rangers would I never seek, were it at my utmost need." And then in his turn he winded the call till all the greenwood rang.

"Well blown and clearly," said the yeoman; "beshrew me an thou knowest not as much of woodcraft as of war!—thou hast been a striker of deer in thy day, I warrant.—Comrades, mark these three mots—it is the call of the Knight of the Fetterlock; and he who hears it, and hastens not to serve him at his need, I will have him scourged out of our band with his own bowstring."

"Long live our leader!" shouted the yeomen, "and long live the Black Knight of the Fetterlock!—May he soon use our service, to prove how readily it will be paid."

Locksley now proceeded to the distribution of the spoil, which he performed with the most laudable impartiality. A tenth part of the whole was set apart for the church, and for pious uses; a portion was next allotted to a sort of public treasury; a part was assigned to the widows and children of those who had fallen, or to be expended in masses for the souls of such as had left no surviving family. The rest was divided amongst the outlaws, according to their rank and merit; and the judgment of the Chief, on all such doubtful questions as occurred, was delivered with great shrewdness, and received with absolute submission. The Black Knight was not a little surprised to find that men, in a state so lawless, were nevertheless among themselves so regularly and equitably governed, and all that he observed added to his opinion of the justice and judgment of their leader.

When each had taken his own proportion of the booty, and while the treasurer, accompanied by four tall yeomen, was transporting that belonging to the state to some place of concealment or of security, the portion devoted to the church still remained unappropriated.

"I would," said the leader, "we could hear tidings of our joyous chaplain—he was never wont to be absent when meat was to be blessed, or spoil to be parted; and it is his duty to take care of these the tithes of our successful enterprise. It may be the office has helped to cover some of his canonical irregularities. Also, I have a holy brother of his a prisoner at no great distance, and I would fain have the Friar to help me to deal with him in due sort—I greatly misdoubt the safety of the bluff priest."

"I were right sorry for that," said the Knight of the Fetterlock, "for I stand indebted to him for the joyous hospitality of a merry night in his cell. Let us to the ruins of the castle; it may be we shall there learn some tidings of him."

While they thus spoke, a loud shout among the yeomen announced the arrival of him for whom they feared, as they learned from the stentorian voice of the Friar himself, long before they saw his burly person.

"Make room, my merry men!" he exclaimed; "room for your godly father and his prisoner—Cry welcome once more.—I come, noble leader, like an eagle, with my prey in my clutch."—And making his way through the ring, amidst the laughter of all around, he appeared in majestic triumph, his huge partisan in one hand, and in the other a halter, one end of which was fastened to the neck of the unfortunate Isaac of York, who, bent down by sorrow and terror, was dragged on by the victorious priest, who shouted aloud, "Where is Allan-a-Dale, to chronicle me in a ballad, or if it were but a lay?—By Saint Hermangild, the jingling crowder is ever out of the way where there is an apt theme for exalting valour!"

"Curtal Priest," said the Captain, "thou hast been at a wet mass this morning, as early as it is. In the name of Saint Nicholas, whom hast thou got here?"

"A captive to my sword and to my lance, noble Captain," replied the Clerk of Copmanhurst; "to my bow and to my halberd, I should rather say; and yet I have redeemed him by my divinity from a worse captivity. Speak, Jew—have I not ransomed thee from Sathanas?—have I not taught thee thy *credo*, thy *pater*, and thine *Ave Maria*?—Did I not spend the whole night in drinking to thee, and in expounding of mysteries?"

"For the love of God!" ejaculated the poor Jew, "will no one take me out of the keeping of this mad—I mean this holy man?"

"How's this, Jew?" said the Friar, with a menacing aspect; "dost thou recant, Jew?—Bethink thee, if thou dost relapse into thine infidelity, though thou art not so tender as a suckling pig—I would I had one to break my fast upon—thou art not too tough to be roasted! Be conformable, Isaac, and repeat the words after me. *Ave Maria!*——"

"Nay, we will have no profanation, mad Priest," said Locksley; "let us rather hear where you found this prisoner of thine."

"By St Dunstan," said the Friar, "I found him where I sought for better ware! I did step into the cellarage to see what might be rescued there; for though a cup of burnt wine, with spice, be an evening's draught for an emperor, it were waste, methought, to let so much good liquor be mulled at once; and I caught up one runlet of sack, and was coming to call more aid among these lazy knaves, who are ever to seek when a good deed is to be done, when I was avised of a strong door—Aha! thought I, here is the choicest juice of all in this secret crypt; and the knave butler, being disturbed in his vocation, hath left the key in the door—In therefore I went, and found just nought besides a commodity of rusted chains and this dog of a Jew, who presently rendered himself my prisoner, rescue or no rescue. I did but refresh myself after the fatigue of the action with the unbeliever, with one humming cup of sack, and was proceeding to lead forth my captive, when, crash after crash, as with wild thunder-dint and levin-fire, down toppled the masonry of an outer tower, (marry beshrew their hands that built it not the firmer!) and blocked up the passage. The roar of one falling tower followed another—I gave up thought of life; and deeming it a dishonour to one

[1] The notes upon the bugles were anciently called mots, and are distinguished in the old treatises on hunting, not by musical characters, but by written words.

of my profession to pass out of this world in company with a Jew, I heaved up my halberd to beat his brains out; but I took pity on his gray hairs, and judged it better to lay down the partisan, and take up my spiritual weapon for his conversion. And truly, by the blessing of Saint Dunstan, the seed has been sown in good soil; only that, with speaking to him of mysteries through the whole night, and being in a manner fasting, (for the few draughts of sack which I sharpened my wits with were not worth marking,) my head is well-nigh dizzied, I trow. — But I was clean exhausted. — Gilbert and Wibbald know in what state they found me — quite and clean exhausted."

"We can bear witness," said Gilbert; "for when we had cleared away the ruin, and by Saint Dunstan's help lighted upon the dungeon stair, we found the runlet of sack half empty, the Jew half dead, and the Friar more than half — exhausted, as he calls it."

"Ye be knaves! ye lie!" retorted the offended Friar; "it was you and your gormandizing companions that drank up the sack, and called it your morning draught — I am a pagan, an I kept it not for the Captain's own throat. But what recks it? the Jew is converted, and understands all I have told him, very nearly, if not altogether, as well as myself."

"Jew," said the Captain, "is this true? hast thou renounced thine unbelief?"

"May I so find mercy in your eyes," said the Jew, "as I know not one word which the reverend prelate spake to me all this fearful night. Alas! I was so distraught with agony, and fear, and grief, that had our holy father Abraham come to preach to me, he had found but a deaf listener."

"Thou liest, Jew, and thou knowest thou dost," said the Friar; "I will remind thee but of one word of our conference — thou didst promise to give all thy substance to our holy Order."

"So help me the Promise, fair sirs," said Isaac, even more alarmed than before, "as no such sounds ever crossed my lips! Alas! I am an aged beggar'd man — I fear me a childless — have ruth on me, and let me go!"

"Nay," said the Friar, "if thou dost retract vows made in favour of holy Church, thou must do penance."

Accordingly, he raised his halberd, and would have laid the staff of it lustily on the Jew's shoulders, had not the Black Knight stopped the blow, and thereby transferred the Holy Clerk's resentment to himself.

"By Saint Thomas of Kent," said he, "an I buckle to my gear, I will teach thee, sir lazy lover, to mell with thine own matters, maugre thine iron case there!"

"Nay, be not wroth with me," said the Knight; "thou knowest I am thy sworn friend and comrade."

"I know no such thing," answered the Friar; "and defy thee for a meddling coxcomb!"

"Nay, but," said the Knight, who seemed to take a pleasure in provoking his quondam host, "hast thou forgotten how, that for my sake (for I say nothing of the temptation of the flagon and the pasty) thou didst break thy vow of fast and vigil?"

"Truly, friend," said the Friar, clenching his huge fist, "I will bestow a buffet on thee."

"I accept of no such presents," said the Knight; "I am content to take thy cuff[1] as a loan, but I will repay thee with usury as deep as ever thy prisoner there exacted in his traffic."

"I will prove that presently," said the Friar.

"Hola!" cried the Captain, "what art thou after, mad Friar? brawling beneath our Trysting-tree?"

"No brawling," said the Knight, "it is but a friendly interchange of courtesy. — Friar, strike an thou darest — I will stand thy blow, if thou wilt stand mine."

"Thou hast the advantage with that iron pot on thy head," said the churchman; "but have at thee — Down thou goest an thou wert Goliath of Gath in his brazen helmet."

The Friar bared his brawny arm up to the elbow, and putting his full strength to the blow, gave the knight a buffet that might have felled an ox. But his adversary stood firm as a rock. A loud shout was uttered by all the yeomen around; for the Clerk's cuff was proverbial amongst them, and there were few who, in jest or earnest, had not had occasion to know its vigour.

"Now, Priest," said the Knight, pulling off his gauntlet, "if I had vantage on my head, I will have none on my hand — stand fast as a true man."

"*Genam meam dedi vapulatori* — I have given my cheek to the smiter," said the Priest; "an thou canst stir me from the spot, fellow, I will freely bestow on thee the Jew's ransom."

So spoke the burly Priest, assuming, on his part, high defiance. But who may resist his fate? The buffet of the Knight was given with such strength and good-will, that the Friar rolled head over heels upon the plain, to the great amazement of all the spectators. But he arose neither angry nor crest fallen.

"Brother," said he to the Knight, "thou shouldst have used thy strength with more discretion. I had mumbled but a lame mass an thou hadst broken my jaw, for the piper plays ill that wants the nether chops. Nevertheless, there is my hand, in friendly witness that I will exchange no more cuffs with thee, having been a loser by the barter. End now all unkindness. Let us put the Jew to ransom, since the leopard will not change his spots, and a Jew he will continue to be."

"The Priest," said Clement, "is not half so confident of the Jew's conversion, since he received that buffet on the ear."

"Go to, knave, what pratest thou of conversions? — what, is there no respect? — all masters and no men? — I tell thee, fellow, I was somewhat totty when I received the good knight's blow, or I had kept my ground under it. But an thou gibest more of it, thou shalt learn I can give as well as take."

"Peace all!" said the Captain "And thou, Jew, think of thy ransom; thou needest not to be told that thy race are held to be accursed in all Christian communities, and trust me that we cannot endure thy presence among us. Think, therefore, of an offer, while I examine a prisoner of another cast."

"Were many of Front-de-Bœuf's men taken?" demanded the Black Knight.

"None of note enough to be put to ransom," answered the Captain; "a set of hilding fellows there were, whom we dismissed to find them a new

[1] See Note I. *Richard Cœur-de-Lion*

master — enough had been done for revenge and profit; the bunch of them were not worth a cardecu. The prisoner I speak of is better booty — a jolly monk riding to visit his leman, an I may judge by his horse-gear and wearing apparel. — Here cometh the worthy prelate, as pert as a pyet." And, between two yeomen, was brought before the silvan throne of the outlaw Chief, our friend, Prior Aymer of Jorvaulx.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

— Flower of warriors,
How is 't with Titus Lartius?
Marcius. As with a man busied about decrees,
Condemning some to death and some to exile,
Ransoming him or pitying, threatening the other.
Coriolanus.

The captive Abbot's features and manners exhibited a whimsical mixture of offended pride, and deranged foppery and bodily terror.

"Why, how now, my masters?" said he, with a voice in which all three emotions were blended. "What order is this among ye? Be ye Turks or Christians, that handle a churchman? — Know ye what it is, *manus imponere in servos Domini?* Ye have plundered my mails — torn my cope of curious cut lace, which might have served a cardinal! Another in my place would have been at his *excommunicabo vos;* but I am placable, and if ye order forth my palfreys, release my brethren, and restore my mails, tell down with all speed an hundred crowns to be expended in masses at the high altar of Jorvaulx Abbey, and make your vow to eat no venison until next Pentecost, it may be you shall hear little more of this mad frolic."

"Holy Father," said the chief Outlaw, "it grieves me to think that you have met with such usage from any of my followers, as calls for your fatherly reprehension."

"Usage!" echoed the priest, encouraged by the mild tone of the silvan leader; "it were usage fit for no hound of good race — much less for a Christian — far less for a priest — and least of all for the Prior of the holy community of Jorvaulx. Here is a profane and drunken minstrel, called Allan-a-Dale — *nebulo quidam* — who has menaced me with corporal punishment — nay, with death itself, an I pay not down four hundred crowns of ransom, to the boot of all the treasure he hath already robbed me of — gold chains and gymmal rings to an unknown value; besides what is broken and spoiled among their rude hands, such as my pouncet-box and silver crisping-tongs."

"It is impossible that Allan-a-Dale can have thus treated a man of your reverend bearing," replied the Captain.

"It is true as the gospel of Saint Nicodemus," said the Prior; "he swore, with many a cruel north-country oath, that he would hang me up on the highest tree in the greenwood."

"Did he so in very deed? Nay, then, reverend father, I think you had better comply with his demands — for Allan-a-Dale is the very man to abide by his word when he has so pledged it."[1]

"You do but jest with me," said the astounded Prior, with a forced laugh; "and I love a good jest with all my heart. But, ha! ha! ha! when the mirth has lasted the live-long night, it is time to be grave in the morning."

"And I am as grave as a father confessor," replied the Outlaw; "you must pay a round ransom, Sir Prior, or your convent is likely to be called to a new election; for your place will know you no more."

"Are ye Christians," said the Prior, "and hold this language to a churchman?"

"Christians! ay, marry are we, and have divinity among us to boot," answered the Outlaw. "Let our buxom chaplain stand forth, and expound to this reverend father the texts which concern this matter."

The Friar, half-drunk, half-sober, had huddled a friar's frock over his green cassock, and now summoning together whatever scraps of learning he had acquired by rote in former days, "Holy father," said he, "*Deusfaciat salvam benignitatem vestram* — You are welcome to the greenwood."

"What profane mummery is this?" said the Prior. "Friend, if thou be'st indeed of the church, it were a better deed to shew me how I may escape from these men's hands, than to stand ducking and grinning here like a morris-dancer."

"Truly, reverend father," said the Friar, "I know but one mode in which thou mayst escape. This is Saint Andrew's day with us, we are taking our tithes."

"But not of the church then, I trust, my good brother?" said the Prior.

"Of church and lay," said the Friar; "and therefore, Sir Prior, *facite vobis amicos de Mammone iniquitatis* — make yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, for no other friendship is like to serve your turn."

"I love a jolly woodsman at heart," said the Prior, softening his tone; "come, ye must not deal too hard with me — I can well of woodcraft, and can wind a horn clear and lustily, and hollo till every oak rings again — Come, ye must not deal too hard with me."

"Give him a horn," said the Outlaw; "we will prove the skill he boasts of."

The Prior Aymer winded a blast accordingly. The Captain shook his head.

"Sir Prior," he said, "thou blowest a merry note, but it may not ransom thee — we cannot afford, as the legend on a good knight's shield hath it, to set thee free for a blast. Moreover, I have found thee — thou art one of those, who, with new French graces and Tra-li-ras, disturb the ancient English bugle notes. — Prior, that last flourish on the recheat hath added fifty crowns to thy ransom, for corrupting the true old manly blasts of venerie."

"Well, friend," said the Abbot, peevishly, "thou art ill to please with thy woodcraft. I pray thee be more conformable in this matter of my ransom. At a word — since I must needs, for once, hold a candle to the devil — what ransom am I to pay for walking on Watling-street, without having fifty men at my back?"

"Were it not well," said the Lieutenant of the gang apart to the Captain, "that the Prior should name the Jew's ransom, and the Jew name the Prior's?"

"Thou art a mad knave," said the Captain, "but

[1] A commissary is said to have received similar consolation from a certain commander-in-chief, to whom he complained that a general officer had used some such threat towards him as that in the text.

thy plan transcends! — Here, Jew, step forth — Look at that holy Father Aymer, Prior of the rich Abbey of Jorvaulx, and tell us at what ransom we should hold him! — Thou knowest the income of his convent, I warrant thee."

"Oh, assuredly," said Isaac, "I have trafficked with the good fathers, and bought wheat and barley, and fruits of the earth, and also much wool. Oh, it is a rich abbey-stede, and they do live upon the fat, and drink the sweet wines upon the lees, these good fathers of Jorvaulx. Ah, if an outcast like me had such a home to go to, and such incomings by the year and by the month, I would pay much gold and silver to redeem my captivity."

"Hound of a Jew!" exclaimed the Prior, "no one knows better than thy own cursed self, that our holy house of God is indebted for the finishing of our chancel ——"

"And for the storing of your cellars in the last season with the due allowance of Gascon wine," interrupted the Jew; "but that — that is small matters."

"Hear the infidel dog!" said the churchman; "he jangles as if our holy community did come under debts for the wines we have a licence to drink *propter necessitatem, et ad frigus depellendum*. The circumcised villain blasphemeth the holy church, and Christian men listen and rebuke him not!"

"All this helps nothing," said the leader. — "Isaac pronounce what he may pay, without flaying both hide and hair."

"An six hundred crowns," said Isaac, "the good Prior might well pay to your honoured valours, and never sit less soft in his stall."

"Six hundred crowns," said the leader, gravely; "I am contented — thou hast well spoken, Isaac — six hundred crowns. — It is a sentence, Sir Prior."

"A sentence! — a sentence!" exclaimed the band; "Solomon had not done it better."

"Thou hearest thy doom, Prior," said the leader.

"Ye are mad, my masters," said the Prior; "where am I to find such a sum! If I sell the very pyx and candlesticks on the altar at Jorvaulx, I shall scarce raise the half; and it will be necessary for that purpose that I go to Jorvaulx myself: ye may retain as borrows[1] my two priests."

"That will be but blind trust," said the Outlaw; "we will retain thee, Prior, and send them to fetch thy ransom. Thou shalt not want a cup of wine and a collop of venison the while; and if thou lovest woodcraft, thou shalt see such as your north country never witnessed."

"Or, if so please you," said Isaac, willing to curry favour with the outlaws, "I can send to York for the six hundred crowns, out of certain moneys in my hands, if so be that the most reverend Prior present will grant me a quittance."

"He shall grant thee whatever thou dost list, Isaac," said the Captain; "and thou shalt lay down the redemption money for Prior Aymer as well as for thyself."

"For myself! ah, courageous sirs," said the Jew; "I am a broken and impoverished man; a beggar's staff must be my portion through life, supposing I were to pay you fifty crowns."

"The Prior shall judge of that matter," replied the Captain. — "How say you, Father Aymer! Can the Jew afford a good ransom?"

"*Can* he afford a ransom?" answered the Prior — "Is he not Isaac of York, rich enough to redeem the captivity of the ten tribes of Israel, who were led into Assyrian bondage? — I have seen but little of him myself, but our cellarer and treasurer have dealt largely with him, and report says that his house at York is so full of gold and silver as is a shame in any Christian land. Marvel it is to all living Christian hearts that such gnawing adders should be suffered to eat into the bowels of the state, and even of the holy church herself, with foul usuries and extortions."

"Hold, father," said the Jew, "mitigate and assuage your choler. I pray of your reverence to remember that I force my moneys upon no one. But when churchman and layman, prince and prior, knight and priest, come knocking to Isaac's door, they borrow not his shekels with these uncivil terms. It is then, Friend Isaac, will you pleasure us in this matter, and our day shall be truly kept, so God sa' me? — and kind Isaac, if ever you served man, shew yourself a friend in this need. And when the day comes, and I ask my own, then what hear I but damned Jew, and the curse of Egypt on your tribe, and all that may stir up the rude and uncivil populace against poor strangers!"

"Prior," said the Captain, "Jew though he is, he hath in this spoken well. Do thou therefore, name his ransom, as he named thine, without farther rude terms."

"None but *latro famosus* — the interpretation whereof," said the Prior, "will I give at some other time and tide — would place a Christian prelate and an unbaptized Jew upon the same bench. But since ye require me to put a price upon this caitiff, I tell you openly that ye will wrong yourselves if you take from him a penny under a thousand crowns."

"A sentence! — a sentence!" said the chief Outlaw.

"A sentence! — a sentence!" shouted his assessors; "the Christian has shewn his good nurture, and dealt with us more generously than the Jew."

"The God of my fathers help me!" said the Jew; "will ye bear to the ground an impoverished creature? — I am this day childless, and will ye deprive me of the means of livelihood?"

"Thou wilt have the less to provide for, Jew, if thou art childless," said Aymer.

"Alas! my lord," said Isaac, "your law permits you not to know how the child of our bosom is entwined with the strings of our heart — O Rebecca! daughter of my beloved Rachael! were each leaf on that tree a zecchin, and each zecchin mine own, all that mass of wealth would I give to know whether thou art alive, and escaped the hands of the Nazarene!"

"Was not thy daughter dark-haired?" said one of the outlaws; "and wore she not a veil of twisted sendal, broidered with silver?"

"She did! — she did!" said the old man, trembling with eagerness, as formerly with fear. "The blessing of Jacob be upon thee! canst thou tell me aught of her safety?"

"It was she, then," said the yeoman, "who was carried off by the proud Templar, when he broke through our ranks on yester-even. I had drawn

[1] Borghs, or borrows signifies pledges. Hence our word to borrow, because we pledge ourselves to restore what is lent.

my bow to send a shaft after him, but spared him even for the sake of the damsel, who I feared might take harm from the arrow."

"Oh!" answered the Jew, "I would to God thou hadst shot, though the arrow had pierced her bosom!—Better the tomb of her fathers than the dishonourable couch of the licentious and savage Templar. Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory hath departed from my house."

"Friends," said the Chief, looking round, "the old man is but a Jew, natheless his grief touches me.—Deal uprightly with us, Isaac—will paying this ransom of a thousand crowns leave thee altogether penniless?"

Isaac, recalled to think of his worldly goods, the love of which, by dint of inveterate habit, contended even with his parental affection, grew pale, stammered, and could not deny there might be some small surplus.

"Well—go to—what though there be," said the Outlaw, "we will not reckon with thee too closely. Without treasure thou mayst as well hope to redeem thy child from the clutches of Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as to shoot a stag-royal with a headless shaft—We will take thee at the same ransom with Prior Aymer, or rather at one hundred crowns lower, which hundred crowns shall be mine own peculiar loss, and not light upon this worshipful community; and so we shall avoid the heinous offence of rating a Jew merchant as high as a Christian prelate, and thou wilt have six hundred crowns remaining to treat for thy daughter's ransom. Templars love the glitter of silver shekels as well as the sparkle of black eyes.—Hasten to make thy crowns chink in the ear of De Bois-Guilbert, ere worse comes of it. Thou wilt find him, as our scouts have brought notice, at the next Preceptory house of his Order.—Said I well, my merry mates?"

The yeomen expressed their wonted acquiescence in their leader's opinion; and Isaac, relieved of one half of his apprehensions, by learning that his daughter lived, and might possibly be ransomed, threw himself at the feet of the generous Outlaw, and, rubbing his beard against his buskins, sought to kiss the hem of his green cassock. The Captain drew himself back, and extricated himself from the Jew's grasp not without some marks of contempt.

"Nay, beshrew thee, man, up with thee! I am English born, and love no such Eastern prostrations—Kneel to God, and not to a poor sinner, like me."

"Ay, Jew," said Prior Aymer; "kneel to God, as represented in the servant of his altar, and who knows, with thy sincere repentance and due gifts to the shrine of Saint Robert, what grace thou mayest acquire for thyself and thy daughter Rebecca! I grieve for the maiden, for she is of fair and comely countenance,—I beheld her in the lists of Ashby. Also Brian de Bois-Guilbert is one with whom I may do much—bethink thee how thou mayest deserve my good word with him."

"Alas! alas!" said the Jew, "on every hand the spoilers arise against me—I am given as a prey unto the Assyrian, and a prey unto him of Egypt."

"And what else should be the lot of thy accursed race?" answered the Prior; "for what saith holy writ, *verbum Domini projecerunt, et sapientia est nulla in eis*—they have cast forth the word of the Lord, and there is no wisdom in them; *propterea dabo mulieres eorum exteris*—I will give their women to strangers, that is, to the Templar, as in the present matter; *et thesauros eorum hæredibus alienis*, and their treasures to others—as in the present case to these honest gentlemen."

Isaac groaned deeply, and began to wring his hands, and to relapse into his state of desolation and despair. But the leader of the yeomen led him aside.

"Advise thee well, Isaac," said Locksley, "what thou wilt do in this matter; my counsel to thee is to make a friend of this churchman. He is vain, Isaac, and he is covetous; at least he needs money to supply his profusion. Thou canst easily gratify his greed; for think not that I am blinded by thy pretexts of poverty. I am intimately acquainted, Isaac, with the very iron chest in which thou dost keep thy money-bags—What! know I not the great stone beneath the apple-tree, that leads into the vaulted chamber under thy garden at York?" The Jew grew as pale as death—"But fear nothing from me," continued the yeoman, "for we are of old acquainted. Dost thou not remember the sick yeoman whom thy fair daughter Rebecca redeemed from the gyves at York, and kept him in thy house till his health was restored, when thou didst dismiss him recovered, and with a piece of money?—Usurer as thou art, thou didst never place coin at better interest than that poor silver mark, for it has this day saved thee five hundred crowns."

"And thou art he whom we called Diccon Bend-the-Bow?" said Isaac; "I thought ever I knew the accent of thy voice."

"I am Bend-the-Bow," said the Captain, "and Locksley, and have a good name besides all these."

"But thou art mistaken, good Bend-the-Bow, concerning that same vaulted apartment. So help me Heaven, as there is nought in it but some merchandise which I will gladly part with to you—one hundred yards of Lincoln green to make doublets to thy men, and a hundred staves of Spanish yew to make bows, and one hundred silken bowstrings, tough, round, and sound,—these will I send thee for thy good-will, honest Diccon, an thou wilt keep silence about the vault, my good Diccon."

"Silent as a dormouse," said the Outlaw; "and never trust me but I am grieved for thy daughter. But I may not help it—The Templar's lances are too strong for my archery in the open field—they would scatter us like dust. Had I but known it was Rebecca when she was borne off, something might have been done; but now thou must needs proceed by policy. Come, shall I treat for thee with the Prior?"

"In God's name, Diccon, an thou canst, aid me to recover the child of my bosom!"

"Do not thou interrupt me with thine ill-timed avarice," said the Outlaw, "and I will deal with him in thy behalf."

He then turned from the Jew, who followed him, however, as closely as his shadow.

"Prior Aymer," said the Captain, "come apart with me under this tree. Men say thou dost love wine, and a lady's smile, better than beseems thy Order, Sir Priest; but with that I have nought to do. I have heard, too, thou dost love a brace of good dogs and a fleet horse, and it may well be that, loving things which are costly to come by, thou hatest not a purse of gold. But I have never heard that thou didst love oppression or cruelty.—

Now, here is Isaac willing to give thee the means of pleasure and pastime in a bag containing one hundred marks of silver, if thy intercession with thine ally the Templar shall avail to procure the freedom of his daughter."

"In safety and honour, as when taken from me," said the Jew, "otherwise it is no bargain."

"Peace, Isaac," said the Outlaw, "or I give up thine interest. What say you to this my purpose, Prior Aymer?"

"The matter," quoth the Prior, "is of a mixed condition; for, if I do a good on the one hand, yet on the other, it goeth to the vantage of a Jew, and in so much is against my conscience. Yet, if the Israelite will advantage the Church by giving me somewhat over to the building of our dortour[1] I will take it on my conscience to aid him in the matter of his daughter."

"For a score of marks to the dortour," said the Outlaw,—"Be still, I say, Isaac!—or for a brace of silver candlesticks to the altar, we will not stand with you."

"Nay, but, good Diccon Bend-the-Bow"—said Isaac, endeavouring to interpose.

"Good Jew—good beast—good earthworm!" said the yeoman, losing patience; "an thou dost go on to put thy filthy lucre in the balance with thy daughter's life and honour, by Heaven, I will strip thee of every maravedi thou hast in the world, before three days are out!"

Isaac shrunk together, and was silent.

"And what pledge am I to have for all this?" said the Prior.

"When Isaac returns successful through your mediation," said the Outlaw, "I swear by Saint Hubert, I will see that he pays thee the money in good silver, or I will reckon with him for it in such sort, he had better have paid twenty such sums."

"Well then, Jew," said Aymer, "since I must needs meddle in this matter, let me have the use of thy writing-tablets—though, hold—rather than use thy pen, I would fast for twenty-four hours, and where shall I find one?"

"If your holy scruples can dispense with using the Jew's tablets, for the pen I can find a remedy," said the yeoman; and, bending his bow, he aimed his shaft at a wild-goose which was soaring over their heads, the advanced-guard of a phalanx of his tribe, which were winging their way to the distant and solitary fens of Holderness. The bird came fluttering down, transfixed with the arrow.

"There, Prior," said the Captain, "are quills enow to supply all the monks of Jorvaulx for the next hundred years, an they take not to writing chronicles."

The Prior sat down, and at great leisure indited an epistle to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and having carefully sealed up the tablets, delivered them to the Jew, saying, "This will be thy safe-conduct to the Preceptory of Templestowe, and, as I think, is most likely to accomplish the delivery of thy daughter, if it be well backed with proffers of advantage and commodity at thine own hand; for, trust me well, the good Knight Bois-Guilbert is of their confraternity that do nought for nought."

"Well, Prior," said the Outlaw, "I will detain thee no longer here than to give the Jew a quittance for the five hundred crowns at which thy ransom is fixed—I accept of him for my paymaster; and if I hear that ye boggle at allowing him in his accompts the sum so paid by him, Saint Mary refuse me, an I burn not the abbey over thine head, though I hang ten years the sooner!"

With a much worse grace than that wherewith he had penned the letter to Bois-Guilbert, the Prior wrote an acquittance, discharging Isaac of York of five hundred crowns, advanced to him in his need for acquittal of his ransom, and faithfully promising to hold true compt with him for that sum.

"And now," said Prior Aymer, "I will pray you of restitution of my mules and palfreys, and the freedom of the reverend brethren attending upon me, and also of the gymmal rings, jewels, and fair vestures, of which I have been despoiled, having now satisfied you for my ransom as a true prisoner."

"Touching your brethren, Sir Prior," said Locksley, "they shall have present freedom, it were unjust to detain them; touching your horses and mules, they shall also be restored, with such spending money as may enable you to reach York, for it were cruel to deprive you of the means of journeying.—But as concerning rings, jewels, chains, and what else, you must understand that we are men of tender consciences, and will not yield to a venerable man like yourself, who should be dead to the vanities of this life, the strong temptation to break the rule of his foundation, by wearing rings, chains, or other vain gauds."

"Think what you do, my masters," said the Prior, "ere you put your hands on the Church's patrimony—These things are *inter res sacras*, and I wot not what judgment might ensue were they to be handled by laical hands."

"I will take care of that, reverend Prior," said the Hermit of Copmanhurst; "for I will wear them myself."

"Friend, or brother," said the Prior, in answer to this solution of his doubts, "if thou hast really taken religious orders, I pray thee to look how thou wilt answer to thine official for the share thou hast taken in this day's work.

"Friend Prior," returned the Hermit, "you are to know that I belong to a little diocese, where I am my own diocesan, and care as little for the Bishop of York as I do for the Abbot of Jorvaulx, the Prior, and all the convent."

"Thou art utterly irregular," said the Prior; "one of those disorderly men, who, taking on them the sacred character without due cause, profane the holy rites, and endanger the souls of those who take counsel at their hands; *lapides pro pane condenantes iis*, giving them stones instead of bread, as the Vulgate hath it."

"Nay," said the Friar, "an my brain-pan could have been broken by Latin, it had not held so long together.—I say, that easing a world of such mis-proud priests as thou art of their jewels and their gimcracks, is a lawful spoiling of the Egyptians."

"Thou be 'st a hedge-priest,"[2] said the Prior, in great wrath, "*excommunicabo vos.*"

"Thou be 'st thyself more like a thief and a heretic," said the Friar, equally indignant; "I will pouch up no such affront before my parishioners, as thou thinkest it not shame to put upon me, although I be a reverend brother to thee. *Ossa ejus per-*

[1] *Dortour*, or dormitory.

[2] See Note K. *Hedge-Priests.*

tringam, I will break your bones as the Vulgate hath it."

"Hola!" cried the Captain, "come the reverend brethren to such terms?— Keep thine assurance of peace, Friar.— Prior, an thou hast not made thy peace perfect with God, provoke the Friar no farther.— Hermit, let the reverend father depart in peace, as a ransomed man."

The yeomen separated the incensed priests, who continued to raise their voices, vituperating each other in bad Latin, which the Prior delivered the more fluently, and the Hermit with the greater vehemence. The Prior at length recollected himself sufficiently to be aware that he was compromising his dignity, by squabbling with such a hedge-priest as the Outlaw's chaplain, and being joined by his attendants, rode off with considerably less pomp, and in a much more apostolical condition, so far as worldly matters were concerned, than he had exhibited before this rencounter.

It remained that the Jew should produce some security for the ransom which he was to pay on the Prior's account, as well as upon his own. He gave, accordingly, an order sealed with his signet, to a brother of his tribe at York, requiring him to pay to the bearer the sum of a thousand crowns, and to deliver certain merchandises specified in the note.

"My brother Sheva," he said, groaning deeply, "hath the key of my warehouses."

"And of the vaulted chamber" whispered Locksley.

"No, no— may Heaven forefend!" said Isaac; "evil is the hour that let any one whomsoever into that secret."

"It is safe with me," said the Outlaw, "so be that this thy scroll produce the sum therein nominated and set down.— But what now, Isaac? art dead? art stupified? hath the payment of a thousand crowns put thy daughter's peril out of thy mind?"

The Jew started to his feet— "No, Diccon, no — I will presently set forth.— Farewell, thou whom I may not call good, and dare not and will not call evil."

Yet ere Isaac departed, the Outlaw Chief bestowed on him this parting advice:— "Be liberal of thine offers, Isaac, and spare not thy purse for thy daughter's safety. Credit me, that the gold thou shalt spare in her cause, will hereafter give thee as much agony as if it were poured molten down thy throat."

Isaac acquiesced with a deep groan, and set forth on his journey, accompanied by two tall foresters, who were to be his guides, and at the same time his guards through the wood.

The Black Knight, who had seen with no small interest these various proceedings, now took his leave of the Outlaw in turn; nor could he avoid expressing his surprise at having witnessed so much of civil policy amongst persons cast out from all the ordinary protection and influence of the laws.

"Good fruit, Sir Knight," said the yeoman, "will sometimes grow on a sorry tree; and evil times are not always productive of evil alone and unmixed. Amongst those who are drawn into this lawless state, there are, doubtless, numbers who wish to exercise its licence with some moderation, and some who regret, it may be, that they are obliged to follow such a trade at all."

"And to one of those," said the Knight, "I am now, I presume, speaking?"

"Sir Knight," said the Outlaw, "we have each our secret. You are welcome to form your judgment of me, and I may use my conjectures touching you, though neither of our shafts may hit the mark they are shot at. But as I do not pray to be admitted into your mystery, be not offended that I preserve my own."

"I crave pardon, brave Outlaw," said the Knight, "your reproof is just. But it may be we shall meet hereafter with less of concealment on either side.— Meanwhile we part friends, do we not?"

"There is my hand upon it," said Locksley; "and I will call it the hand of a true Englishman, though an outlaw for the present."

"And there is mine in return," said the Knight; "and I hold it honoured by being clasped with yours. For he that does good, having the unlimited power to do evil, deserves praise not only for the good which he performs, but for the evil which he forbears. Fare thee well, gallant Outlaw!"

Thus parted that fair fellowship; and he of the Fetterlock, mounting upon his strong war-horse, rode off through the forest.

CHAPTER XXXV.

King John. I'll tell thee what, my friend,
He is a very serpent in my way;
And wheresoe'er this foot of mine doth tread,
He lies before me.— Dost thou understand me?
King John.

THERE was brave feasting in the Castle of York, to which Prince John had invited those nobles, prelates, and leaders, by whose assistance he hoped to carry through his ambitious projects upon his brother's throne. Waldemar Fitzurse, his able and politic agent, was at secret work among them, tempering all to that pitch of courage which was necessary in making an open declaration of their purpose. But their enterprise was delayed by the absence of more than one main limb of the confederacy. The stubborn and daring, though brutal courage of Front-de-Bœuf; the buoyant spirits and bold bearing of De Bracy; the sagacity, martial experience, and renowned valour of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, were important to the success of their conspiracy; and, while cursing in secret their unnecessary and unmeaning absence, neither John nor his adviser dared to proceed without them. Isaac the Jew also seemed to have vanished, and with him the hope of certain sums of money, making up the subsidy for which Prince John had contracted with that Israelite and his brethren. This deficiency was likely to prove perilous in an emergency so critical.

It was on the morning after the fall of Torquilstone, that a confused report began to spread abroad in the city of York, that De Bracy and Bois-Guilbert, with their confederate Front-de-Bœuf, had been taken or slain. Waldemar brought the rumour to prince John, announcing, that he feared its truth the more that they had set out with a small attendance, for the purpose of committing an assault on the Saxon Cedric and his attendants. At another time the Prince would have treated this deed of violence as a good jest; but now, that it

interfered with and impeded his own plans, he exclaimed against the perpetrators, and spoke of the broken laws, and the infringement of public order and of private property, in a tone which might have become King Alfred.

"The unprincipled marauders!" he said—"were I ever to become monarch of England, I would hang such transgressors over the draw-bridges of their own castles."

"But to become monarch of England," said his Ahithophel coolly, "it is necessary not only that your Grace should endure the transgressions of these unprincipled marauders, but that you should afford them your protection, notwithstanding your laudable zeal for the laws they are in the habit of infringing. We shall be finely helped, if the churl Saxons should have realized your Grace's vision, of converting feudal drawbridges into gibbets; and yonder bold-spirited Cedric seemeth one to whom such an imagination might occur. Your Grace is well aware, it will be dangerous to stir without Front-de-Bœuf, De Bracy, and the Templar; and yet we have gone too far to recede with safety."

Prince John struck his forehead with impatience, and then began to stride up and down the apartment.

"The villains," he said, "the base treacherous villains, to desert me at this pinch!"

"Nay, say rather the feather-pated giddy madmen," said Waldemar, "who must be toying with follies when such business was in hand."

"What is to be done?" said the Prince, stopping short before Waldemar.

"I know nothing which can be done," answered his counsellor, "save that which I have already taken order for.—I came not to bewail this evil chance with your Grace, until I had done my best to remedy it."

"Thou art ever my better angel, Waldemar," said the Prince; "and when I have such a chancellor to advise withal, the reign of John will be renowned in our annals.—What hast thou commanded?"

"I have ordered Louis Winkelbrand, De Bracy's lieutenant, to cause his trumpet sound to horse, and to display his banner, and to set presently forth towards the castle of Front-de-Bœuf, to do what yet may be done for the succour of our friends."

Prince John's face flushed with the pride of a spoilt child, who has undergone what it conceives to be an insult.

"By the face of God!" he said, "Waldemar Fitzurse, much hast thou taken upon thee! and over malapert thou wert to cause trumpet to blow, or banner to be raised, in a town where ourselves were in presence, without our express command."

"I crave your Grace's pardon," said Fitzurse, internally cursing the idle vanity of his patron; "but when time pressed, and even the loss of minutes might be fatal, I judged it best to take this much burden upon me, in a matter of such importance to your Grace's interest."

"Thou art pardoned, Fitzurse," said the Prince, gravely; "thy purpose hath atoned for thy hasty rashness.—But whom have we here?—De Bracy himself, by the rood!—and in strange guise doth he come before us."

It was indeed De Bracy—"bloody with spurring, fiery red with speed." His armour bore all the marks of the late obstinate fray, being broken, defaced, and stained with blood in many places, and covered with clay and dust from the crest to the spur. Undoing his helmet, he placed it on the table, and stood a moment as if to collect himself before he told his news.

"De Bracy," said Prince John, "what means this?—Speak, I charge thee! Are the Saxons in rebellion?"

"Speak, De Bracy," said Fitzurse, almost in the same moment with his master, "thou wert wont to be a man—Where is the Templar?—where Front-de-Bœuf?"

"The Templar is fled," said De Bracy; "Front-de-Bœuf you will never see more. He has found a red grave among the blazing rafters of his own castle, and I alone am escaped to tell you."

"Cold news," said Waldemar, "to us, though you speak of fire and conflagration."

"The worst news is not yet said," answered De Bracy; and, coming up to Prince John, he uttered in a low and emphatic tone—"Richard is in England—I have seen and spoken with him."

Prince John turned pale, tottered and caught at the back of an oaken bench to support himself—much like to a man who receives an arrow in his bosom.

"Thou ravest, De Bracy," said Fitzurse, "it cannot be."

"It is as true as truth itself," said De Bracy; "I was his prisoner, and spoke with him."

"With Richard Plantagenet, sayest thou?" continued Fitzurse.

"With Richard Plantagenet," replied De Bracy, "with Richard Cœur-de-Lion—with Richard of England."

"And thou wert his prisoner?" said Waldemar; "he is then at the head of a power?"

"No—only a few outlawed yeomen were around him, and to these his person is unknown. I heard him say he was about to depart from them. He joined them only to assist at the storming of Torquilstone."

"Ay," said Fitzurse, "such is indeed the fashion of Richard—a true knight-errant he, and will wander in wild adventure, trusting the prowess of his single arm, like any Sir Guy or Sir Bevis, while the weighty affairs of his kingdom slumber, and his own safety is endangered.—What dost thou propose to do, De Bracy?"

"I?—I offered Richard the service of my Free Lances, and he refused them—I will lead them to Hull, seize on shipping and embark for Flanders; thanks to the bustling times, a man of action will always find employment. And thou, Waldemar, wilt thou take lance and shield, and lay down thy policies, and wend along with me, and share the fate which God sends us?"

"I am too old, Maurice, and I have a daughter," answered Waldemar.

"Give her to me, Fitzurse, and I will maintain her as fits her rank, with the help of lance and stirrup," said De Bracy.

"Not so," answered Fitzurse; "I will take sanctuary in this church of Saint Peter—the Archbishop is my sworn brother."

During this discourse, Prince John had gradually awakened from the stupor into which he had been thrown by the unexpected intelligence, and had been attentive to the conversation which passed betwixt his followers. "They fall off from me."

he said to himself, "they hold no more by me than a withered leaf by the bough when a breeze blows on it!—Hell and fiends! can I shape no means for myself when I am deserted by these cravens!"—He paused, and there was an expression of diabolical passion in the constrained laugh with which he at length broke in on their conversation.

"Ha! ha! ha! my good lords, by the light of Our Lady's brow, I held ye sage men, bold men, ready-witted men; yet ye throw down wealth, honour, pleasure, all that our noble game promised you, at the moment it might be won by one bold cast!"

"I understand you not," said De Bracy. "As soon as Richard's return is blown abroad, he will be at the head of an army, and all is then over with us. I would counsel you, my lord, either to fly to France, or take the protection of the Queen Mother."

"I seek no safety for myself," said Prince John, haughtily; "that I could secure by a word spoken to my brother. But although you, De Bracy, and you, Waldemar Fitzurse, are so ready to abandon me, I should not greatly delight to see your heads blackening on Clifford's gate yonder. Thinkest thou, Waldemar, that the wily Archbishop will not suffer thee to be taken from the very horns of the altar, would it make his peace with King Richard? And forgettest thou, De Bracy, that Robert Estoteville lies betwixt thee and Hull with all his forces, and that the Earl of Essex is gathering his followers? If we had reason to fear these levies even before Richard's return, trowest thou there is any doubt now which party their leaders will take? Trust me, Estoteville alone has strength enough to drive all thy Free Lances into the Humber."—Waldemar Fitzurse and De Bracy looked in each other's faces with blank dismay.—"There is but one road to safety," continued the Prince, and his brow grew black as midnight; "this object of our terror journeys alone—He must be met withal."

"Not by me," said De Bracy, hastily; "I was his prisoner, and he took me to mercy. I will not harm a feather in his crest."

"Who spoke of harming him?" said Prince John, with a hardened laugh; "the knave will say next that I meant he should slay him!—No—a prison were better; and whether in Britain or Austria, what matters it?—Things will be but as they were when we commenced our enterprise—It was founded on the hope that Richard would remain a captive in Germany—Our uncle Robert lived and died in the castle of Cardiffe."

"Ay, but," said Waldemar, "your sire Henry sate more firm in his seat than your Grace can. I say the best prison is that which is made by the sexton—no dungeon like a church-vault! I have said my say."

"Prison or tomb," said De Bracy, "I wash my hands of the whole matter."

"Villain!" said Prince John, "thou wouldst not bewray our counsel!"

"Counsel was never bewrayed by me," said De Bracy haughtily, "nor must the name of villain be coupled with mine!"

"Peace, Sir Knight!" said Waldemar; "and you, good my lord, forgive the scruples of valiant De Bracy; I trust I shall soon remove them."

"That passes your eloquence, Fitzurse," replied the Knight.

"Why, good Sir Maurice," rejoined the wily politician, "start not aside like a scared steed, without, at least, considering the object of your terror.—This Richard—but a day since, and it would have been thy dearest wish to have met him hand to hand in the ranks of battle—a hundred times I have heard thee wish it."

"Ay," said De Bracy, "but that was as thou sayest, hand to hand, and in the ranks of battle! Thou never heardest me breathe a thought of assaulting him alone, and in a forest."

"Thou art no good knight if thou dost scruple at it," said Waldemar. "Was it in battle that Lancelot de Lac and Sir Tristram won renown? or was it not by encountering gigantic knights under the shade of deep and unknown forests?"

"Ay, but I promise you," said De Bracy, "that neither Tristram nor Lancelot would have been match, hand to hand, for Richard Plantagenet, and I think it was not their wont to take odds against a single man."

"Thou art mad, De Bracy—what is it we propose to thee, a hired and retained captain of Free Companions, whose swords are purchased for Prince John's service? Thou art apprized of our enemy, and then thou scruplest, though thy patron's fortunes, those of thy comrades, thine own, and the life and honour of every one amongst us, are at stake!"

"I tell you," said De Bracy, sullenly, "that he gave me my life. True, he sent me from his presence, and refused my homage—so far I owe him neither favour nor allegiance—but I will not lift hand against him."

"It needs not—send Louis Winkelbrand and a score of thy lances."

"Ye have sufficient ruffians of your own," said De Bracy; "not one of mine shall budge on such an errand."

"Art thou so obstinate, De Bracy?" said Prince John; "and wilt thou forsake me, after so many protestations of zeal for my service?"

"I mean it not," said De Bracy; "I will abide by you in aught that becomes a knight, whether in the lists or in the camp; but this highway practice comes not within my vow."

"Come hither, Waldemar," said Prince John. "An unhappy Prince am I. My father, King Henry, had faithful servants—He had but to say that he was plagued with a factious priest, and the blood of Thomas-à-Becket, saint though he was, stained the steps of his own altar.—Tracy, Morville, Brito,[1] loyal and daring subjects, your names, your spirit, are extinct! and although Reginald Fitzurse hath left a son, he hath fallen off from his father's fidelity and courage."

"He has fallen off from neither," said Waldemar Fitzurse; "and since it may not better be, I will take on me the conduct of this perilous enterprise. Dearly, however, did my father purchase the praise of a zealous friend; and yet did his proof of loyalty to Henry fall far short of what I am about to afford; for rather would I assail a whole calendar of saints, than put spear in rest against Cœur-de-Lion.—De Bracy, to thee I must trust to keep up the spirits of the doubtful, and to guard Prince John's person.

[1] Reginald Fitzurse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville, and Richard Brito, were the gentlemen of Henry the Second's household, who, instigated by some passionate expressions of their sovereign, slew the celebrated Thomas-à-Becket.

If you receive such news as I trust to send you, our enterprise will no longer wear a doubtful aspect — Page," he said, " hie to my lodgings, and tell my armourer to be there in readiness ; and bid Stephen Wetheral, Broad Thoresby, and the Three Spears of Spyinghow, come to me instantly; and let the scout-master, Hugh Bardon attend me also. — Adieu, my Prince, till better times." Thus speaking he left the apartment.

" He goes to make my brother prisoner," said Prince John to De Bracy, " with as little touch of compunction, as if it but concerned the liberty of a Saxon franklin. I trust he will observe our orders, and use our dear Richard's person with all due respect."

De Bracy only answered by a smile.

" By the light of Our Lady's brow," said Prince John, " our orders to him were most precise — though it may be you heard them not, as we stood together in the oriel window — Most clear and positive was our charge that Richard's safety should be cared for, and wo to Waldemar's head if he transgress it !"

" I had better pass to his lodgings," said De Bracy, " and make him fully aware of your Grace's pleasure; for, as it quite escaped my ear, it may not perchance have reached that of Waldemar."

" Nay, nay," said Prince John, impatiently, " I promise thee he heard me : and besides, I have farther occupation for thee. Maurice, come hither; let me lean on thy shoulder."

They walked a turn through the hall in this familiar posture, and Prince John, with an air of the most confidential intimacy proceeded to say, " What thinkest thou of this Waldemar Fitzurse, my De Bracy ? — He trusts to be our Chancellor. Surely we will pause ere we give an office so high to one who shews evidently how little he reverences our blood, by his so readily undertaking this enterprise against Richard. Thou dost think, I warrant, that thou hast lost somewhat of our regard, by thy boldly declining this unpleasing task — But no, Maurice ! I rather honour thee for thy virtuous constancy. There are things most necessary to be done, the perpetrator of which we neither love nor honour ; and there may be refusals to serve us, which shall rather exalt in our estimation those who deny our request. The arrest of my unfortunate brother forms no such good title to the high office of Chancellor, as thy chivalrous and courageous denial establishes in thee to the truncheon of High Marshal. Think of this, De Bracy, and begone to thy charge."

" Fickle tyrant !" muttered De Bracy, as he left the presence of the Prince ; " evil luck have they who trust thee. Thy Chancellor, indeed ! — He who hath the keeping of thy conscience shall have an easy charge, I trow. But High Marshal of England ! that," he said, extending his arm, as if to grasp the baton of office, and assuming a loftier stride along the antechamber, " that is indeed a prize worth playing for !"

De Bracy had no sooner left the apartment than Prince John summoned an attendant.

" Bid Hugh Bardon, our scout-master, come hither, as soon as he shall have spoken with Waldemar Fitzurse."

The scout-master arrived after a brief delay, during which John traversed the apartment with unequal and disordered steps.

" Bardon," said he, " what did Waldemar desire of thee ?"

" Two resolute men, well acquainted with these northern wilds, and skilful in tracking the tread of man and horse."

" And thou hast fitted him ?"

" Let your grace never trust me else," answered the master of the spies. " One is from Hexamshire; he is wont to trace the Tynedale and Teviotdale thieves as a bloodhound follows the slot of a hurt deer. The other is Yorkshire bred, and has twanged his bowstring right oft in merry Sherwood, he knows each glade and dingle, copse and high-wood, betwixt this and Richmond."

" 'Tis well," said the Prince.—" Goes Waldemar forth with them ?"

" Instantly," said Bardon.

" With what attendance ?" asked John, carelessly

" Broad Thoresby goes with him, and Wetheral, whom they call, for his cruelty, Stephen Steel-heart, and three northern men-at-arms that belonged to Ralph Middleton's gang — they are called the Spears of Spyinghow."

" 'Tis well," said Prince John ; then added, after a moment's pause, " Bardon, it imports our service that thou keep a strict watch on Maurice de Bracy — so that he shall not observe it, however — And let us know of his motions from time to time — with whom he converses, what he proposeth. Fail not in this, as thou wilt be answerable."

Hugh Bardon bowed, and retired.

" If Maurice betrays me." said Prince John — " if he betrays me, as his bearing leads me to fear, I will have his head, were Richard thundering at the gates of York."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

> Arouse the tiger of Hyrcanian deserts,
> Strive with the half-starved lion for his prey;
> Lesser the risk, than rouse the slumbering fire
> Of wild Fanaticism.
>
> *Anonymous.*

Our tale now returns to Isaac of York. — Mounted upon a mule, the gift of the Outlaw, with two tall yeomen to act as his guard and guides, the Jew had set out for the Preceptory of Templestowe, for the purpose of negotiating his daughter's redemption. The Preceptory was but a day's journey from the demolished castle of Torquilstone, and the Jew had hoped to reach it before nightfall ; accordingly, having dismissed his guides at the verge of the forest, and rewarded them with a piece of silver, he began to press on with such speed as his weariness permitted him to exert. But his strength failed him totally ere he had reached within four miles of the Temple-Court; racking pains shot along his back and through his limbs, and the excessive anguish which he felt at heart being now augmented by bodily suffering, he was rendered altogether incapable of proceeding farther than a small market-town, where dwelt a Jewish Rabbi of his tribe, eminent in the medical profession, and to whom Isaac was well known. Nathan Ben Israel received his suffering countryman with that kindness which the law prescribed, and which the Jews practised to each other. He insisted on his betaking himself to repose, and used such

remedies as were then in most repute to check the progress of the fever, which terror, fatigue, ill usage, and sorrow, had brought upon the poor old Jew.

On the morrow, when Isaac proposed to arise and pursue his journey, Nathan remonstrated against his purpose, both as his host and as his physician. It might cost him, he said, his life. But Isaac replied, that more than life and death depended upon his going that morning to Templestowe.

"To Templestowe!" said his host with surprise; again felt his pulse, and then muttered to himself, "His fever is abated, yet seems his mind somewhat alienated and disturbed."

"And why not to Templestowe?" answered his patient. "I grant thee, Nathan, that it is a dwelling of those to whom the despised Children of the Promise are a stumbling-block and an abomination; yet thou knowest that pressing affairs of traffic sometimes carry us among these bloodthirsty Nazarene soldiers, and that we visit the Preceptories of the Templars, as well as the Commanderies of the Knights Hospitallers, as they are called." [1]

"I know it well," said Nathan; "but wottest thou that Lucas de Beaumanoir, the chief of their Order, and whom they term Grand Master, is now himself at Templestowe?"

"I know it not," said Isaac; "our last letters from our brethren at Paris advised us that he was at that city, beseeching Philip for aid against the Sultan Saladine."

"He hath since come to England, unexpected by his brethren," said Ben Israel; "and he cometh among them with a strong and outstretched arm to correct and to punish. His countenance is kindled in anger against those who have departed from the vow which they have made, and great is the fear of those sons of Belial. Thou must have heard of his name?"

"It is well known unto me," said Isaac; "the Gentiles deliver this Lucas Beaumanoir as a man zealous to slaying for every point of the Nazarene law; and our brethren have termed him a fierce destroyer of the Saracens, and a cruel tyrant to the Children of the Promise."

"And truly have they termed him," said Nathan the physician. "Other Templars may be moved from the purpose of their heart by pleasure, or bribed by promise of gold and silver; but Beaumanoir is of a different stamp — hating sensuality, despising treasure, and pressing forward to that which they call the crown of martyrdom — The God of Jacob speedily send it unto him, and unto them all! Specially hath this proud man extended his glove over the children of Judah, as holy David over Edom, holding the murder of a Jew to be an offering of as sweet savour as the death of a Saracen. Impious and false things has he said even of the virtues of our medicines, as if they were the devices of Satan — The Lord rebuke him!"

"Nevertheless," said Isaac, "I must present myself at Templestowe, though he hath made his face like unto a fiery furnace seven times heated."

He then explained to Nathan the pressing cause of his journey. The Rabbi listened with interest, and testified his sympathy after the fashion of his people, rending his clothes, and saying, "Ah, my daughter! — ah, my daughter! — Alas! for the beauty of Zion! — Alas! for the captivity of Israel!"

"Thou seest," said Isaac, "how it stands with me, and that I may not tarry. Peradventure, the presence of this Lucas Beaumanoir, being the chief man over them, may turn Brian de Bois-Guilbert from the ill which he doth meditate, and that he may deliver to me my beloved daughter Rebecca."

"Go thou," said Nathan Ben Israel, "and be wise, for wisdom availed Daniel in the den of lions into which he was cast; and may it go well with thee, even as thine heart wisheth. Yet, if thou canst, keep thee from the presence of the Grand Master, for to do foul scorn to our people is his morning and evening delight. It may be if thou couldst speak with Bois-Guilbert in private, thou shalt the better prevail with him; for men say that these accursed Nazarenes are not of one mind in the Preceptory — May their counsels be confounded and brought to shame! But do thou, brother, return to me as if it were to the house of thy father, and bring me word how it has sped with thee; and well do I hope thou wilt bring with thee Rebecca, even the scholar of the wise Miriam, whose cures the Gentiles slandered as if they had been wrought by necromancy."

Isaac accordingly bade his friend farewell, and about an hour's riding brought him before the Preceptory of Templestowe.

This establishment of the Templars was seated amidst fair meadows and pastures, which the devotion of the former Preceptor had bestowed upon their Order. It was strong and well fortified, a point never neglected by these knights, and which the disordered state of England rendered peculiarly necessary. Two halberdiers, clad in black, guarded the drawbridge, and others, in the same sad livery, glided to and fro upon the walls with a funereal pace, resembling spectres more than soldiers. The inferior officers of the Order were thus dressed, ever since their use of white garments, similar to those of the knights and esquires, had given rise to a combination of certain false brethren in the mountains of Palestine, terming themselves Templars, and bringing great dishonour on the Order. A knight was now and then seen to cross the court in his long white cloak, his head depressed on his breast, and his arms folded. They passed each other, if they chanced to meet, with a slow, solemn, and mute greeting; for such was the rule of their Order, quoting thereupon the holy texts, "In many words thou shalt not avoid sin," and "Life and death are in the power of the tongue." In a word, the stern ascetic rigour of the Temple discipline, which had been so long exchanged for prodigal and licentious indulgence, seemed at once to have revived at Templestowe under the severe eye of Lucas Beaumanoir.

Isaac paused at the gate, to consider how he might seek entrance in the manner most likely to bespeak favour; for he was well aware, that to his unhappy race the reviving fanaticism of the Order was not less dangerous than their unprincipled licentiousness; and that his religion would be the object of hate and persecution in the one

[1] The establishments of the Knight Templars were called Preceptories, and the title of those who presided in the Order was Preceptor; as the principal Knights of Saint John were termed Commanders, and their houses Commanderies. But these terms were sometimes, it would seem, used indiscriminately.

case, as his wealth would have exposed him in the other to the extortions of unrelenting oppression.

Meantime Lucas Beaumanoir walked in a small garden belonging to the Preceptory, included within the precincts of its exterior fortification, and held sad and confidential communication with a brother of his Order, who had come in his company from Palestine.

The Grand Master was a man advanced in age, as was testified by his long gray beard, and the shaggy gray eyebrows, overhanging eyes, of which, however, years had been unable to quench the fire. A formidable warrior, his thin and severe features retained the soldier's fierceness of expression; an ascetic bigot, they were no less marked by the emaciation of abstinence, and the spiritual pride of the self-satisfied devotee. Yet with these severer traits of physiognomy, there was mixed somewhat striking and noble, arising, doubtless, from the great part which his high office called upon him to act among monarchs and princes, and from the habitual exercise of supreme authority over the valiant and high-born knights, who were united by the rules of the Order. His stature was tall, and his gait, undepressed by age and toil, was erect and stately. His white mantle was shaped with severe regularity, according to the rule of Saint Bernard himself, being composed of what was then called Burrel cloth, exactly fitted to the size of the wearer, and bearing on the left shoulder the octangular cross peculiar to the Order, formed of red cloth. No vair or ermine decked this garment; but in respect of his age, the Grand Master, as permitted by the rules, wore his doublet lined and trimmed with the softest lambskin, dressed with the wool outwards, which was the nearest approach he could regularly make to the use of fur, then the greatest luxury of dress. In his hand he bore that singular *abacus*, or staff of office, with which Templars are usually represented, having at the upper end a round plate, on which was engraved the cross of the Order, inscribed within a circle or orle, as heralds term it. His companion, who attended on this great personage, had nearly the same dress in all respects, but his extreme deference towards his Superior shewed that no other equality subsisted between them. The Preceptor, for such he was in rank, walked not in a line with the Grand Master, but just so far behind that Beaumanoir could speak to him without turning round his head.

"Conrade," said the Grand Master, "dear companion of my battles and my toils, to thy faithful bosom alone I can confide my sorrows. To thee alone can I tell how oft, since I came to this kingdom, I have desired to be dissolved and to be with the just. Not one object in England hath met mine eye which it could rest upon with pleasure, save the tombs of our brethren, beneath the massive roof of our Temple Church in yonder proud capital. Oh, valiant Robert de Ros! did I exclaim internally, as I gazed upon these good soldiers of the cross, where they lie sculptured on their sepulchres, — Oh, worthy William de Mareschal! open your marble cells, and take to your repose a weary brother, who would rather strive with a hundred thousand pagans than witness the decay of our Holy Order!"

"It is but true," answered Conrade Mont-Fitchet; "it is but too true; and the irregularities of our brethren in England are even more gross than those in France."

"Because they are more wealthy," answered the Grand Master. "Bear with me, brother, although I should something vaunt myself. Thou knowest the life I have led, keeping each point of my Order, striving with devils embodied and disembodied, striking down the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, like a good knight and devout priest, wheresoever I met with him — even as blessed Saint Bernard hath prescribed to us in the forty-fifth capital of our rule, *Ut Leo semper feriatur*.[1] But, by the Holy Temple! the zeal which hath devoured my substance and my life, yea, the very nerves and marrow of my bones; by that very Holy Temple I swear to thee, that save thyself and some few that still retain the ancient severity of our Order, I look upon no brethren whom I can bring my soul to embrace under that holy name. What say our statutes, and how do our brethren observe them? They should wear no vain or worldly ornament, no crest upon their helmet, no gold upon stirrup or bridle-bit; yet who now go pranked out so proudly and so gaily as the poor soldiers of the Temple? They are forbidden by our statutes to take one bird by means of another, to shoot beasts with bow or arblast, to halloo to a hunting-horn, or to spur the horse after game. But now, at hunting and hawking, and each idle sport of wood and river, who so prompt as the Templars in all these fond vanities? They are forbidden to read, save what their Superior permitted, or listen to what is read, save such holy things as may be recited aloud during the hours of refection; but lo! their ears are at the command of idle minstrels, and their eyes study empty romaunts. They were commanded to extirpate magic and heresy. Lo! they are charged with studying the accursed cabalistical secrets of the Jews, and the magic of the Paynim Saracens. Simpleness of diet was prescribed to them, roots, pottage, gruels, eating flesh but thrice a-week, because the accustomed feeding on flesh is a dishonourable corruption of the body; and behold, their tables groan under delicate fare! Their drink was to be water, and now, to drink like a Templar, is the boast of each jolly boon companion! This very garden, filled as it is with curious herbs and trees sent from the Eastern climes, better becomes the harem of an unbelieving Emir, than the plot which Christian Monks should devote to raise their homely pot-herbs. — And Oh, Conrade! well it were that the relaxation of discipline stopped even here! — Well thou knowest that we were forbidden to receive those devout women, who at the beginning were associated as sisters of our Order, because, saith the forty-sixth chapter, the Ancient Enemy hath, by female society, withdrawn many from the right path to paradise. Nay, in the last capital, being, as it were, the cope-stone which our blessed founder placed on the pure and undefiled doctrine which he had enjoined, we are prohibited from offering, even to our sisters and our mothers, the kiss of affection — *ut omnium mulierum fugiantur oscula*. — I shame to speak — I shame to think

[1] In the ordinances of the Knights of the Temple, this phrase is repeated in a variety of forms, and occurs in almost every chapter, as if it were the signal word of the Order; which may account for its being so frequently put in the Grand Master's mouth.

— of the corruptions which have rushed in upon us even like a flood. The souls of our pure founders, the spirits of Hugh de Payen and Godfrey de Saint Omer, and of the blessed Seven who first joined in dedicating their lives to the service of the Temple, are disturbed even in the enjoyment of paradise itself. I have seen them, Conrade, in the visions of the night — their sainted eyes shed tears for the sins and follies of their brethren, and for the foul and shameful luxury in which they wallow. Beaumanoir, they say, thou slumberest — awake! There is a stain in the fabric of the Temple, deep and foul as that left by the streaks of leprosy on the walls of the infected houses of old.[1] The soldiers of the Cross, who should shun the glance of a woman as the eye of a basilisk, live in open sin, not with the females of their own race only, but with the daughters of the accursed heathen, and more accursed Jew. Beaumanoir, thou sleepest; up, and avenge our cause! — Slay the sinners, male and female! — Take to thee the brand of Phineas! — The vision fled, Conrade, but as I awaked I could still hear the clank of their mail, and see the waving of their white mantles. — And I will do according to their word, I WILL purify the fabric of the Temple! and the unclean stones in which the plague is, I will remove and cast out of the building."

"Yet bethink thee, reverend father," said Mont-Fitchet, "the stain hath become engrained by time and consuetude; let thy reformation be cautious, as it is just and wise."

"No, Mont-Fitchet," answered the stern old man — "it must be sharp and sudden — the Order is on the crisis of its fate. The sobriety, self-devotion, and piety of our predecessors, made us powerful friends — our presumption, our wealth, our luxury, have raised up against us mighty enemies. — We must cast away these riches, which are a temptation to princes — we must lay down that presumption, which is an offence to them — we must reform that licence of manners, which is a scandal to the whole Christian world! Or — mark my words — the Order of the Temple will be utterly demolished — and the place thereof shall no more be known among the nations."

"Now may God avert such a calamity!" said the Preceptor.

"Amen," said the Grand Master, with solemnity, "but we must deserve His aid. I tell thee, Conrade, that neither the powers in Heaven, nor the powers on earth, will longer endure the wickedness of this generation — My intelligence is sure — the ground on which our fabric is reared is already undermined, and each addition we make to the structure of our greatness will only sink it the sooner in the abyss. We must retrace our steps, and shew ourselves the faithful Champions of the Cross, sacrificing to our calling, not alone our blood and our lives — not alone our lusts and our vices — but our ease, our comforts, and our natural affections, and act as men convinced that many a pleasure which may be lawful to others, is forbidden to the vowed soldier of the Temple."

At this moment a squire, clothed in a threadbare vestment, (for the aspirants after this holy Order wore during their noviciate the cast-off garments of the knights,) entered the garden, and, bowing profoundly before the Grand Master, stood silent, awaiting his permission ere he presumed to tell his errand.

"Is it not more seemly," said the Grand Master, "to see this Damian, clothed in the garments of Christian humility, thus appear with reverend silence before his Superior, than but two days since, when the fond fool was decked in a painted coat, and jangling as pert and as proud as any popinjay? — Speak, Damian, we permit thee — What is thine errand?"

"A Jew stands without the gate, noble and reverend father," said the squire, "who prays to speak with brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert."

"Thou wert right to give me knowledge of it," said the Grand Master; "in our presence a Preceptor is but as a common compeer of our Order, who may not walk according to his own will, but to that of his Master — even according to the text, 'In the hearing of the ear he hath obeyed me.' — It imports us especially to know of this Bois-Guilbert's proceedings," said he, turning to his companion.

"Report speaks him brave and valiant," said Conrade.

"And truly is he so spoken of," said the Grand Master; "in our valour only we are not degenerated from our predecessors, the heroes of the Cross. But brother Brian came into our Order a moody and disappointed man, stirred, I doubt me, to take our vows and to renounce the world, not in sincerity of soul, but as one whom some touch of light discontent had driven into penitence. Since then, he hath become an active and earnest agitator, a murmurer, and a machinator, and a leader amongst those who impugn our authority; not considering that the rule is given to the Master even by the symbol of the staff and the rod — the staff to support the infirmities of the weak — the rod to correct the faults of delinquents — Damian," he continued, "lead the Jew to our presence."

The squire departed with a profound reverence, and in a few minutes returned, marshalling in Isaac of York. No naked slave, ushered into the presence of some mighty prince, could approach his judgment-seat with more profound reverence and terror than that with which the Jew drew near to the presence of the Grand Master. When he had approached within the distance of three yards, Beaumanoir made a sign with his staff that he should come no farther. The Jew kneeled down on the earth, which he kissed in token of reverence; then rising, stood before the Templars, his hands folded on his bosom, his head bowed on his breast, in all the submission of Oriental slavery.

"Damian," said the Grand Master, "retire, and have a guard ready to await our sudden call; and suffer no one to enter the garden until we shall leave it." — The squire bowed and retreated. — "Jew," continued the haughty old man, "mark me. It suits not our condition to hold with thee long communication, nor do we waste words or time upon any one. Wherefore be brief in thy answers to what questions I shall ask thee, and let thy words be of truth; for if thy tongue doubles with me, I will have it torn from thy misbelieving jaws."

The Jew was about to reply, but the Grand Master went on.

"Peace, unbeliever! — not a word in our presence, save in answer to our questions. — What is

[1] See the 13th chapter of Leviticus.

thy business with our brother Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"

Isaac gasped with terror and uncertainty. To tell his tale might be interpreted into scandalizing the Order; yet, unless he told it, what hope could he have of achieving his daughter's deliverance? Beaumanoir saw his mortal apprehension and condescended to give him some assurance.

"Fear nothing," he said, "for thy wretched person, Jew, so thou dealest uprightly in this matter. I demand again to know from thee thy business with Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"

"I am bearer of a letter," stammered out the Jew, "so please your reverend valour, to that good knight, from Prior Aymer of the Abbey of Jorvaulx."

"Said I not these were evil times, Conrade?" said the Master. "A Cistertian Prior sends a letter to a soldier of the Temple, and can find no more fitting messenger than an unbelieving Jew. — Give me the letter."

The Jew, with trembling hands, undid the folds of his Armenian cap, in which he had deposited the Prior's tablets for the greater security, and was about to approach, with hand extended and body crouched, to place it within the reach of his grim interrogator.

"Back, dog!" said the Grand Master; "I touch not misbelievers, save with the sword. — Conrade, take thou the letter from the Jew, and give it to me."

Beaumanoir, being thus possessed of the tablets, inspected the outside carefully, and then proceeded to undo the packthread which secured its folds. "Reverend father," said Conrade interposing, though with much deference, "wilt thou break the seal?"

"And will I not?" said Beaumanoir, with a frown. "Is it not written in the forty-second capital, *De Lectione Literarum*, that a Templar shall not receive a letter, no not from his father, without communicating the same to the Grand Master, and reading it in his presence?"

He then perused the letter in haste, with an expression of surprise and horror; read it over again more slowly; then holding it out to Conrade with one hand, and slightly striking it with the other, exclaimed — "Here is goodly stuff for one Christian man to write to another, and both members, and no inconsiderable members, of religious professions! When," said he solemnly, and looking upward, "wilt thou come with thy fanners to purge the thrashing-floor?"

Mont-Fitchet took the letter from his superior, and was about to peruse it. "Read it aloud, Conrade," said the Grand Master, — "and do thou," (to Isaac) "attend to the purport of it, for we will question thee concerning it."

Conrade read the letter, which was in these words: "Aymer, by divine grace, Prior of the Cistertian house of Saint Mary's of Jorvaulx, to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a Knight of the holy Order of the Temple, wisheth health, with the bounties of King Bacchus and of my Lady Venus. Touching our present condition, dear Brother, we are a captive in the hands of certain lawless and godless men, who have not feared to detain our person, and put us to ransom; whereby we have also learned of Front-de-Bœuf's misfortune, and that thou hast escaped with that fair Jewish sorceress, whose black eyes have bewitched thee. We are heartily rejoiced of thy safety; nevertheless, we pray thee to be on thy guard in the matter of this second Witch of Endor; for we are privately assured that your Great Master, who careth not a bean for cherry cheeks and black eyes, comes from Normandy to diminish your mirth, and amend your misdoings. Wherefore we pray you heartily to beware, and to be found watching, even as the Holy Text hath it, *Invenientur vigilantes.* And the wealthy Jew her father, Isaac of York, having prayed of me letters in his behalf, I gave him these, earnestly advising, and in a sort entreating, that you do hold the damsel to ransom, seeing he will pay you from his bags as much as may find fifty damsels upon safer terms, whereof I trust to have my part when we make merry together, as true brothers, not forgetting the wine-cup. For what saith the text, *Vinum lætificat cor hominis;* and again, *Rex delectabitur pulchritudine tua.*

"Till which merry meeting, we wish you farewell. Given from this den of thieves, about the hour of matins,

"Aymer Pr. S. M. Jorvolciencis.

"*Postscriptum.* Truly your golden chain hath not long abidden with me, and will now sustain, around the neck of an outlaw deer-stealer, the whistle wherewith he calleth on his hounds."

"What sayest thou to this, Conrade?" said the Grand Master — "Den of thieves! and a fit residence is a den of thieves for such a Prior. No wonder that the hand of God is upon us, and that in the Holy Land we lose place by place, foot by foot, before the infidels, when we have such churchmen as this Aymer. — And what meaneth he, I trow, by this second Witch of Endor?" said he to his confident, something apart.

Conrade was better acquainted (perhaps by practice) with the jargon of gallantry, than was his Superior; and he expounded the passage which embarrassed the Grand Master, to be a sort of language used by worldly men towards those whom they loved *par amours;* but the explanation did not satisfy the bigoted Beaumanoir.

"There is more in it than thou dost guess, Conrade; thy simplicity is no match for this deep abyss of wickedness. This Rebecca of York was a pupil of that Miriam of whom thou hast heard. Thou shalt hear the Jew own it even now." Then turning to Isaac, he said aloud, "Thy daughter, then, is prisoner with Brian de Bois-Guilbert?"

"Ay, reverend valorous sir," stammered poor Isaac, "and whatsoever ransom a poor man may pay for her deliverance ——"

"Peace!" said the Grand Master. "This thy daughter hath practised the art of healing, hath she not?"

"Ay, gracious sir," answered the Jew, with more confidence; "and knight and yeoman, squire and vassal, may bless the goodly gift which Heaven hath assigned to her. Many a one can testify that she hath recovered them by her art, when every other human aid hath proved vain; but the blessing of the God of Jacob was upon her."

Beaumanoir turned to Mont-Fitchet with a grim smile. "See, brother," he said, "the deceptions of the devouring Enemy! Behold the baits with which he fishes for souls, giving a poor space of

earthly life in exchange for eternal happiness hereafter. Well said our blessed rule, *Semper percutiatur leo vorans.* — Up on the lion! Down with the destroyer!" said he, shaking aloft his mystic abacus, as if in defiance of the powers of darkness — "Thy daughter worketh the cures I doubt not," thus he went on to address the Jew, "by words and sigils, and periapts, and other cabalistical mysteries."

"Nay, reverend and brave Knight," answered Isaac, "but in chief measure by a balsam of marvellous virtue."

"Where had she that secret?" said Beaumanoir.

"It was delivered to her," answered Isaac, reluctantly, "by Miriam, a sage matron of our tribe."

"Ah, false Jew!" said the Grand Master; "was it not from that same witch Miriam, the abomination of whose enchantments have been heard of throughout every Christian land?" exclaimed the Grand Master, crossing himself. "Her body was burnt at a stake, and her ashes were scattered to the four winds; and so be it with me and mine Order, if I do not as much to her pupil, and more also! I will teach her to throw spell and incantation over the soldiers of the blessed Temple. — There, Damian, spurn this Jew from the gate — shoot him dead if he oppose or turn again. With his daughter we will deal as the Christian law and our own high office warrant."

Poor Isaac was hurried off accordingly, and expelled from the Preceptory; all his entreaties, and even his offers, unheard and disregarded. He could do no better than return to the house of the Rabbi, and endeavour, through his means, to learn how his daughter was to be disposed of. He had hitherto feared for her honour, he was now to tremble for her life. Meanwhile, the Grand Master ordered to his presence the Preceptor of Templestowe.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

> Say not my art is fraud — all live by seeming.
> The beggar begs with it, and the gay courtier
> Gains land and title, rank and rule, by seeming;
> The clergy scorn it not, and the bold soldier
> Will eke with it his service. — All admit it,
> All practise it; and he who is content
> With shewing what he is, shall have small credit
> In church, or camp, or state — So wags the world.
> *Old Play.*

Albert Malvoisin, President, or, in the language of the Order, Preceptor of the establishment of Templestowe, was brother to that Philip Malvoisin who has been already occasionally mentioned in this history, and was, like that baron, in close league with Brian de Bois-Guilbert.

Amongst dissolute and unprincipled men, of whom the Temple Order included but too many, Albert of Templestowe might be distinguished; but with this difference from the audacious Bois-Guilbert, that he knew how to throw over his vices and his ambition the veil of hypocrisy, and to assume in his exterior the fanaticism which he internally despised. Had not the arrival of the Grand Master been so unexpectedly sudden, he would have seen nothing at Templestowe which might have appeared to argue any relaxation of discipline. And, even although surprised, and, to a certain extent, detected, Albert Malvoisin listened with such respect and apparent contrition to the rebuke of his Superior, and made such haste to reform the particulars he censured, — succeeded, in fine, so well in giving an air of ascetic devotion to a family which had been lately devoted to licence and pleasure, that Lucas Beaumanoir began to entertain a higher opinion of the Preceptor's morals, than the first appearance of the establishment had inclined him to adopt.

But these favourable sentiments on the part of the Grand Master were greatly shaken by the intelligence that Albert had received within a house of religion the Jewish captive, and, as was to be feared, the paramour of a brother of the Order; and when Albert appeared before him, he was regarded with unwonted sternness.

"There is in this mansion, dedicated to the purposes of the holy Order of the Temple," said the Grand Master, in a severe tone, "a Jewish woman, brought hither by a brother of religion, by your connivance, Sir Preceptor."

Albert Malvoisin was overwhelmed with confusion; for the unfortunate Rebecca had been confined in a remote and secret part of the building, and every precaution used to prevent her residence there from being known. He read in the looks of Beaumanoir ruin to Bois-Guilbert and to himself, unless he should be able to avert the impending storm.

"Why are you mute?" continued the Grand Master.

"Is it permitted to me to reply?" answered the Preceptor, in a tone of the deepest humility, although by the question he only meant to gain an instant's space for arranging his ideas.

"Speak, you are permitted," said the Grand Master—"speak, and say, knowest thou the capital of our holy rule, — *De commilitonibus Templi in sancta civitate, qui cum miserrimis mulieribus versantur, propter oblectationem carnis?*" [1]

"Surely, most reverend father," answered the Preceptor, "I have not risen to this office in the Order, being ignorant of one of its most important prohibitions."

"How comes it, then, I demand of thee once more, that thou hast suffered a brother to bring a paramour, and that paramour a Jewish sorceress, into this holy place, to the stain and pollution thereof?"

"A Jewish sorceress!" echoed Albert Malvoisin; "good angels guard us!"

"Ay, brother, a Jewish sorceress!" said the Grand Master, sternly. "I have said it. Darest thou deny that this Rebecca, the daughter of that wretched usurer Isaac of York, and the pupil of the foul witch Miriam, is now—shame to be thought or spoken! — lodged within this thy Preceptory?"

"Your wisdom, reverend father," answered the Preceptor, "hath rolled away the darkness from my understanding. Much did I wonder that so good a knight as Brian de Bois-Guilbert seemed so fondly besotted on the charms of this female, whom I received into this house merely to place a bar betwixt their growing intimacy, which else might have been cemented at the expense of the fall of our valiant and religious brother."

"Hath nothing, then, as yet passed betwixt them

[1] The edict which he quotes, is against communion with women of light character.

in breach of his vow?" demanded the Grand Master.

"What! under this roof?" said the Preceptor, crossing himself; "Saint Magdalene and the ten thousand virgins forbid!—No! if I have sinned in receiving her here, it was in the erring thought that I might thus break off our brother's besotted devotion to this Jewess, which seemed to me so wild and unnatural, that I could not but ascribe it to some touch of insanity, more to be cured by pity than reproof. But since your reverend wisdom hath discovered this Jewish quean to be a sorceress, perchance it may account fully for his enamoured folly."

"It doth!—it doth!" said Beaumanoir. "See, brother Conrade, the peril of yielding to the first devices and blandishments of Satan! We look upon woman only to gratify the lust of the eye, and to take pleasure in what men call her beauty; and the Ancient Enemy, the devouring Lion, obtains power over us, to complete, by talisman and spell, a work which was begun by idleness and folly. It may be that our brother Bois-Guilbert does in this matter deserve rather pity than severe chastisement; rather the support of the staff, than the strokes of the rod; and that our admonitions and prayers may turn him from his folly, and restore him to his brethren."

"It were deep pity," said Conrade Mont-Fitchet, "to lose to the Order one of its best lances, when the Holy Community most requires the aid of its sons. Three hundred Saracens hath this Brian de Bois-Guilbert slain with his own hand."

"The blood of these accursed dogs," said the Grand Master, "shall be a sweet and acceptable offering to the saints and angels whom they despise and blaspheme; and with their aid will we counteract the spells and charms with which our brother is entwined as in a net. He shall burst the bands of this Delilah, as Sampson burst the two new cords with which the Philistines had bound him, and shall slaughter the infidels, even heaps upon heaps. But concerning this foul witch, who hath flung her enchantments over a brother of the Holy Temple, assuredly she shall die the death."

"But the laws of England,"—said the Preceptor, who, though delighted that the Grand Master's resentment, thus fortunately averted from himself and Bois-Guilbert, had taken another direction, began now to fear he was carrying it too far.

"The laws of England," interrupted Beaumanoir, "permit and enjoin each judge to execute justice within his own jurisdiction. The most petty baron may arrest, try, and condemn a witch found within his own domain. And shall that power be denied to the Grand Master of the Temple within a preceptory of his Order?—No—we will judge and condemn. The witch shall be taken out of the land, and the wickedness thereof shall be forgiven. Prepare the Castle-hall for the trial of the sorceress."

Albert Malvoisin bowed and retired,—not to give directions for preparing the hall, but to seek out Brian de Bois-Guilbert, and communicate to him how matters were likely to terminate. It was not long ere he found him, foaming with indignation at a repulse he had anew sustained from the fair Jewess. "The unthinking," he said, "the ungrateful, to scorn him who, amidst blood and flames, would have saved her life at the risk of his own! By Heaven, Malvoisin! I abode until roof and rafters crackled and crashed around me. I was the butt of a hundred arrows; they rattled on mine armour like hailstones against a latticed casement, and the only use I made of my shield was for her protection. This did I endure for her; and now the self-willed girl upbraids me that I did not leave her to perish, and refuses me not only the slightest proof of gratitude, but even the most distant hope that ever she will be brought to grant any. The devil, that possessed her race with obstinacy, has concentrated its full force in her single person!"

"The devil," said the Preceptor, "I think, possessed you both. How oft have I preached to you caution, if not continence? Did I not tell you that there were enough willing Christian damsels to be met with, who would think it sin to refuse so brave a knight *le don d'amoureux merci*, and you must needs anchor your affection on a wilful, obstinate Jewess? By the mass, I think old Lucas Beaumanoir guesses right, when he maintains she hath cast a spell over you."

"Lucas Beaumanoir!"—said Bois-Guilbert, reproachfully—"Are these your precautions, Malvoisin? Hast thou suffered the dotard to learn that Rebecca is in the Preceptory?"

"How could I help it?" said the Preceptor. "I neglected nothing that could keep secret your mystery; but it is betrayed, and whether by the devil or no, the devil only can tell. But I have turned the matter as I could; you are safe if you renounce Rebecca. You are pitied—the victim of magical delusion. She is a sorceress, and must suffer as such."

"She shall not, by Heaven!" said Bois-Guilbert.

"By Heaven, she must and will!" said Malvoisin. "Neither you nor any one else can save her. Lucas Beaumanoir hath settled that the death of a Jewess will be a sin-offering sufficient to atone for all the amorous indulgences of the Knights-Templars; and thou knowest he hath both the power and will to execute so reasonable and pious a purpose."

"Will future ages believe that such stupid bigotry ever existed!" said Bois-Guilbert, striding up and down the apartment.

"What they may believe, I know not," said Malvoisin, calmly; "but I know well, that in this our day, clergy and laymen, take ninety-nine to the hundred, will cry *amen* to the Grand Master's sentence."

"I have it," said Bois-Guilbert. "Albert, thou art my friend. Thou must connive at her escape, Malvoisin, and I will transport her to some place of greater security and secrecy."

"I cannot, if I would," replied the Preceptor; "the mansion is filled with the attendants of the Grand Master, and others who are devoted to him. And, to be frank with you, brother, I would not embark with you in this matter, even if I could hope to bring my bark to haven. I have risked enough already for your sake. I have no mind to encounter a sentence of degradation, or even to lose my Preceptory, for the sake of a painted piece of Jewish flesh and blood. And you, if you will be guided by my counsel, will give up this wild-goose chase, and fly your hawk at some other game. Think, Bois-Guilbert,—thy present rank, thy future honours, all depend on thy place in the Order.

Shouldst thou adhere perversely to thy passion for this Rebecca, thou wilt give Beaumanoir the power of expelling thee, and he will not neglect it. He is jealous of the truncheon which he holds in his trembling gripe, and he knows thou stretchest thy bold hand towards it. Doubt not he will ruin thee, if thou affordest him a pretext so fair as thy protection of a Jewish sorceress. Give him his scope in this matter, for thou canst not control him. When the staff is in thine own firm grasp, thou mayest caress the daughters of Judah, or burn them, as may best suit thine own humour."

"Malvoisin," said Bois-Guilbert, "thou art a cold-blooded——"

"Friend," said the Preceptor, hastening to fill up the blank, in which Bois-Guilbert would probably have placed a worse word,—"a cold-blooded friend I am, and therefore more fit to give thee advice. I tell thee once more, that thou canst not save Rebecca. I tell thee once more, thou canst but perish with her. Go hie thee to the Grand Master — throw thyself at his feet and tell him ——"

"Not at his feet, by Heaven! but to the dotard's very beard will I say ——"

"Say to him, then, to his beard," continued Malvoisin, coolly, "that you love this captive Jewess to distraction; and the more thou dost enlarge on thy passion, the greater will be his haste to end it by the death of the fair enchantress; while thou, taken in flagrant delict by the avowal of a crime contrary to thine oath, canst hope no aid of thy brethren, and must exchange all thy brilliant visions of ambition and power, to lift perhaps a mercenary spear in some of the petty quarrels between Flanders and Burgundy."

"Thou speakest the truth, Malvoisin," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, after a moment's reflection. "I will give the hoary bigot no advantage over me; and for Rebecca, she hath not merited at my hand that I should expose rank and honour for her sake. I will cast her off — yes, I will leave her to her fate, unless ——"

"Qualify not thy wise and necessary resolution," said Malvoisin; "women are but the toys which amuse our lighter hours — ambition is the serious business of life. Perish a thousand such frail baubles as this Jewess, before thy manly step pause in the brilliant career that lies stretched before thee! For the present we part, nor must we be seen to hold close conversation — I must order the hall for his judgment-seat."

"What!" said Bois-Guilbert, "so soon?"

"Ay," replied the Preceptor, "trial moves rapidly on when the judge has determined the sentence beforehand."

"Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert, when he was left alone, "thou art like to cost me dear — Why cannot I abandon thee to thy fate, as this calm hypocrite recommends? — One effort will I make to save thee — but beware of ingratitude! for if I am again repulsed, my vengeance shall equal my love. The life and honour of Bois-Guilbert must not be hazarded, where contempt and reproaches are his only reward."

The Preceptor had hardly given the necessary orders, when he was joined by Conrade Mont-Fitchet, who acquainted him with the Grand Master's resolution to bring the Jewess to instant trial for sorcery.

"It is surely a dream," said the Preceptor; "we have many Jewish physicians, and we call them not wizards though they work wonderful cures."

"The Grand Master thinks otherwise," said Mont-Fitchet; "and, Albert, I will be upright with thee — wizard or not, it were better that this miserable damsel die, than that Brian de Bois-Guilbert should be lost to the Order, or the Order divided by internal dissention. Thou knowest his high rank, his fame in arms — thou knowest the zeal with which many of our brethren regard him — but all this will not avail him with our Grand Master, should he consider Brian as the accomplice, not the victim, of this Jewess. Were the souls of the twelve tribes in her single body, it were better she suffered alone, than that Bois-Guilbert were partner in her destruction."

"I have been working him even now to abandon her," said Malvoisin; "but still, are there grounds enough to condemn this Rebecca for sorcery? — Will not the Grand Master change his mind when he sees that the proofs are so weak?"

"They must be strengthened, Albert," replied Mont-Fitchet, "they must be strengthened. Dost thou understand me?"

"I do," said the Preceptor, "nor do I scruple to do aught for advancement of the Order — but there is little time to find engines fitting."

"Malvoisin, they *must* be found," said Conrade; "well will it advantage both the Order and thee. This Templestowe is a poor Preceptory — that of Maison-Dieu is worth double its value — thou knowest my interest with our old Chief — find those who can carry this matter through, and thou art Preceptor of Maison-Dieu in the fertile Kent — How sayst thou?"

"There is," replied Malvoisin, "among those who came hither with Bois-Guilbert, two fellows whom I well know; servants they were to my brother Philip de Malvoisin, and passed from his service to that of Front-de-Bœuf — It may be they know something of the witcheries of this woman."

"Away, seek them out instantly — and hark thee, if a byzant or two will sharpen their memory, let them not be wanting."

"They would swear the mother that bore them a sorceress for a zecchin," said the Preceptor.

"Away, then," said Mont-Fitchet; "at noon the affair will proceed. I have not seen our senior in such earnest preparation since he condemned to the stake Hamet Alfagi, a convert who relapsed to the Moslem faith."

The ponderous castle-bell had tolled the point of noon, when Rebecca heard a trampling of feet upon the private stair which led to her place of confinement. The noise announced the arrival of several persons, and the circumstance rather gave her joy; for she was more afraid of the solitary visits of the fierce and passionate Bois-Guilbert than of any evil that could befall her besides. The door of the chamber was unlocked, and Conrade and the Preceptor Malvoisin entered, attended by four warders clothed in black, and bearing halberds.

"Daughter of an accursed race!" said the Preceptor, "arise and follow us."

"Whither," said Rebecca, "and for what purpose?"

"Damsel," answered Conrade, "it is not for thee to question, but to obey. Nevertheless, be it known to thee, that thou art to be brought before the

tribunal of the Grand Master of our holy Order, there to answer for thine offences."

"May the God of Abraham be praised!" said Rebecca, folding her hands devoutly; "the name of a judge, though an enemy to my people, is to me as the name of a protector. Most willingly do I follow thee — permit me only to wrap my veil around my head."

They descended the stair with slow and solemn step, traversed a long gallery, and, by a pair of folding doors placed at the end, entered the great hall in which the Grand Master had for the time established his court of justice.

The lower part of this ample apartment was filled with squires and yeomen, who made way not without some difficulty for Rebecca, attended by the Preceptor and Mont-Fitchet, and followed by the guard of halberdiers, to move forward to the seat appointed for her. As she passed through the crowd, her arms folded and her head depressed, a scrap of paper was thrust into her hand, which she received almost unconsciously, and continued to hold without examining its contents. The assurance that she possessed some friend in this awful assembly gave her courage to look around, and to mark into whose presence she had been conducted. She gazed, accordingly, upon the scene, which we shall endeavour to describe in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Stern was the law which bade its vot'ries leave
At human woes with human hearts to grieve;
Stern was the law, which at the winning wile
Of frank and harmless mirth forbade to smile;
But sterner still, when high the iron-rod
Of tyrant power she shook, and call'd that power of God.
The Middle Ages.

The tribunal, erected for the trial of the innocent and unhappy Rebecca, occupied the dais or elevated part of the upper end of the great hall — a platform, which we have already described as the place of honour, destined to be occupied by the most distinguished inhabitants or guests of an ancient mansion.

On an elevated seat, directly before the accused, sat the Grand Master of the Temple, in full and ample robes of flowing white, holding in his hand the mystic staff, which bore the symbol of the Order. At his feet was placed a table, occupied by two scribes, chaplains of the Order, whose duty it was to reduce to formal record the proceedings of the day. The black dresses, bare scalps, and demure looks of these churchmen, formed a strong contrast to the warlike appearance of the knights who attended, either as residing in the Preceptory, or as come thither to attend upon their Grand Master. The Preceptors, of whom there were four present, occupied seats lower in height, and somewhat drawn back behind that of their superior; and the knights, who enjoyed no such rank in the Order, were placed on benches still lower, and preserving the same distance from the Preceptors as these from the Grand Master. Behind them, but still upon the dais or elevated portion of the hall, stood the esquires of the Order, in white dresses of an inferior quality.

The whole assembly wore an aspect of the most profound gravity; and in the faces of the knights might be perceived traces of military daring, united with the solemn carriage becoming men of a religious profession, and which, in the presence of their Grand Master, failed not to sit upon every brow.

The remaining and lower part of the hall was filled with guards, holding partisans, and with other attendants whom curiosity had drawn thither, to see at once a Grand Master and a Jewish sorceress. By far the greater part of those inferior persons were, in one rank or other, connected with the Order, and were accordingly distinguished by their black dresses. But peasants from the neighbouring country were not refused admittance; for it was the pride of Beaumanoir to render the edifying spectacle of the justice which he administered as public as possible. His large blue eyes seemed to expand as he gazed around the assembly, and his countenance appeared elated by the conscious dignity, and imaginary merit, of the part which he was about to perform. A psalm, which he himself accompanied with a deep mellow voice, which age had not deprived of its powers, commenced the proceedings of the day; and the solemn sounds, *Venite exultemus Domino*, so often sung by the Templars before engaging with earthly adversaries, was judged by Lucas most appropriate to introduce the approaching triumph, for such he deemed it, over the powers of darkness. The deep prolonged notes, raised by a hundred masculine voices accustomed to combine in the choral chant, arose to the vaulted roof of the hall, and rolled on amongst its arches with the pleasing yet solemn sound of the rushing of mighty waters.

When the sounds ceased, the Grand Master glanced his eye slowly around the circle, and observed that the seat of one of the Preceptors was vacant. Brian de Bois-Guilbert, by whom it had been occupied, had left his place, and was now standing near the extreme corner of one of the benches occupied by the Knights Companions of the Temple, one hand extending his long mantle, so as in some degree to hide his face; while the other held his cross-handled sword, with the point of which, sheathed as it was, he was slowly drawing lines upon the oaken floor.

"Unhappy man!" said the Grand Master, after favouring him with a glance of compassion. "Thou seest, Conrade, how this holy work distresses him. To this can the light look of woman, aided by the Prince of the Powers of this world, bring a valiant and worthy knight! — Seest thou he cannot look upon us; he cannot look upon her; and who knows by what impulse from his tormentor his hand forms these cabalistic lines upon the floor? — It may be our life and safety are thus aimed at; but we spit at and defy the foul enemy. *Semper Leo percutiatur!*"

This was communicated apart to his confidential follower, Conrade Mont-Fitchet. The Grand Master then raised his voice, and addressed the assembly.

"Reverend and valiant men, Knights, Preceptors, and Companions of this Holy Order, my brethren and my children! — you also, well-born and pious Esquires, who aspire to wear this holy Cross! — and you also, Christian brethren, of every degree! — Be it known to you, that it is not defect of power in us which hath occasioned the assembling of this congregation; for, however unworthy in our person, yet to us is committed, with this

batoon, full power to judge and to try all that regards the weal of this our Holy Order. Holy Saint Bernard, in the rule of our knightly and religious profession, hath said, in the fifty-ninth capital,[1] that he would not that brethren be called together in council, save at the will and command of the Master; leaving it free to us, as to those more worthy fathers who have preceded us in this our office, to judge, as well of the occasion as of the time and place in which a chapter of the whole Order, or of any part thereof, may be convoked. Also, in all such chapters, it is our duty to hear the advice of our brethren, and to proceed according to our own pleasure. But when the raging wolf hath made an inroad upon the flock, and carried off one member thereof, it is the duty of the kind shepherd to call his comrades together, that with bows and slings they may quell the invader, according to our well-known rule, that the lion is ever to be beaten down. We have therefore summoned to our presence a Jewish woman, by name Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York—a woman infamous for sortileges and for witcheries; whereby she hath maddened the blood, and besotted the brain, not of a churl, but of a Knight—not of a secular Knight, but of one devoted to the service of the Holy Temple—not of a Knight Companion, but of a Preceptor of our Order, first in honour as in place. Our brother, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, is well known to ourselves, and to all degrees who now hear me, as a true and zealous champion of the Cross, by whose arm many deeds of valour have been wrought in the Holy Land, and the holy places purified from pollution by the blood of those infidels who defiled them. Neither have our brother's sagacity and prudence been less in repute among his brethren than his valour and discipline; in so much, that knights, both in eastern and western lands, have named De Bois-Guilbert as one who may well be put in nomination as successor to this batoon, when it shall please Heaven to release us from the toil of bearing it. If we were told that such a man, so honoured, and so honourable, suddenly casting away regard for his character, his vows, his brethren, and his prospects, had associated to himself a Jewish damsel, wandered in this lewd company through solitary places, defended her person in preference to his own, and, finally, was so utterly blinded and besotted by his folly, as to bring her even to one of our own Preceptories, what should we say but that the noble knight was possessed by some evil demon, or influenced by some wicked spell?—If we could suppose it otherwise, think not rank, valour, high repute, or any earthly consideration, should prevent us from visiting him with punishment, that the evil thing might be removed, even according to the text, *Auferte malum ex vobis.* For various and heinous are the acts of transgression against the rule of our blessed Order in this lamentable history.—1st, He hath walked according to his proper will, contrary to capital 33, *Quod nullus juxta propriam voluntatem incedat.*—2d, He hath held communication with an excommunicated person, capital 57, *Ut fratres non participent cum excommunicatis*, and therefore hath a portion in *Anathema Maranatha.*—3d, He hath conversed with strange women, contrary to the capital, *Ut fratres non conversantur cum extraneis mulieribus.*—4th, He hath not avoided, nay, he hath, it is to be feared, solicited the kiss of woman; by which, saith the last rule of our renowned Order, *Ut fugiantur oscula*, the soldiers of the Cross are brought into a snare. For which heinous and multiplied guilt, Brian de Bois-Guilbert should be cut off and cast out from our congregation, were he the right hand and right eye thereof."

He paused. A low murmur went through the assembly. Some of the younger part, who had been inclined to smile at the statute *De osculis fugiendis*, became now grave enough, and anxiously waited what the Grand Master was next to propose.

"Such," he said, "and so great should indeed be the punishment of a Knight-Templar, who wilfully offended against the rules of his Order in such weighty points. But if, by means of charms and of spells, Satan had obtained dominion over the Knight, perchance because he cast his eyes too lightly upon a damsel's beauty, we are then rather to lament than chastise his backsliding; and, imposing on him only such penance as may purify him from his iniquity, we are to turn the full edge of our indignation upon the accursed instrument, which had so well-nigh occasioned his utter falling away.—Stand forth, therefore, and bear witness, ye who have witnessed these unhappy doings, that we may judge of the sum and bearing thereof; and judge whether our justice may be satisfied with the punishment of this infidel woman, or if we must go on, with a bleeding heart, to the farther proceeding against our brother."

Several witnesses were called upon to prove the risks to which Bois-Guilbert exposed himself in endeavouring to save Rebecca from the blazing castle, and his neglect of his personal defence in attending to her safety. The men gave these details with the exaggerations common to vulgar minds which have been strongly excited by any remarkable event, and their natural disposition to the marvellous was greatly increased by the satisfaction which their evidence seemed to afford to the eminent person for whose information it had been delivered. Thus the dangers which Bois-Guilbert surmounted, in themselves sufficiently great, became portentous in their narrative. The devotion of the Knight to Rebecca's defence was exaggerated beyond the bounds, not only of discretion, but even of the most frantic excess of chivalrous zeal; and his deference to what she said, even although her language was often severe and upbraiding, was painted as carried to an excess, which, in a man of his haughty temper, seemed almost preternatural.

The Preceptor of Templestowe was then called on to describe the manner in which Bois-Guilbert and the Jewess arrived at the Preceptory. The evidence of Malvoisin was skilfully guarded. But while he apparently studied to spare the feelings of Bois-Guilbert, he threw in, from time to time, such hints, as seemed to infer that he laboured under some temporary alienation of mind, so deeply did he appear to be enamoured of the damsel whom he brought along with him. With sighs of penitence, the Preceptor avowed his own contrition for having admitted Rebecca and her lover within the walls of the Preceptory—"But my defence," he concluded, "has been made in my confession to our

[1] The reader is again referred to the Rules of the Poor Military Brotherhood of the Temple, which occur in the Works of St Bernard.—L. T.

most reverend father the Grand Master; he knows my motives were not evil, though my conduct may have been irregular. Joyfully will I submit to any penance he shall assign me."

"Thou hast spoken well, Brother Albert," said Beaumanoir; "thy motives were good, since thou didst judge it right to arrest thine erring brother in his career of precipitate folly. But thy conduct was wrong; as he that would stop a runaway steed, and seizing by the stirrup instead of the bridle, receiveth injury himself, instead of accomplishing his purpose. Thirteen paternosters are assigned by our pious founder for matins, and nine for vespers; be those services doubled by thee. Thrice a-week are Templars permitted the use of flesh; but do thou keep fast for all the seven days. This do for six weeks to come, and thy penance is accomplished."

With a hypocritical look of the deepest submission, the Preceptor of Templestowe bowed to the ground before his Superior, and resumed his seat.

"Were it not well, brethren," said the Grand Master, "that we examine something into the former life and conversation of this woman, specially that we may discover whether she be one likely to use magical charms and spells, since the truths which we have heard may well incline us to suppose, that in this unhappy course our erring brother has been acted upon by some infernal enticement and delusion?"

Herman of Goodalricke was the Fourth Preceptor present; the other three were Conrade, Malvoisin, and Bois-Guilbert himself. Herman was an ancient warrior, whose face was marked with scars inflicted by the sabre of the Moslemah, and had great rank and consideration among his brethren. He arose and bowed to the Grand Master, who instantly granted him licence of speech. "I would crave to know, most Reverend Father, of our valiant brother, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, what he says to these wondrous accusations, and with what eye he himself now regards his unhappy intercourse with this Jewish maiden?"

"Brian de Bois-Guilbert," said the Grand Master, "thou hearest the question which our Brother of Goodalricke desirest thou shouldst answer. I command thee to reply to him."

Bois-Guilbert turned his head towards the Grand Master when thus addressed, and remained silent.

"He is possessed by a dumb devil," said the Grand Master. "Avoid thee, Sathanas!—Speak, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, I conjure thee, by this symbol of our Holy Order."

Bois-Guilbert made an effort to suppress his rising scorn and indignation, the expression of which, he was well aware, would have little availed him. "Brian de Bois-Guilbert," he answered, "replies not, most Reverend Father, to such wild and vague charges. If his honour be impeached he will defend it with his body, and with that sword which has often fought for Christendom."

"We forgive thee, Brother Brian," said the Grand Master; "though that thou hast boasted thy warlike achievements before us, is a glorifying of thine own deeds, and cometh of the Enemy, who tempteth us to exalt our own worship. But thou hast our pardon, judging thou speakest less of thine own suggestion than from the impulse of him whom, by Heaven's leave, we will quell and drive forth from our assembly." A glance of disdain flashed from the dark fierce eyes of Bois-Guilbert, but he made no reply.—"And now," pursued the Grand Master, "since our Brother of Goodalricke's question has been thus imperfectly answered, pursue we our quest, brethren, and with our patron's assistance, we will search to the bottom this mystery of iniquity.—Let those who have aught to witness of the life and conversation of this Jewish woman, stand forth before us." There was a bustle in the lower part of the hall, and when the Grand Master inquired the reason, it was replied, there was in the crowd a bedridden man, whom the prisoner had restored to the perfect use of his limbs, by a miraculous balsam.

The poor peasant, a Saxon by birth, was dragged forward to the bar, terrified at the penal consequences which he might have incurred by the guilt of having been cured of the palsy by a Jewish damsel. Perfectly cured he certainly was not, for he supported himself forward on crutches to give evidence. Most unwilling was his testimony, and given with many tears; but he admitted that two years since, when residing at York, he was suddenly afflicted with a sore disease, while labouring for Isaac the rich Jew, in his vocation of a joiner; that he had been unable to stir from his bed until the remedies applied by Rebecca's directions, and especially a warming and spicy-smelling balsam, had in some degree restored him to the use of his limbs. Moreover, he said, she had given him a pot of that precious ointment, and furnished him with a piece of money withal, to return to the house of his father, near to Templestowe. "And may it please your gracious Reverence," said the man, "I cannot think the damsel meant harm by me, though she hath the ill hap to be a Jewess; for even when I used her remedy, I said the Pater and the Creed, and it never operated a whit less kindly."

"Peace, slave," said the Grand Master, "and begone! It well suits brutes like thee to be tampering and trinketing with hellish cures, and to be giving your labour to the sons of mischief. I tell thee, the fiend can impose diseases for the very purpose of removing them, in order to bring into credit some diabolical fashion of cure. Hast thou that unguent of which thou speakest?"

The peasant, fumbling in his bosom with a trembling hand, produced a small box, bearing some Hebrew characters on the lid, which was, with most of the audience, a sure proof that the devil had stood apothecary. Beaumanoir, after crossing himself, took the box into his hand, and, learned in most of the Eastern tongues, read with ease the motto on the lid,—*The Lion of the Tribe of Judah hath conquered.* "Strange powers of Sathanas," said he, "which can convert Scripture into blasphemy, mingling poison with our necessary food!—Is there no leech here who can tell us the ingredients of this mystic unguent?"

Two mediciners, as they called themselves, the one a monk, the other a barber, appeared, and avouched they knew nothing of the materials, excepting that they savoured of myrrh and camphire, which they took to be Oriental herbs. But with the true professional hatred to a successful practitioner of their art, they insinuated that, since the medicine was beyond their own knowledge, it must necessarily have been compounded from an unlawful and magical pharmacopeia; since they

themselves, though no conjurers, fully understood every branch of their art, so far as it might be exercised with the good faith of a Christian. When this medical research was ended, the Saxon peasant desired humbly to have back the medicine which he had found so salutary; but the Grand Master frowned severely at the request. "What is thy name, fellow?" said he to the cripple.

"Higg, the son of Snell," answered the peasant.

"Then Higg, son of Snell," said the Grand Master, "I tell thee it is better to be bedridden, than to accept the benefit of unbelievers' medicine that thou mayest arise and walk; better to despoil infidels of their treasure by the strong hand than to accept of them benevolent gifts, or do them service for wages. Go thou, and do as I have said."

"Alack," said the peasant, "an it shall not displease your Reverence, the lesson comes too late for me, for I am but a maimed man; but I will tell my two brethren, who serve the rich Rabbi Nathan Ben Samuel, that your mastership says it is more lawful to rob him than to render him faithful service."

"Out with the prating villain?" said Beaumanoir, who was not prepared to refute this practical application of his general maxim.

Higg, the son of Snell, withdrew into the crowd, but, interested in the fate of his benefactress, lingered until he should learn her doom, even at the risk of again encountering the frown of that severe judge, the terror of which withered his very heart within him.

At this period of the trial, the Grand Master commanded Rebecca to unveil herself. Opening her lips for the first time, she replied patiently, but with dignity,—"That it was not the wont of the daughters of her people to uncover their faces when alone in an assembly of strangers." The sweet tones of her voice, and the softness of her reply, impressed on the audience a sentiment of pity and sympathy. But Beaumanoir, in whose mind the suppression of each feeling of humanity which could interfere with his imagined duty, was a virtue of itself, repeated his commands that his victim should be unveiled. The guards were about to remove her veil accordingly, when she stood up before the Grand Master and said, "Nay, but for the love of your own daughters—"Alas," she said, recollecting herself, "ye have no daughters!—yet for the remembrance of your mothers—for the love of your sisters, and of female decency, let me not be thus handled in your presence; it suits not a maiden to be disrobed by such rude grooms. I will obey you," she added, with an expression of patient sorrow in her voice, which had almost melted the heart of Beaumanoir himself; "ye are elders among your people, and at your command I will shew the features of an ill-fated maiden."

She withdrew her veil, and looked on them with a countenance in which bashfulness contended with dignity. Her exceeding beauty excited a murmur of surprise, and the younger knights told each other with their eyes, in silent correspondence, that Brian's best apology was in the power of her real charms, rather than of her imaginary witchcraft. But Higg, the son of Snell, felt most deeply the effect produced by the sight of the countenance of his benefactress. "Let me go forth," he said to the warders at the door of the hall,—"let me go forth!—To look at her again will kill me, for I have had a share in murdering her."

"Peace, poor man," said Rebecca, when she heard his exclamation; "thou hast done me no harm by speaking the truth—thou canst not aid me by thy complaints or lamentations. Peace, I pray thee—go home and save thyself."

Higg was about to be thrust out by the compassion of the warders, who were apprehensive lest his clamorous grief should draw upon them reprehension, and upon himself punishment. But he promised to be silent, and was permitted to remain. The two men-at-arms, with whom Albert Malvoisin had not failed to communicate upon the import of their testimony, were now called forward. Though both were hardened and inflexible villains, the sight of the captive maiden, as well as her excelling beauty, at first appeared to stagger them; but an expressive glance from the Preceptor of Templestowe restored them to their dogged composure; and they delivered, with a precision which would have seemed suspicious to more impartial judges, circumstances either altogether fictitious or trivial, and natural in themselves, but rendered pregnant with suspicion by the exaggerated manner in which they were told, and the sinister commentary which the witnesses added to the facts. The circumstances of their evidence would have been, in modern days, divided into two classes—those which were immaterial, and those which were actually and physically impossible. But both were, in those ignorant and superstitious times, easily credited as proofs of guilt. —The first class set forth, that Rebecca was heard to mutter to herself in an unknown tongue—that the songs she sung by fits were of a strangely sweet sound, which made the ears of the hearer tingle, and his heart throb—that she spoke at times to herself, and seemed to look upward for a reply—that her garments were of a strange and mystic form, unlike those of women of good repute—that she had rings impressed with cabalistical devices, and that strange characters were broidered on her veil.

All these circumstances, so natural and so trivial, were gravely listened to as proofs, or, at least, as affording strong suspicions that Rebecca had unlawful correspondence with mystical powers.

But there was less equivocal testimony, which the credulity of the assembly, or of the greater part, greedily swallowed, however incredible. One of the soldiers had seen her work a cure upon a wounded man, brought with them to the castle of Torquilstone. She did, he said, make certain signs upon the wound, and repeated certain mysterious words, which he blessed God he understood not, when the iron head of a square cross-bow bolt disengaged itself from the wound, the bleeding was stanched, the wound was closed, and the dying man was, within the quarter of an hour, walking upon the ramparts, and assisting the witness in managing a mangonel, or machine for hurling stones. This legend was probably founded upon the fact, that Rebecca had attended on the wounded Ivanhoe when in the castle of Torquilstone. But it was the more difficult to dispute the accuracy of the witness, as, in order to produce real evidence in support of his verbal testimony, he drew from his pouch the very bolt-head, which, according to his story, had been miraculously extracted from the wound; and

as the iron weighed a full ounce it completely confirmed the tale, however miraculous.

His comrade had been a witness from a neighbouring battlement of the scene betwixt Rebecca and Bois-Guilbert, when she was upon the point of precipitating herself from the top of the tower. Not to be behind his companion, this fellow stated that he had seen Rebecca perch herself upon the parapet of the turret, and there take the form of a milk-white swan, under which appearance she flitted three times round the castle of Torquilstone; then again settle on the turret, and once more assume the female form.

Less than one half of this weighty evidence would have been sufficient to convict any old woman, poor and ugly, even though she had not been a Jewess. United with that fatal circumstance, the body of proof was too weighty for Rebecca's youth, though combined with the most exquisite beauty.

The Grand Master had collected the suffrages, and now in a solemn tone demanded of Rebecca what she had to say against the sentence of condemnation, which he was about to pronounce.

"To invoke your pity," said the lovely Jewess, with a voice tremulous with emotion, "would, I am aware, be as useless as I should hold it mean. To state that to relieve the sick and wounded of another religion, cannot be displeasing to the acknowledged Founder of both our faiths, were also unavailing; to plead that many things which these men (whom may Heaven pardon!) have spoken against me are impossible, would avail me but little, since you believe in their possibility; and still less would it advantage me to explain, that the peculiarities of my dress, language, and manners, are those of my people — I had well-nigh said of my country, but alas! we have no country. Nor will I even vindicate myself at the expense of my oppressor, who stands there listening to the fictions and surmises which seem to convert the tyrant into the victim.— God be judge between him and me! but rather would I submit to ten such deaths as your pleasure may denounce against me, than listen to the suit which that man of Belial has urged upon me — friendless, defenceless, and his prisoner. But he is of your own faith, and his lightest affirmance would weigh down the most solemn protestations of the distressed Jewess. I will not therefore return to himself the charge brought against me — but to himself — Yes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, to thyself I appeal, whether these accusations are not false? as monstrous and calumnious as they are deadly?"

There was a pause; all eyes turned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. He was silent.

"Speak," she said, "if thou art a man — if thou art a Christian, speak! — I conjure thee, by the habit which thou dost wear, by the name thou dost inherit — by the knighthood thou dost vaunt — by the honour of thy mother — by the tomb and the bones of thy father — I conjure thee to say, are these things true?"

"Answer her, brother," said the Grand Master, "if the Enemy with whom thou dost wrestle will give thee power."

In fact, Bois-Guilbert seemed agitated by contending passions, which almost convulsed his features, and it was with a constrained voice that at last he replied, looking to Rebecca, — "The scroll! — the scroll!"

"Ay," said Beaumanoir, "this is indeed testimony! The victim of her witcheries can only name the fatal scroll, the spell inscribed on which is, doubtless, the cause of his silence."

But Rebecca put another interpretation on the words extorted as it were from Bois-Guilbert, and glancing her eye upon the slip of parchment which she continued to hold in her hand, she read written thereupon in the Arabian character, *Demand a Champion!* The murmuring commentary which ran through the assembly at the strange reply of Bois-Guilbert, gave Rebecca leisure to examine and instantly to destroy the scroll unobserved. When the whisper had ceased, the Grand Master spoke.

"Rebecca, thou canst derive no benefit from the evidence of this unhappy knight, for whom, as we well perceive, the Enemy is yet too powerful. Hast thou aught else to say?"

"There is yet one chance of life left to me," said Rebecca, "even by your own fierce laws. Life has been miserable — miserable, at least, of late — but I will not cast away the gift of God, while he affords me the means of defending it. I deny this charge — I maintain my innocence, and I declare the falsehood of this accusation — I challenge the privilege of trial by combat, and will appear by my champion."

"And who, Rebecca," replied the Grand Master, "will lay lance in rest for a sorceress? who will be the champion of a Jewess?"

"God will raise me up a champion," said Rebecca — "it cannot be that in merry England — the hospitable, the generous, the free, where so many are ready to peril their lives for honour, there will not be found one to fight for justice. But it is enough that I challenge the trial by combat — there lies my gage."

She took her embroidered glove from her hand, and flung it down before the Grand Master with an air of mingled simplicity and dignity, which excited universal surprise and admiration.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

> —— There I throw my gage,
> To prove it on thee to the extremest point
> Of martial daring.
>
> *Richard II.*

Even Lucas Beaumanoir himself was affected by the mien and appearance of Rebecca. He was not originally a cruel, or even a severe man; but with passions by nature cold, and with a high, though mistaken, sense of duty, his heart had been gradually hardened by the ascetic life which he pursued, the supreme power which he enjoyed, and the supposed necessity of subduing infidelity and eradicating heresy, which he conceived peculiarly incumbent on him. His features relaxed in their usual severity as he gazed upon the beautiful creature before him, alone, unfriended, and defending herself with so much spirit and courage. He crossed himself twice, as doubting whence arose the unwonted softening of a heart, which on such occasions used to resemble in hardness the steel of his sword. At length he spoke.

"Damsel," he said, "if the pity I feel for thee arise from any practice thine evil arts have made on me, great is thy guilt. But I rather judge it the

kinder feelings of nature, which grieves that so goodly a form should be a vessel of perdition. Repent, my daughter — confess thy witchcrafts — turn thee from thine evil faith — embrace this holy emblem, and all shall yet be well with thee here and hereafter. In some sisterhood of the strictest order, shalt thou have time for prayer and fitting penance, and that repentance not to be repented of. This do and live — what has the law of Moses done for thee, that thou shouldest die for it?"

"It was the law of my fathers," said Rebecca; "it was delivered in thunders and in storms upon the mountain of Sinai, in cloud and in fire. This, if ye are Christians, ye believe — it is, you say, recalled: but so my teachers have not taught me."

"Let our chaplain," said Beaumanoir, "stand forth, and tell this obstinate infidel ——"

"Forgive the interruption," said Rebecca, meekly; "I am a maiden, unskilled to dispute for my religion, but I can die for it, if it be God's will. — Let me pray your answer to my demand of a champion."

"Give me her glove," said Beaumanoir. "This is indeed," he continued, as he looked at the flimsy texture and slender fingers, "a slight and frail gage for a purpose so deadly! — Seest thou, Rebecca, as this thin and light glove of thine is to one of our heavy steel gauntlets, so is thy cause to that of the Temple, for it is our Order which thou hast defied."

"Cast my innocence into the scale," answered Rebecca, "and the glove of silk shall outweigh the glove of iron."

"Then thou dost persist in thy refusal to confess thy guilt, and in that bold challenge which thou hast made?"

"I do persist, noble sir," answered Rebecca.

"So be it then, in the name of Heaven," said the Grand Master; "and may God shew the right!"

"Amen," replied the Preceptors around him, and the word was deeply echoed by the whole assembly.

"Brethren," said Beaumanoir, "you are aware that we might well have refused to this woman the benefit of the trial by combat — but though a Jewess and an unbeliever, she is also a stranger and defenceless, and God forbid that she should ask the benefit of our mild laws, and that it should be refused to her. Moreover, we are knights and soldiers as well as men of religion, and shame it were to us, upon any pretence, to refuse proffered combat. Thus, therefore, stands the case. Rebecca, the daughter of Isaac of York, is, by many frequent and suspicious circumstances, defamed of sorcery practised on the person of a noble knight of our holy Order, and hath challenged the combat in proof of her innocence. To whom, reverend brethren, is it your opinion that we should deliver the gage of battle, naming him, at the same time, to be our champion on the field?"

"To Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whom it chiefly concerns," said the Preceptor of Goodalricke, "and who, moreover, best knows how the truth stands in this matter."

"But if," said the Grand Master, "our brother Brian be under the influence of a charm or a spell — we speak but for the sake of precaution, for to the arm of none of our holy Order would we more willingly confide this or a more weighty cause."

"Reverend father," answered the Preceptor of Goodalricke, "no spell can affect the champion who comes forward to fight for the judgment of God."

"Thou sayest right, brother," said the Grand Master. "Albert Malvoisin, give this gage of battle to Brian de Bois-Guilbert. — It is our charge to thee, brother," he continued, addressing himself to Bois-Guilbert, "that thou do thy battle manfully nothing doubting that the good cause shall triumph — And do thou, Rebecca, attend, that we assign thee the third day from the present to find a champion."

"That is but brief space," answered Rebecca, "for a stranger, who is also of another faith, to find one who will do battle, wagering life and honour for her cause, against a knight who is called an approved soldier."

"We may not extend it," answered the Grand Master; "the field must be foughten in our own presence, and divers weighty causes call us on the fourth day from hence."

"God's will be done!" said Rebecca; "I put my trust in Him, to whom an instant is as effectual to save as a whole age."

"Thou hast spoken well, damsel," said the Grand Master; "but well know we who can array himself like an angel of light. It remains but to name a fitting place of combat, and, if it so hap, also of execution. — Where is the Preceptor of this house?"

Albert Malvoisin, still holding Rebecca's glove in his hand, was speaking to Bois-Guilbert very earnestly, but in a low voice.

"How!" said the Grand Master, "will he not receive the gage?"

"He will — he doth, most Reverend Father," said Malvoisin, slipping the glove under his own mantle. "And for the place of combat, I hold the fittest to be the lists of Saint George belonging to this Preceptory, and used by us for military exercise."

"It is well," said the Grand Master.—"Rebecca, in those lists shalt thou produce thy champion; and if thou failest to do so, or if thy champion shall be discomfited by the judgment of God, thou shalt then die the death of a sorceress, according to doom. — Let this our judgment be recorded, and the record read aloud, that no one may pretend ignorance."

One of the chaplains, who acted as clerks to the chapter, immediately engrossed the order in a huge volume, which contained the proceedings of the Templar Knights when solemnly assembled on such occasions; and when he had finished writing, the other read aloud the sentence of the Grand Master, which, when translated from the Norman-French in which it was couched, was expressed as follows: —

"Rebecca, a Jewess, daughter of Isaac of York, being attainted of sorcery, seduction, and other damnable practices, practised on a Knight of the most Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, doth deny the same; and saith, that the testimony delivered against her this day is false, wicked, and disloyal; and that by lawful *essoine*[1] of her body as being unable to combat in her own behalf, she doth offer, by a champion instead thereof, to avouch her case, he performing his loyal *devoir* in all knightly sort,

[1] *Essoine* signifies excuse, and here relates to the appellant's privilege of appearing by her champion, in excuse of her own person on account of her sex.

with such arms as to gage of battle do fully appertain, and that at her peril and cost. And therewith she proffered her gage. And the gage having been delivered to the noble Lord and Knight, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, of the Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, he was appointed to do this battle, in behalf of his Order and himself, as injured and impaired by the practices of the appellant. Wherefore the most reverend Father and puissant Lord, Lucas Marquis of Beaumanoir, did allow of the said challenge, and of the said *essoine* of the appellant's body, and assigned the third day for the said combat, the place being the enclosure called the lists of Saint George, near to the Preceptory of Templestowe. And the Grand Master appoints the appellant to appear there by her champion, on pain of doom, as a person convicted of sorcery or seduction; and also the defendant so to appear, under the penalty of being held and adjudged recreant in case of default; and the noble Lord and most reverend Father aforesaid appointed the battle to be done in his own presence, and according to all that is commendable and profitable in such a case. And may God aid the just cause!"

"Amen!" said the Grand Master; and the word was echoed by all around. Rebecca spoke not, but she looked up to heaven, and, folding her hands, remained for a minute without change of attitude. She then modestly reminded the Grand Master, that she ought to be permitted some opportunity of free communication with her friends, for the purpose of making her condition known to them, and procuring, if possible, some champion to fight in her behalf.

"It is just and lawful," said the Grand Master; "choose what messenger thou shalt trust, and he shall have free communication with thee in thy prison-chamber."

"Is there," said Rebecca, "any one here, who, either for love of a good cause, or for ample hire, will do the errand of a distressed being?"

All were silent; for none thought it safe, in the presence of the Grand Master, to avow any interest in the calumniated prisoner, lest he should be suspected of leaning towards Judaism. Not even the prospect of reward, far less any feelings of compassion alone, could surmount this apprehension.

Rebecca stood for a few moments in indescribable anxiety, and then exclaimed, "Is it really thus?—And, in English land, am I to be deprived of the poor chance of safety which remains to me, for want of an act of charity which would not be refused to the worst criminal?"

Higg, the son of Snell, at length replied, "I am but a maimed man, but that I can at all stir or move was owing to her charitable assistance.—I will do thine errand," he added, addressing Rebecca, "as well as a crippled object can, and happy were my limbs fleet enough to repair the mischief done by my tongue. Alas! when I boasted of thy charity, I little thought I was leading thee into danger!"

"God," said Rebecca, "is the disposer of all. He can turn back the captivity of Judah, even by the weakest instrument. To execute his message the snail is as sure a messenger as the falcon. Seek out Isaac of York—here is that will pay for horse and man—let him have this scroll.—I know not if it be of Heaven the spirit which inspires me, but most truly do I judge that I am not to die this death, and that a champion will be raised up for me. Farewell!—Life and death are in thy haste."

The peasant took the scroll, which contained only a few lines in Hebrew. Many of the crowd would have dissuaded him from touching a document so suspicious; but Higg was resolute in the service of his benefactress. She had saved his body, he said, and he was confident she did not mean to peril his soul.

"I will get me," he said, "my neighbour Buthan's good capul,[1] and I will be at York within as brief space as man and beast may."

But as it fortuned, he had no occasion to go so far, for within a quarter of a mile from the gate of the Preceptory he met with two riders, whom, by their dress and their huge yellow caps, he knew to be Jews; and, on approaching more nearly, discovered that one of them was his ancient employer, Isaac of York. The other was the Rabbi Ben Samuel; and both had approached as near to the Preceptory as they dared, on hearing that the Grand Master had summoned a chapter for the trial of a sorceress.

"Brother Ben Samuel," said Isaac, "my soul is disquieted, and I wot not why. This charge of necromancy is right often used for cloaking evil practices on our people."

"Be of good comfort, brother," said the physician; "thou canst deal with the Nazarenes as one possessing the mammon of unrighteousness, and canst therefore purchase immunity at their hands—it rules the savage minds of those ungodly men, even as the signet of the mighty Solomon was said to command the evil genii.—But what poor wretch comes hither upon his crutches, desiring, as I think, some speech of me?—Friend," continued the physician, addressing Higg, the son of Snell, "I refuse thee not the aid of mine art, but I relieve not with one asper those who beg for alms upon the highway. Out upon thee!—Hast thou the palsy in thy legs? then let thy hands work for thy livelihood; for, albeit thou be'st unfit for a speedy post, or for a careful shepherd, or for the warfare, or for the service of a hasty master, yet there be occupations—How now, brother?" said he, interrupting his harangue to look towards Isaac, who had but glanced at the scroll which Higg offered, when, uttering a deep groan, he fell from his mule like a dying man, and lay for a minute insensible.

The Rabbi now dismounted in great alarm, and hastily applied the remedies which his art suggested for the recovery of his companion. He had even taken from his pocket a cupping apparatus, and was about to proceed to phlebotomy, when the object of his anxious solicitude suddenly revived; but it was to dash his cap from his head, and to throw dust on his gray hairs. The physician was at first inclined to ascribe this sudden and violent emotion to the effects of insanity; and, adhering to his original purpose, began once again to handle his implements. But Isaac soon convinced him of his error.

"Child of my sorrow," he said, "well shouldst thou be called Benoni, instead of Rebecca! Why should thy death bring down my gray hairs to the grave, till, in the bitterness of my heart, I curse God and die!"

[1] *Capul*, i. e. horse; in a more limited sense, work-horse

"Brother," said the Rabbi, in great surprise, "art thou a father in Israel, and dost thou utter words like unto these?—I trust that the child of thy house yet liveth?"

"She liveth," answered Isaac; "but it is as Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, even when within the den of the lions. She is captive unto those men of Belial, and they will wreak their cruelty upon her, sparing neither for her youth nor her comely favour. Oh! she was as a crown of green palms to my gray locks; and she must wither in a night, like the gourd of Jonah!—Child of my love!—child of my old age!—oh, Rebecca, daughter of Rachel! the darkness of the shadow of death hath encompassed thee."

"Yet read the scroll," said the Rabbi; "peradventure it may be that we may yet find out a way of deliverance."

"Do thou read, brother," answered Isaac, "for mine eyes are as a fountain of water."

The physician read, but in their native language, the following words:—

"To Isaac, the son of Adonikam, whom the Gentiles call Isaac of York, peace and the blessing of the promise be multiplied unto thee!—My father, I am as one doomed to die for that which my soul knoweth not—even for the crime of witchcraft. My father, if a strong man can be found to do battle for my cause with sword and spear, according to the custom of the Nazarenes, and that within the lists of Templestowe, on the third day from this time, peradventure our fathers' God will give him strength to defend the innocent, and her who hath none to help her. But if this may not be, let the virgins of our people mourn for me as for one cast off, and for the hart that is stricken by the hunter, and for the flower which is cut down by the scythe of the mower. Wherefore, look now what thou doest, and whether there be any rescue. One Nazarene warrior might indeed bear arms in my behalf, even Wilfred, son of Cedric, whom the Gentiles call Ivanhoe. But he may not yet endure the weight of his armour. Nevertheless, send the tidings unto him, my father; for he hath favour among the strong men of his people, and as he was our companion in the house of bondage, he may find some one to do battle for my sake. And say unto him, even unto him, even unto Wilfred, the son of Cedric, that if Rebecca live, or if Rebecca die, she liveth or dieth wholly free of the guilt she is charged withal. And if it be the will of God that thou shalt be deprived of thy daughter, do not thou tarry, old man, in this land of bloodshed and cruelty; but betake thyself to Cordova, where thy brother liveth in safety, under the shadow of the throne, even of the throne of Boabdil the Saracen; for less cruel are the cruelties of the Moors unto the race of Jacob, than the cruelties of the Nazarenes of England."

Isaac listened with tolerable composure while Ben Samuel read the letter, and then again resumed the gestures and exclamations of Oriental sorrow, tearing his garments, besprinkling his head with dust, and ejaculating, "My daughter! my daughter! flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone!"

"Yet," said the Rabbi, "take courage, for this grief availeth nothing. Gird up thy loins, and seek out this Wilfred, the son of Cedric. It may be he will help thee with counsel or with strength; for the youth hath favour in the eyes of Richard, called of the Nazarenes Cœur-de-Lion, and the tidings that he hath returned are constant in the land. It may be that he may obtain his letter, and his signet, commanding these men of blood, who take their name from the Temple to the dishonour thereof, that they proceed not in their purposed wickedness."

"I will seek him out," said Isaac, "for he is a good youth, and hath compassion for the exile of Jacob. But he cannot bear his armour, and what other Christian shall do battle for the oppressed of Zion?"

"Nay, but," said the Rabbi, "thou speakest as one that knoweth not the Gentiles. With gold shalt thou buy their valour, even as with gold thou buyest thine own safety. Be of good courage, and do thou set forward to find out this Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I will also up and be doing, for great sin it were to leave thee in thy calamity. I will hie me to the city of York, where many warriors and strong men are assembled, and doubt not I will find among them some one who will do battle for thy daughter; for gold is their god, and for riches will they pawn their lives as well as their lands.—Thou wilt fulfil, my brother, such promise as I may make unto them in thy name?"

"Assuredly, brother," said Isaac, "and Heaven be praised that raised me up a comforter in my misery. Howbeit, grant them not their full demand at once, for thou shalt find it the quality of this accursed people that they will ask pounds, and peradventure accept of ounces—Nevertheless, be it as thou willest, for I am distracted in this thing, and what would my gold avail me if the child of my love should perish?"

"Farewell," said the physician, "and may it be to thee as thy heart desireth."

They embraced accordingly, and departed on their several roads. The crippled peasant remained for some time looking after them.

"These dog-Jews!" said he; "to take no more notice of a free guild-brother, than if I were a bond slave or a Turk, or a circumcised Hebrew like themselves! They might have flung me a mancus or two, however. I was not obliged to bring their unhallowed scrawls, and run the risk of being bewitched, as more folks than one told me. And what care I for the bit of gold that the wench gave me, if I am to come to harm from the priest next Easter at confession, and be obliged to give him twice as much to make it up with him, and be called the Jew's flying post all my life, as it may hap, into the bargain? I think I was bewitched in earnest when I was beside the girl!—But it was always so with Jew or Gentile, whosoever came near her—none could stay when she had an errand to go—and still, whenever I think of her, I would give shop and tools to save her life."

CHAPTER XL.

O maid, unrelenting and cold as thou art,
My bosom is proud as thine own.

SEWARD.

It was in the twilight of the day when her trial, if it could be called such, had taken place, that a low knock was heard at the door of Rebecca's prison-chamber. It disturbed not the inmate, who was then engaged in the evening prayer recom-

mended by her religion, and which concluded with a hymn we have ventured thus to translate into English.

When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out of the land of bondage came,
Her father's God before her moved,
An awful guide, in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonish'd lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimson'd sands
Return'd the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answer'd keen,
And Zion's daughters pour'd their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze,
Forsaken Israel wanders lone;
Our fathers would not know THY ways,
And THOU hast left them to their own.

But, present still, though now unseen;
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of THEE a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.
And oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be THOU, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning, and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute our timbrel, trump, and horn.
But THOU hast said, the blood of goat,
The flesh of rams, I will not prize;
A contrite heart, an humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

When the sounds of Rebecca's devotional hymn had died away in silence, the low knock at the door was again renewed. "Enter," she said, "if thou art a friend; and if a foe, I have not the means of refusing thy entrance."

"I am," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert, entering the apartment, "friend or foe, Rebecca, as the event of this interview shall make me."

Alarmed at the sight of this man, whose licentious passion she considered as the root of her misfortunes, Rebecca drew backward with a cautious and alarmed, yet not a timorous demeanour, into the farthest corner of the apartment, as if determined to retreat as far as she could, but to stand her ground when retreat became no longer possible. She drew herself into an attitude not of defiance, but of resolution, as one that would avoid provoking assault, yet was resolute to repel it, being offered, to the utmost of her power.

"You have no reason to fear me, Rebecca," said the Templar; "or if I must so qualify my speech, you have at least *now* no reason to fear me."

"I fear you not, Sir Knight," replied Rebecca, although her short-drawn breath seemed to belie the heroism of her accents; "my trust is strong, and I fear thee not."

"You have no cause," answered Bois-Guilbert, gravely; "my former frantic attempts you have not now to dread. Within your call are guards, over whom I have no authority. They are designed to conduct you to death, Rebecca, yet would not suffer you to be insulted by any one, even by me, were my frenzy — for frenzy it is — to urge me so far."

"May Heaven be praised!" said the Jewess; "death is the least of my apprehensions in this den of evil."

"Ay," replied the Templar, "the idea of death is easily received by the courageous mind, when the road to it is sudden and open. A thrust with a lance, a stroke with a sword, were to me little — To you, a spring from a dizzy battlement, a stroke with a sharp poniard, has no terrors, compared with what either thinks disgrace. Mark me—I say this — perhaps mine own sentiments of honour are not less fantastic, Rebecca, than thine are; but we know alike how to die for them."

"Unhappy man," said the Jewess; "and art thou condemned to expose thy life for principles, of which thy sober judgment does not acknowledge the solidity? Surely this is a parting with your treasure for that which is not bread — but deem not so of me. Thy resolution may fluctuate on the wild and changeful billows of human opinion, but mine is anchored on the Rock of Ages."

"Silence, maiden," answered the Templar; "such discourse now avails but little. Thou art condemned to die not a sudden and easy death, such as misery chooses, and despair welcomes, but a slow, wretched, protracted course of torture, suited to what the diabolical bigotry of these men calls thy crime."

"And to whom — if such my fate — to whom do I owe this?" said Rebecca; "surely only to him, who, for a most selfish and brutal cause, dragged me hither, and who now, for some unknown purpose of his own, strives to exaggerate the wretched fate to which he exposed me."

"Think not," said the Templar, "that I have so exposed thee; I would have bucklered thee against such danger with my own bosom, as freely as ever I exposed it to the shafts which had otherwise reached thy life."

"Had thy purpose been the honourable protection of the innocent," said Rebecca, "I had thanked thee for thy care — as it is, thou hast claimed merit for it so often, that I tell thee life is worth nothing to me, preserved at the price which thou wouldst exact for it."

"Truce with thine upbraidings, Rebecca," said the Templar; "I have my own cause of grief, and brook not that thy reproaches should add to it."

"What is thy purpose, then, Sir Knight?" said the Jewess; "speak it briefly. — If thou hast aught to do, save to witness the misery thou hast caused, let me know it; and then, if so it please you, leave me to myself — the step between time and eternity is short but terrible, and I have few moments to prepare for it."

"I perceive, Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert, "that thou dost continue to burden me with the charge of distresses, which most fain would I have prevented."

"Sir Knight," said Rebecca, "I would avoid reproaches — But what is more certain than that I owe my death to thine unbridled passion?"

"You err — you err," — said the Templar, hastily, "if you impute what I could neither foresee nor prevent to my purpose or agency. — Could I guess the unexpected arrival of yon dotard, whom some flashes of frantic valour, and the praises yielded by fools to the stupid self-torments of an ascetic, have raised for the present above his own merits, above common sense, above me, and above the hundreds of our Order, who think and feel as men free from such silly and fantastic prejudices as are the grounds of his opinions and actions?"

"Yet," said Rebecca, "you sate a judge upon me, innocent — most innocent — as you knew me

to be — you concurred in my condemnation, and, if I aright understood, are yourself to appear in arms to assert my guilt, and assure my punishment."

"Thy patience, maiden," replied the Templar. — "No race knows so well as thine own tribes how to submit to the time, and so to trim their bark as to make advantage even of an adverse wind."

"Lamented be the hour," said Rebecca, "that has taught such art to the house of Israel! but adversity bends the heart as fire bends the stubborn steel, and those who are no longer their own governors, and the denizens of their own free independent state, must crouch before strangers. It is our curse, Sir Knight, deserved, doubtless, by our own misdeeds and those of our fathers; but you — you who boast your freedom as your birthright, how much deeper is your disgrace when you stoop to soothe the prejudices of others, and that against your own conviction?"

"Your words are bitter, Rebecca," said Bois-Guilbert, pacing the apartment with impatience, "but I came not hither to bandy reproaches with you. — Know that Bois-Guilbert yields not to created man, although circumstances may for a time induce him to alter his plan. His will is the mountain stream, which may indeed be turned for a little space aside by the rock, but fails not to find its course to the ocean. That scroll which warned thee to demand a champion, from whom couldst thou think it came, if not from Bois-Guilbert? in whom else couldst thou have excited such interest?"

"A brief respite from instant death," said Rebecca, "which will little avail me — was this all thou couldst do for one, on whose head thou hast heaped sorrow, and whom thou hast brought near even to the verge of the tomb?"

"No, maiden," said Bois-Guilbert, "this was *not* all that I purposed. Had it not been for the accursed interference of yon fanatical dotard, and the fool of Goodalricke, who, being a Templar, affects to think and judge according to the ordinary rules of humanity, the office of the Champion Defender had devolved, not on a Preceptor, but on a Companion of the Order. Then I myself — such was my purpose — had, on the sounding of the trumpet, appeared in the lists as thy champion, disguised indeed in the fashion of a roving knight, who seeks adventures to prove his shield and spear; and then, let Beaumanoir have chosen not one, but two or three of the brethren here assembled, I had not doubted to cast them out of the saddle with my single lance. Thus, Rebecca, should thine innocence have been avouched, and to thine own gratitude would I have trusted for the reward of my victory."

"This, Sir Knight," said Rebecca, "is but idle boasting — a brag of what you would have done had you not found it convenient to do otherwise. You received my glove, and my champion, if a creature so desolate can find one, must encounter your lance in the lists — yet you would assume the air of my friend and protector!"

"Thy friend and protector," said the Templar, gravely, "I will yet be — but mark at what risk, or rather at what certainty, of dishonour; and then blame me not if I make my stipulations, before I offer up all that I have hitherto held dear, to save the life of a Jewish maiden."

"Speak," said Rebecca; "I understand thee not."

"Well, then," said Bois-Guilbert, "I will speak as freely as ever did doting penitent to his ghostly father, when placed in the tricky confessional — Rebecca, if I appear not in these lists I lose fame and rank — lose that which is the breath of my nostrils, the esteem, I mean, in which I am held by my brethren, and the hopes I have of succeeding to that mighty authority, which is now wielded by the bigoted dotard Lucas de Beaumanoir, but of which I should make a far different use. Such is my certain doom, except I appear in arms against thy cause. Accursed be he of Goodalricke, who baited this trap for me! and doubly accursed Albert de Malvoisin, who withheld me from the resolution I had formed, of hurling back the glove at the face of the superstitious and superannuated fool, who listened to a charge so absurd and against a creature so high in mind, and so lovely in form as thou art!"

"And what now avails rant or flattery?" answered Rebecca. "Thou hast made thy choice between causing to be shed the blood of an innocent woman, or of endangering thine own earthly state and earthly hopes — What avails it to reckon together? — thy choice is made."

"No, Rebecca," said the knight, in a softer tone, and drawing nearer towards her; "my choice is NOT made — nay, mark, it is thine to make the election. If I appear in the lists, I must maintain my name in arms; and if I do so, championed or unchampioned, thou diest by the stake and faggot, for there lives not the knight who hath coped with me in arms on equal issue, or on terms of vantage, save Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and his minion of Ivanhoe. Ivanhoe, as thou well knowest, is unable to bear his corslet, and Richard is in a foreign prison. If I appear, then thou diest, even although thy charms should instigate some hot-headed youth to enter the lists in thy defence."

"And what avails repeating this so often?" said Rebecca.

"Much," replied the Templar; "for thou must learn to look at thy fate on every side."

"Well, then, turn the tapestry," said the Jewess, "and let me see the other side."

"If I appear," said Bois-Guilbert, "in the fatal lists, thou diest by a slow and cruel death, in pain such as they say is destined to the guilty hereafter. But if I appear not, then am I a degraded and dishonoured knight, accused of witchcraft and of communion with infidels — the illustrious name, which has grown yet more so under my wearing, becomes a hissing and a reproach. I lose fame, I lose honour, I lose the prospect of such greatness as scarce emperors attain to — I sacrifice mighty ambition, I destroy schemes built as high as the mountains with which heathens say their heaven was once nearly scaled — and yet, Rebecca," he added, throwing himself at her feet, "this greatness will I sacrifice, this fame will I renounce, this power will I forego, even now when it is half within my grasp, if thou wilt say, Bois-Guilbert, I receive thee for my lover."

"Think not of such foolishness, Sir Knight," answered Rebecca, "but hasten to the Regent, the Queen Mother, and to Prince John — they cannot, in honour to the English crown, allow of the proceedings of your Grand Master. So shall you give

me protection without sacrifice on your part, or the pretext of requiring any requital from me."

"With these I deal not," he continued, holding the train of her robe — "it is thee only I address; and what can counterbalance thy choice? Bethink thee, were I a fiend, yet death is a worse, and it is death who is my rival."

"I weigh not these evils," said Rebecca, afraid to provoke the wild knight, yet equally determined neither to endure his passion, nor even feign to endure it. "Be a man, be a Christian! If, indeed, thy faith recommends that mercy which rather your tongues than your actions pretend, save me from this dreadful death, without seeking a requital which would change thy magnanimity into base barter."

"No, damsel!" said the proud Templar, springing up, "thou shalt not thus impose on me — if I renounce present fame, and future ambition, I renounce it for thy sake, and we will escape in company. Listen to me, Rebecca," he said, again softening his tone; "England, — Europe, — is not the world. There are spheres in which we may act, ample enough even for my ambition. We will go to Palestine, where Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, is my friend — a friend free as myself from the doting scruples which fetter our free-born reason — rather with Saladin will we league ourselves, than endure the scorn of the bigots whom we contemn. — I will form new paths to greatness," he continued, again traversing the room with hasty strides — "Europe shall hear the loud step of him she has driven from her sons! — Not the millions whom her crusaders send to slaughter, can do so much to defend Palestine — not the sabres of the thousands and ten thousands of Saracens can hew their way so deep into that land for which nations are striving, as the strength and policy of me and those brethren, who, in despite of yonder old bigot, will adhere to me in good and evil. Thou shalt be a queen, Rebecca — on Mount Carmel shall we pitch the throne which my valour will gain for you, and I will exchange my long-desired batoon for a sceptre!"

"A dream," said Rebecca; "an empty vision of the night, which, were it a waking reality, affects me not. Enough that the power which thou mightest acquire, I will never share; nor hold I so light of country or religious faith, as to esteem him who is willing to barter these ties, and cast away the bonds of the Order of which he is a sworn member, in order to gratify an unruly passion for the daughter of another people. — Put not a price on my deliverance, Sir Knight — sell not a deed of generosity — protect the oppressed for the sake of charity, and not for a selfish advantage — Go to the throne of England; Richard will listen to my appeal from these cruel men."

"Never, Rebecca!" said the Templar, fiercely. "If I renounce my Order, for thee alone will I renounce it — Ambition shall remain mine, if thou refuse my love; I will not be fooled on all hands. — Stoop my crest to Richard? — ask a boon of that heart of pride? — Never, Rebecca, will I place the Order of the Temple at his feet in my person. I may forsake the Order, I never will degrade or betray it."

"Now God be gracious to me," said Rebecca, "for the succour of man is well-nigh hopeless!"

"It is indeed," said the Templar; "for, proud as thou art, thou hast in me found thy match. If I enter the lists with my spear in rest, think not any human consideration shall prevent my putting forth my strength; and think then upon thine own fate — to die the dreadful death of the worst of criminals — to be consumed upon a blazing pile — dispersed to the elements of which our strange forms are so mystically composed — not a relic left of that graceful frame, from which we could say this lived and moved! — Rebecca, it is not in woman to sustain this prospect — thou wilt yield to my suit."

"Bois-Guilbert," answered the Jewess, "thou knowest not the heart of woman, or hast only conversed with those who are lost to their best feelings. I tell thee, proud Templar, that not in thy fiercest battles hast thou displayed more of thy vaunted courage, than has been shewn by a woman when called upon to suffer by affection or duty. I am myself a woman, tenderly nurtured, naturally fearful of danger, and impatient of pain — yet, when we enter those fatal lists, thou to fight and I to suffer, I feel the strong assurance within me, that my courage shall mount higher than thine. Farewell — I waste no more words on thee; the time that remains on earth to the daughter of Jacob must be otherwise spent — she must seek the Comforter, who may hide his face from his people, but who ever opens his ear to the cry of those who seek him in sincerity and in truth."

"We part then thus?" said the Templar after a short pause; "would to Heaven we had never met, or that thou hadst been noble in birth and Christian in faith! — Nay, by Heaven! when I gaze on thee, and think when and how we are next to meet, I could even wish myself one of thine own degraded nation; my hand conversant with ingots and shekels, instead of spear and shield; my head bent down before each petty noble, and my look only terrible to the shivering and bankrupt debtor — this could I wish, Rebecca, to be near to thee in life, and to escape the fearful share I must have in thy death."

"Thou hast spoken the Jew," said Rebecca, "as the persecution of such as thou art has made him. Heaven in ire has driven him from his country, but industry has opened to him the only road to power and to influence, which oppression has left unbarred. Read the ancient history of the people of God, and tell me if those, by whom Jehovah wrought such marvels among the nations, were then a people of misers and usurers! — And know, proud knight, we number names amongst us to which your boasted northern nobility is as the gourd compared with the cedar — names that ascend far back to those high times when the Divine Presence shook the mercy-seat between the cherubim, and which derive their splendour from no earthly prince, but from the awful Voice, which bade their fathers be nearest of the congregation to the Vision — Such were the princes of the House of Jacob."

Rebecca's colour rose as she boasted the ancient glories of her race, but faded as she added, with a sigh, "Such *were* the princes of Judah, now such no more! — They are trampled down like the shorn grass, and mixed with the mire of the ways. Yet there are those among them who shame not such high descent, and of such shall be the daughter of Isaac the son of Adonikam! Farewell! I envy not thy blood-won honours — I envy not thy bar-

barous descent from northern heathens — I envy thee not thy faith, which is ever in thy mouth, but never in thy heart nor in thy practice."

"There is a spell on me, by Heaven!" said Bois-Guilbert. "I almost think yon besotted skeleton spoke truth, and that the reluctance with which I part from thee has something in it more than is natural.— Fair creature!" he said, approaching near her, but with great respect, — "so young, so beautiful, so fearless of death! and yet doomed to die, and with infamy and agony. Who would not weep for thee?—The tear, that has been a stranger to these eyelids for twenty years, moistens them as I gaze on thee. But it must be — nothing may now save thy life. Thou and I are but the blind instruments of some irresistible fatality, that hurries us along, like goodly vessels driving before the storm, which are dashed against each other, and so perish. Forgive me, then, and let us part, at least, as friends part. I have assailed thy resolution in vain, and mine own is fixed as the adamantine decrees of fate."

"Thus," said Rebecca, "do men throw on fate the issue of their own wild passions. But I do forgive thee, Bois-Guilbert, though the author of my early death. There are noble things which cross over thy powerful mind; but it is the garden of the sluggard, and the weeds have rushed up, and conspired to choke the fair and wholesome blossom."

"Yes," said the Templar, "I am, Rebecca, as thou hast spoken me, untaught, untamed — and proud, that, amidst a shoal of empty fools and crafty bigots, I have attained the pre-eminent fortitude that places me above them. I have been a child of battle from my youth upward, high in my views, steady and inflexible in pursuing them. Such must I remain — proud, inflexible, and unchanging; and of this the world shall have proof. — But thou forgivest me, Rebecca?"

"As freely as ever victim forgave her executioner."

"Farewell, then," said the Templar, and left the apartment.

The Preceptor Albert waited impatiently in an adjacent chamber the return of Bois-Guilbert.

"Thou hast tarried long," he said; "I have been as if stretched on red-hot iron with very impatience. What if the Grand Master, or his spy Conrade, had come hither? I had paid dear for my complaisance. — But what ails thee, brother? — Thy step totters, thy brow is as black as night. Art thou well, Bois-Guilbert?"

"Ay," answered the Templar, "as well as the wretch who is doomed to die within an hour. — Nay, by the rood, not half so well — for there be those in such state, who can lay down life like a cast-off garment. By Heaven, Malvoisin, yonder girl hath well-nigh unmanned me. I am half resolved to go to the Grand Master, abjure the Order to his very teeth, and refuse to act the brutality which his tyranny has imposed on me."

"Thou art mad," answered Malvoisin; "thou mayest thus indeed utterly ruin thyself, but canst not even find a chance thereby to save the life of this Jewess, which seems so precious in thine eyes. Beaumanoir will name another of the Order to defend his judgment in thy place, and the accused will as assuredly perish as if thou hadst taken the duty imposed on thee."

"'Tis false — I will myself take arms in her behalf," answered the Templar, haughtily; "and should I do so, I think, Malvoisin, that thou knowest not one of the Order, who will keep his saddle before the point of my lance."

"Ay, but thou forgettest," said the wily adviser, "thou wilt have neither leisure nor opportunity to execute this mad project. Go to Lucas Beaumanoir, and say thou hast renounced thy vow of obedience, and see how long the despotic old man will leave thee in personal freedom. The words shall scarce have left thy lips, ere thou wilt either be an hundred feet under ground, in the dungeon of the Preceptory, to abide trial as a recreant knight; or, if his opinion holds concerning thy possession, thou wilt be enjoying straw, darkness, and chains, in some distant convent cell, stunned with exorcisms, and drenched with holy water, to expel the foul fiend which hath obtained dominion over thee. Thou must to the lists, Brian, or thou art a lost and dishonoured man."

"I will break forth and fly," said Bois-Guibert — "fly to some distant land, to which folly and fanaticism have not yet found their way. No drop of the blood of this most excellent creature shall be spilled by my sanction."

"Thou canst not fly," said the Preceptor; "thy ravings have excited suspicion, and thou wilt not be permitted to leave the Preceptory. Go and make the essay — present thyself before the gate, and command the bridge to be lowered, and mark what answer thou shalt receive. — Thou art surprised and offended; but is it not the better for thee? Wert thou to fly, what would ensue but the reversal of thy arms, the dishonour of thine ancestry, the degradation of thy rank? — Think on it. Where shall thine old companions in arms hide their heads when Brian de Bois-Guilbert, the best lance of the Templars, is proclaimed recreant, amid the hisses of the assembled people? What grief will be at the Court of France! With what joy will the haughty Richard hear the news, that the knight that set him hard in Palestine, and well-nigh darkened his renown, has lost fame and honour for a Jewish girl, whom he could not even save by so costly a sacrifice!"

"Malvoisin," said the Knight, "I thank thee — thou hast touched the string at which my heart most readily thrills! — Come of it what may, recreant shall never be added to the name of Bois-Guilb rt. Would to God, Richard, or any of his vaunting minions of England, would appear in these lists! But they will be empty — no one will risk to break a lance for the innocent, the forlorn."

"The better for thee, if it prove so," said the Preceptor; "if no champion appears, it is not by thy means that this unlucky damsel shall die, but by the doom of the Grand Master, with whom rests all the blame, and who will count that blame for praise and commendation."

"True," said Bois-Guilbert; "if no champion appears, I am but a part of the pageant, sitting indeed on horseback in the lists, but having no part in what is to follow."

"None whatever," said Malvoisin; "no more than the armed image of Saint George when it makes part of a procession."

"Well, I will resume my resolution," replied the haughty Templar. "She has despised me — repulsed me — reviled me — And wherefore should

I offer up for her whatever of estimation I have in the opinion of others? Malvoisin, I will appear in the lists."

He left the apartment hastily as he uttered these words, and the Preceptor followed, to watch and confirm him in his resolution; for in Bois-Guilbert's fame he had himself a strong interest, expecting much advantage from his being one day at the head of the Order, not to mention the preferment of which Mont-Fitchet had given him hopes, on condition he would forward the condemnation of the unfortunate Rebecca. Yet although, in combating his friend's better feelings, he possessed all the advantage which a wily, composed, selfish disposition has over a man agitated by strong and contending passions, it required all Malvoisin's art to keep Bois-Guilbert steady to the purpose he had prevailed on him to adopt. He was obliged to watch him closely to prevent his resuming his purpose of flight, to intercept his communication with the Grand Master, lest he should come to an open rupture with his Superior, and to renew, from time to time, the various arguments by which he endeavoured to shew, that, in appearing as champion on this occasion, Bois-Guilbert, without either accelerating or ensuring the fate of Rebecca, would follow the only course by which he could save himself from degradation and disgrace.

CHAPTER XLI.

Shadows avaunt! — Richard's himself again.
Richard III.

When the Black Knight — for it becomes necessary to resume the train of his adventures — left the Trysting-tree of the generous Outlaw, he held his way straight to a neighbouring religious house, of small extent and revenue, called the Priory of Saint Botolph, to which the wounded Ivanhoe had been removed when the castle was taken, under the guidance of the faithful Gurth, and the magnanimous Wamba. It is unnecessary at present to mention what took place in the interim betwixt Wilfred and his deliverer; suffice it to say, that after long and grave communication, messengers were despatched by the Prior in several directions, and that on the succeeding morning the Black Knight was about to set forth on his journey, accompanied by the jester Wamba, who attended as his guide.

"We will meet," he said to Ivanhoe, "at Coningsburgh, the castle of the deceased Athelstane, since there thy father Cedric holds the funeral feast for his noble relation. I would see your Saxon kindred together, Sir Wilfred, and become better acquainted with them than heretofore. Thou also wilt meet me; and it shall be my task to reconcile thee to thy father."

So saying, he took an affectionate farewell of Ivanhoe, who expressed an anxious desire to attend upon his deliverer. But the Black Knight would not listen to the proposal.

"Rest this day; thou wilt have scarce strength enough to travel on the next. I will have no guide with me but honest Wamba, who can play priest or fool as I shall be most in the humour."

"And I," said Wamba, "will attend you with all my heart. I would fain see the feasting at the funeral of Athelstane; for, if it be not full and frequent, he will rise from the dead to rebuke cook, sewer, and cupbearer; and that were a sight worth seeing. Always, Sir Knight, I will trust your valour with making my excuse to my master Cedric, in case mine own wit should fail."

"And how should my poor valour succeed, Sir Jester, when thy light wit halts? — resolve me that."

"Wit, Sir Knight," replied the Jester, "may do much. He is a quick, apprehensive knave, who sees his neighbour's blind side, and knows how to keep the lee-gage when his passions are blowing high. But valour is a sturdy fellow, that makes all split. He rows against both wind and tide, and makes way notwithstanding; and, therefore, good Sir Knight, while I take advantage of the fair weather in our noble master's temper, I will expect you to bestir yourself when it grows rough."

"Sir Knight of the Fetterlock, since it is your pleasure so to be distinguished," said Ivanhoe, "I fear me you have chosen a talkative and a troublesome fool to be your guide. But he knows every path and alley in the woods as well as e'er a hunter who frequents them; and the poor knave, as thou hast partly seen, is as faithful as steel."

"Nay," said the Knight, "an he have the gift of shewing my road, I shall not grumble with him that he desires to make it pleasant. — Fare thee well, kind Wilfred — I charge thee not to attempt to travel till to-morrow at earliest."

So saying, he extended his hand to Ivanhoe, who pressed it to his lips, took leave of the Prior, mounted his horse, and departed, with Wamba for his companion. Ivanhoe followed them with his eyes, until they were lost in the shades of the surrounding forest, and then returned into the convent.

But shortly after matin-song, he requested to see the Prior. The old man came in haste, and inquired anxiously after the state of his health.

"It is better," he said, "than my fondest hope could have anticipated; either my wound has been slighter than the effusion of blood led me to suppose, or this balsam hath wrought a wonderful cure upon it. I feel already as if I could bear my corslet; and so much the better, for thoughts pass in my mind which render me unwilling to remain here longer in inactivity."

"Now, the saints forbid," said the Prior, "that the son of the Saxon Cedric should leave our convent ere his wounds were healed! It were shame to our profession were we to suffer it."

"Nor would I desire to leave your hospitable roof, venerable father," said Ivanhoe, "did I not feel myself able to endure the journey, and compelled to undertake it."

"And what can have urged you to so sudden a departure?" said the Prior.

"Have you never, holy father," answered the Knight, "felt an apprehension of approaching evil, for which you in vain attempted to assign a cause? — Have you never found your mind darkened, like the sunny landscape, by the sudden cloud, which augurs a coming tempest? — And thinkest thou not that such impulses are deserving of attention, as being the hints of our guardian spirits, that danger is impending?"

"I may not deny," said the Prior, crossing him-

self, "that such things have been, and have been of Heaven; but then, such communications have had a visibly useful scope and tendency. But thou, wounded as thou art, what avails it thou shouldst follow the steps of him whom thou couldst not aid, were he to be assaulted?"

"Prior," said Ivanhoe, "thou dost mistake — I am stout enough to exchange buffets with any who will challenge me to such a traffic. — But were it otherwise, may I not aid him were he in danger, by other means than by force of arms? It is but too well known that the Saxons love not the Norman race, and who knows what may be the issue, if he break in upon them when their hearts are irritated by the death of Athelstane, and their heads heated by the carousal in which they will indulge themselves? I hold his entrance among them at such a moment most perilous, and I am resolved to share or avert the danger; which, that I may the better do, I would crave of thee the use of some palfrey whose pace may be softer than that of my *destrier*."[1]

"Surely," said the worthy churchman; "you shall have mine own ambling jennet, and I would it ambled as easy for your sake as that of the Abbot of Saint Albans. Yet this will I say for Malkin, for so I call her, that unless you were to borrow a ride on the juggler's steed that paces a hornpipe amongst the eggs, you could not go a journey on a creature so gentle and smooth-paced. I have composed many a homily on her back, to the edification of my brethren of the convent, and many poor Christian souls."

"I pray you, reverend father," said Ivanhoe, "let Malkin be got ready instantly, and bid Gurth attend me with mine arms."

"Nay, but fair sir," said the Prior, "I pray you to remember that Malkin hath as little skill in arms as her master, and that I warrant not her enduring the sight or weight of your full panoply. Oh, Malkin, I promise you, is a beast of judgment, and will contend against any undue weight — I did but borrow the *Fructus Temporum* from the priest of Saint Bees, and I promise you she would not stir from the gate until I had exchanged the huge volume for my little breviary."

"Trust me, holy father," said Ivanhoe, "I will not distress her with too much weight; and if she calls a combat with me, it is odds but she has the worst."

This reply was made while Gurth was buckling on the Knight's heels a pair of large gilded spurs, capable of convincing any restive horse that his best safety lay in being conformable to the will of his rider.

The deep and sharp rowels with which Ivanhoe's heels were now armed, began to make the worthy Prior repent of his courtesy, and ejaculate, — "Nay, but fair sir, now I bethink me, my Malkin abideth not the spur — Better it were that you tarry for the mare of our manciple down at the Grange, which may be had in little more than an hour, and cannot but be tractable, in respect that she draweth much of our winter fire-wood, and eateth no corn."

"I thank you, reverend father, but will abide by your first offer, as I see Malkin is already led forth to the gate. Gurth shall carry mine armour; and, for the rest, rely on it, that as I will not overload Malkin's back, she shall not overcome my patience. And now, farewell!"

Ivanhoe now descended the stairs more hastily and easily than his wound promised, and threw himself upon the jennet, eager to escape the importunity of the Prior, who stuck as closely to his side as his age and fatness would permit, now singing the praises of Malkin, now recommending caution to the Knight in managing her.

"She is at the most dangerous period for maidens as well as mares," said the old man, laughing at his own jest, "being barely in her fifteenth year."

Ivanhoe, who had other web to weave than to stand canvassing a palfrey's paces with its owner, lent but a deaf ear to the Prior's grave advices and facetious jests, and having leapt on his mare, and commanded his squire (for such Gurth now called himself) to keep close by his side, he followed the track of the Black Knight into the forest, while the Prior stood at the gate of the convent looking after him, and ejaculating, — "Saint Mary! how prompt and fiery be these men of war! I would I had not trusted Malkin to his keeping, for, crippled as I am with the cold rheum, I am undone if aught but good befalls her. And yet," said he, recollecting himself, "as I would not spare my own old and disabled limbs in the good cause of Old England, so Malkin must e'en run her hazard on the same venture; and it may be they will think our poor house worthy of some munificent guerdon — or, it may be, they will send the old Prior a pacing nag. And if they do none of these, as great men will forget little men's service, truly I shall hold me well repaid in having done that which is right. And it is now well-nigh the fitting time to summon the brethren to breakfast in the refectory — Ah! I doubt they obey that call more cheerily than the bells for primes and matins."

So the Prior of Saint Botolph's hobbled back again into the refectory, to preside over the stock-fish and ale, which was just serving out for the friars' breakfast. Pursy and important, he sat him down at the table, and many a dark word he threw out, of benefits to be expected to the convent, and high deeds of service done by himself, which, at another season, would have attracted observation. But as the stock-fish was highly salted, and the ale reasonably powerful, the jaws of the brethren were too anxiously employed to admit of their making much use of their ears; nor do we read of any of the fraternity, who was tempted to speculate upon the mysterious hints of their Superior, except Father Diggory, who was severely afflicted by the toothach, so that he could only eat on one side of his jaws.

In the meantime, the Black Champion and his guide were pacing at their leisure through the recesses of the forest; the good Knight whiles humming to himself the lay of some enamoured troubadour, sometimes encouraging by questions the prating disposition of his attendant, so that their dialogue formed a whimsical mixture of song and jest, of which we would fain give our readers some idea. You are then to imagine this Knight, such as we have already described him, strong of person, tall, broad-shouldered, and large of bone, mounted on his mighty black charger, which seemed made on purpose to bear his weight, so easily he paced forward under it, having the visor of his helmet

[1] *Destrier* — war-horse.

raised, in order to admit freedom of breath, yet keeping the beaver, or under part, closed, so that his features could be but imperfectly distinguished. But his ruddy embrowned cheek-bones could be plainly seen, and the large and bright blue eyes, that flashed from under the dark shade of the raised visor; and the whole gesture and look of the champion expressed careless gaiety and fearless confidence —a mind which was unapt to apprehend danger, and prompt to defy it when most imminent —yet with whom danger was a familiar thought, as with one whose trade was war and adventure.

The Jester wore his usual fantastic habit, but late accidents had led him to adopt a good cutting falchion, instead of his wooden sword, with a targe to match it; of both which weapons he had, notwithstanding his profession, shewn himself a skilful master during the storming of Torquilstone. Indeed, the infirmity of Wamba's brain consisted chiefly in a kind of impatient irritability, which suffered him not long to remain quiet in any posture, or adhere to any certain train of ideas, although he was for a few minutes alert enough in performing any immediate task, or in apprehending any immediate topic. On horseback, therefore, he was perpetually swinging himself backwards and forwards, now on the horse's ears, then anon on the very rump of the animal,—now hanging both his legs on one side, and now sitting with his face to the tail, moping, mowing, and making a thousand apish gestures, until his palfrey took his freaks so much to heart, as fairly to lay him at his length on the green grass—an incident which greatly amused the Knight, but compelled his companion to ride more steadily thereafter.

At the point of their journey at which we take them up, this joyous pair were engaged in singing a virelai, as it was called, in which the clown bore a mellow burden, to the better instructed Knight of the Fetterlock. And thus run the ditty:—

Anna-Marie, love, up is the sun,
Anna-Marie, love, morn is begun,
Mists are dispersing, love, birds singing free,
Up in the morning, love, Anna-Marie.
Anna-Marie, love, up in the morn,
The hunter is winding blithe sounds on his horn,
The echo rings merry from rock and from tree,
'Tis time to arouse thee, love, Anna-Marie.

WAMBA.

O Tybalt, love Tybalt, awake me not yet,
Around my soft pillow while softer dreams flit,
For what are the joys that in waking we prove,
Compared with these visions, O Tybalt, my love?
Let the birds to the rise of the mist carol shrill,
Let the hunter blow out his loud horn on the hill,
Softer sounds, softer pleasures, in slumber I prove,—
But think not I dreamt of thee, Tybalt, my love.

"A dainty song," said Wamba, when they had finished their carol, "and I swear by my bauble, a pretty moral!—I used to sing it with Gurth, once my playfellow, and now, by the grace of God and his master, no less than a freeman; and we once came by the cudgel for being so entranced by the melody, that we lay in bed two hours after sunrise, singing the ditty betwixt sleeping and waking—my bones ache at thinking of the tune ever since. Nevertheless, I have played the part of Anna-Marie, to please you, fair sir."

The Jester next struck into another carol, a sort of comic ditty, to which the Knight, catching up the tune, replied in the like manner.

KNIGHT and WAMBA.

There came three merry men from south, west, and north,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
To win the Widow of Wycombe forth,
And where was the widow might say them nay?

The first was a knight, and from Tynedale he came,
Ever more sing the roundelay;
And his fathers, God save us, were men of great fame,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Of his father the laird, of his uncle the squire,
He boasted in rhyme and in roundelay;
She bade him go bask by his sea-coal fire,
For she was the widow would say him nay.

WAMBA.

The next that came forth, swore by blood and by nails,
Merrily sing the roundelay;
Hur's a gentleman, God wot, and hur's lineage was of Wales,
And where was the widow might say him nay?

Sir David ap Morgan ap Griffith ap Hugh
Ap Tudor ap Rhice, quoth his roundelay;
She said that one widow for so many was too few,
And she bade the Welshman wend his way.

But then next came a yeoman, a yeoman of Kent,
Jollily singing his roundelay;
He spoke to the widow of living and rent,
And where was the widow could say him nay?

BOTH.

So the knight and the squire were both left in the mire,
There for to sing their roundelay;
For a yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent,
There never was a widow could say him nay.

"I would, Wamba," said the Knight, "that our host of the Trysting-tree, or the jolly Friar, his chaplain, heard this thy ditty in praise of our bluff yeoman."

"So would not I," said Wamba—"but for the horn that hangs at your baldric."

"Ay," said the Knight,—"this is a pledge of Locksley's goodwill, though I am not like to need it. Three mots on this bugle will, I am assured, bring round, at our need, a jolly band of yonder honest yeomen."

"I would say, Heaven forefend," said the Jester, "were it not that that fair gift is a pledge they would let us pass peaceably."

"Why, what meanest thou?" said the Knight; "thinkest thou that but for this pledge of fellowship they would assault us?"

"Nay, for me I say nothing," said Wamba; "for green trees have ears as well as stone walls. But canst thou construe me this, Sir Knight—When is thy wine pitcher and thy purse better empty than full?"

"Why never I think," replied the Knight.

"Thou never deservest to have a full one in thy hand, for so simple an answer! Thou hadst best empty thy pitcher ere thou pass it to a Saxon, and leave thy money at home ere thou walk in the greenwood."

"You hold our friends for robbers, then?" said the Knight of the Fetterlock.

"You hear me not say so, fair sir," said Wamba; "it may relieve a poor man's steed to take off his mail when he hath a long journey to make; and, certes, it may do good to the rider's soul to ease him of that which is the root of all evil; therefore will I give no hard names to those who do such services. Only I would wish my mail at home,and my purse in my chamber. when I meet with these good fellows, because it may save them some trouble."

"*We* are bound to pray for them, my friend, notwithstanding the fair character thou dost afford them."

"Pray for them with all my heart," said Wamba; "but in the town, not in the greenwood, like the Abbot of Saint Bees, whom they caused to say mass with an old hollow oak tree for his stall."

"Say as thou list, Wamba," replied the Knight, "these yeomen did thy master Cedric yeomanly service at Torquilstone."

"Ay, truly," answered Wamba; "but that was in the fashion of their trade with Heaven."

"Their trade, Wamba! how mean you by that?" replied his companion.

"Marry, thus," said the Jester. "They make up a balanced account with Heaven, as our old cellarer used to call his ciphering, as fair as Isaac the Jew keeps with his debtors, and, like him, give out a very little, and take large credit for doing so; reckoning, doubtless, on their own behalf, the seven-fold usury which the blessed text hath promised to charitable loans."

"Give me an example of your meaning, Wamba,—I know nothing of ciphers or rates of usage," answered the Knight.

"Why," said Wamba, "an your valour be so dull, you will please to learn, that those honest fellows balance a good deed with one not quite so laudable; as a crown given to a begging friar with an hundred byzants taken from a fat abbot, or a wench kissed in the greenwood with the relief of a poor widow."

"Which of these was the good deed, which was the felony?" interrupted the Knight.

"A good gibe! a good gibe!" said Wamba; "keeping witty company sharpeneth the apprehension. You said nothing so well, Sir Knight, I will be sworn, when you held drunken vespers with the bluff Hermit.—But to go on. The merry-men of the forest set off the building of a cottage with the burning of a castle,—the thatching of a choir against the robbing of a church,—the setting free a poor prisoner against the murder of a proud sheriff; or, to come nearer to our point, the deliverance of a Saxon franklin against the burning alive of a Norman baron. Gentle thieves they are, in short, and courteous robbers; but it is ever the luckiest to meet with them when they are at the worst."

"How so, Wamba?" said the Knight.

"Why, then they have some compunction, and are for making up matters with Heaven. But when they have struck an even balance, Heaven help them with whom they next open the account! The travellers who first met them after their good service at Torquilstone would have a woful flaying. And yet," said Wamba, coming close up to the Knight's side, "there be companions who are far more dangerous for travellers to meet than yonder outlaws."

"And who may they be, for you have neither bears nor wolves, I trow?" said the Knight.

"Marry, sir, but we have Malvoisin's men-at-arms," said Wamba; "and let me tell you, that, in time of civil war, a halfscore of these is worth a band of wolves at any time. They are now expecting their harvest, and are reinforced with the soldiers that escaped from Torquilstone. So that, should we meet with a band of them, we are like to pay for our feats of arms.—Now, I pray you, Sir Knight, what would you do if we met two of them?"

"Pin the villains to the earth with my lance, Wamba, if they offered us any impediment."

"But what if there were four of them?"

"They should drink of the same cup," answered the Knight.

"What if six," continued Wamba, "and we as we now are, barely two—would you not remember Locksley's horn?"

"What! sound for aid," exclaimed the Knight, "against a score of such *rascaille* as these, whom one good knight could drive before him as the wind drives the withered leaves?"

"Nay, then," said Wamba, "I will pray you for a close sight of that same horn that hath so powerful a breath."

The Knight undid the clasp of the baldric, and indulged his fellow-traveller, who immediately hung the bugle round his own neck.

"Tra-lira-la," said he, whistling the notes; "nay, I know my gamut as well as another."

"How mean you, knave?" said the Knight; "restore me the bugle."

"Content you, Sir Knight, it is in safe keeping. When Valour and Folly travel, Folly should bear the horn, because she can blow the best."

"Nay but, rogue," said the Black Knight, "this exceedeth thy licence—Beware ye tamper not with my patience."

"Urge me not with violence, Sir Knight," said the Jester, keeping at a distance from the impatient champion, "or Folly will shew a clean pair of heels, and leave Valour to find out his way through the wood as best he may."

"Nay, thou hast hit me there," said the Knight; "and, sooth to say, I have little time to jangle with thee. Keep the horn an thou wilt, but let us proceed on our journey."

"You will not harm me, then?" said Wamba.

"I tell thee no, thou knave!"

"Ay, but pledge me your knightly word for it," continued Wamba, as he approached with great caution.

"My knightly word I pledge; only come on with thy foolish self."

"Nay, then, Valour and Folly are once more boon companions," said the Jester, coming up frankly to the knight's side; "but, in truth, I love not such buffets as that you bestowed on the burly Friar, when his holiness rolled on the green like a king of the nine-pins. And now that Folly wears the horn, let Valour rouse himself, and shake his mane; for, if I mistake not, there are company in yonder brake that are on the look out for us."

"What makes thee judge so?" said the Knight.

"Because I have twice or thrice noticed the glance of a morrion from amongst the green leaves. Had they been honest men, they had kept the path. But yonder thicket is a choice chapel for the Clerks of Saint Nicholas."

"By my faith," said the Knight, closing his visor, "I think thou be'st in the right on't."

And in good time did he close it, for three arrows flew at the same instant from the suspected spot against his head and breast, one of which would have penetrated to the brain, had it not been turned aside by the steel visor. The other two were averted by the gorget, and by the shield which hung around his neck.

Thanks, trusty armourer," said the knight.— "Wamba, let us close with them,"—and he rode straight to the thicket. He was met by six or seven men-at-arms, who ran against him with their lances at full career. Three of the weapons struck against him, and splintered with as little effect as if they had been driven against a tower of steel. The Black Knight's eyes seemed to flash fire even through the aperture of his visor. He raised himself in his stirrups with an air of inexpressible dignity, and exclaimed, "What means this, my masters?"—The men made no other reply than by drawing their swords and attacking him on every side, crying "Die, tyrant!"

"Ha! Saint Edward! Ha! Saint George!" said the Black Knight, striking down a man at every invocation; "have we traitors here?"

His opponents, desperate as they were, bore back from an arm which carried death in every blow, and it seemed as if the terror of his single strength was about to gain the battle against such odds, when a knight, in blue armour, who had hitherto kept himself behind the other assailants, spurred forward with his lance, and taking aim, not at the rider, but at the steed, wounded the noble animal mortally.

"That was a felon stroke!" exclaimed the Black Knight, as the steed fell to the earth, bearing his rider along with him.

And at this moment, Wamba winded the bugle, for the whole had passed so speedily, that he had not time to do so sooner. The sudden sound made the murderers bear back once more, and Wamba, though so imperfectly weaponed, did not hesitate to rush in and assist the Black Knight to rise.

"Shame on ye, false cowards!" exclaimed he in the blue harness, who seemed to lead the assailants, "do ye fly from the empty blast of a horn blown by a Jester?"

Animated by his words, they attacked the Black Knight anew, whose best refuge was now to place his back against an oak, and defend himself with his sword. The felon knight, who had taken another spear, watching the moment when his formidable antagonist was most closely pressed, galloped against him in hopes to nail him with his lance against the tree, when his purpose was again intercepted by Wamba. The Jester, making up by agility the want of strength, and little noticed by the men-at-arms, who were busied in their more important object, hovered on the skirts of the fight, and effectually checked the fatal career of the Blue Knight, by hamstringing his horse with a stroke of his sword. Horse and man went to the ground; yet the situation of the Knight of the Fetterlock continued very precarious, as he was pressed close by several men completely armed, and began to be fatigued by the violent exertions necessary to defend himself on so many points at nearly the same moment, when a gray-goose shaft suddenly stretched on the earth one of the most formidable of his assailants, and a band of yeomen broke forth from the glade, headed by Locksley and the jovial Friar, who, taking ready and effectual part in the fray, soon disposed of the ruffians, all of whom lay on the spot dead or mortally wounded. The Black Knight thanked his deliverers with a dignity they had not observed in his former bearing, which hitherto had seemed rather that of a blunt bold soldier, than of a person of exalted rank.

"It concerns me much," he said, "even before I express my full gratitude to my ready friends, to discover, if I may, who have been my unprovoked enemies.—Open the visor of that Blue Knight, Wamba, who seems the chief of these villains."

The Jester instantly made up to the leader of the assassins, who, bruised by his fall, and entangled under the wounded steed, lay incapable either of flight or resistance.

"Come, valiant sir," said Wamba, "I must be your armourer as well as your equerry—I have dismounted you, and now I will unhelm you."

So saying, with no very gentle hand he undid the helmet of the Blue Knight, which, rolling to a distance on the grass, displayed to the Knight of the Fetterlock grizzled locks, and a countenance he did not expect to have seen under such circumstances.

"Waldemar Fitzurse!" he said in astonishment; "what could urge one of thy rank and seeming worth to so foul an undertaking?"

"Richard," said the captive Knight, looking up to him, "thou knowest little of mankind, if thou knowest not to what ambition and revenge can lead every child of Adam."

"Revenge?" answered the Black Knight; "I never wronged thee—On me thou hast nought to revenge."

"My daughter, Richard, whose alliance thou didst scorn—was that no injury to a Norman, whose blood is noble as thine own?"

"Thy daughter?" replied the Black Knight; "a proper cause of enmity, and followed up to a bloody issue!—Stand back, my masters, I would speak to him alone.—And now, Waldemar Fitzurse, say me the truth—confess who set thee on this traitorous deed.'

"Thy father's son," answered Waldemar, "who, in so doing, did but avenge on thee thy disobedience to thy father."

Richard's eyes sparkled with indignation, but his better nature overcame it. He pressed his hand against his brow, and remained an instant gazing on the face of the humbled baron, in whose features pride was contending with shame.

"Thou dost not ask thy life, Waldemar," said the King.

"He that is in the lion's clutch," answered Fitzurse, "knows it were needless."

"Take it, then, unasked," said Richard; "the lion preys not on prostrate carcasses.—Take thy life, but with this condition, that in three days thou shalt leave England, and go to hide thine infamy in thy Norman castle, and that thou wilt never mention the name of John of Anjou as connected with thy felony. If thou art found on English ground after the space I have allotted thee, thou diest—or if thou breathest aught that can attaint the honour of my house, by Saint George! not the altar itself shall be a sanctuary. I will hang thee out to feed the ravens, from the very pinnacle of thine own castle.—Let this knight have a steed, Locksley, for I see your yeomen have caught those which were running loose, and let him depart unharmed."

"But that I judge I listen to a voice whose behests must not be disputed," answered the yeoman, "I would send a shaft after the skulking villain that should spare him the labour of a long journey."

"Thou bearest an English heart, Locksley," said the Black Knight, "and well dost judge thou art the more bound to obey my behest — I am Richard of England!"

At these words, pronounced in a tone of majesty suited to the high rank, and no less distinguished character of Cœur-de-Lion, the yeomen at once kneeled down before him, and at the same time tendered their allegiance, and implored pardon for their offences.

"Rise, my friends," said Richard, in a gracious tone, looking on them with a countenance in which his habitual good-humour had already conquered the blaze of hasty resentment, and whose features retained no mark of the late desperate conflict, excepting the flush arising from exertion, — "Arise," he said, "my friends!—Your misdemeanours, whether in forest or field, have been atoned by the loyal services you rendered my distressed subjects before the walls of Torquilstone, and the rescue you have this day afforded to your sovereign. Arise, my liegemen, and be good subjects in future. — And thou, brave Locksley ——"

"Call me no longer Locksley, my Liege, but know me under the name, which, I fear, fame hath blown too widely not to have reached even your royal ears — I am Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest."[1]

"King of Outlaws, and Prince of good fellows!" said the King, "who hath not heard a name that has been borne as far as Palestine? But be assured, brave Outlaw, that no deed done in our absence, and in the turbulent times to which it hath given rise, shall be remembered to thy disadvantage."

"True says the proverb," said Wamba, interposing his word, but with some abatement of his usual petulance, —

> 'When the cat is away,
> The mice will play.'"

"What, Wamba, art thou there?" said Richard; "I have been so long of hearing thy voice, I thought thou hadst taken flight."

"I take flight!" said Wamba; "when do you ever find Folly separated from Valour? There lies the trophy of my sword, that good gray gelding, whom I heartily wish upon his legs again, conditioning his master lay there houghed in his place. It is true, I gave a little ground at first, for a motley jacket does not brook lance-heads, as a steel doublet will. But if I fought not at sword's point, you will grant me that I sounded the onset."

"And to good purpose, honest Wamba," replied the King. "Thy good service shall not be forgotten."

"*Confiteor! Confiteor!*" — exclaimed in a submissive tone, a voice near the King's side — "my Latin will carry me no farther — but I confess my deadly treason, and pray leave to have absolution before I am led to execution!"

Richard looked around, and beheld the jovial Friar on his knees, telling his rosary, while his quarter-staff, which had not been idle during the skirmish, lay on the grass beside him. His countenance was gathered so as he thought might best express the most profound contrition, his eyes being turned up, and the corners of his mouth drawn down, as Wamba expressed it, like the tassels at the mouth of a purse. Yet this demure affectation of extreme penitence was whimsically belied by a ludicrous meaning which lurked in his huge features, and seemed to pronounce his fear and repentance alike hypocritical.

"For what art thou cast down, mad Priest?" said Richard; "art thou afraid thy diocesan should learn how truly thou dost serve Our Lady and Saint Dunstan?—Tush, man! fear it not; Richard of England betrays no secrets that pass over the flagon."

"Nay, most gracious Sovereign," answered the Hermit, (well known to the curious in penny-histories of Robin Hood, by the name of Friar Tuck,) "it is not the crosier I fear, but the sceptre. — Alas! that my sacrilegious fist should ever have been applied to the ear of the Lord's anointed!"

"Ha! ha!" said Richard, "sits the wind there? — In truth I had forgotten the buffet, though mine ear sung after it for a whole day. But if the cuff was fairly given, I will be judged by the good men around, if it was not as well repaid — or, if thou thinkest I still owe thee aught, and will stand forth for another counterbuff ——"

"By no means," replied Friar Tuck, "I had mine own returned, and with usury — may your Majesty ever pay your debts as fully!"

"If I could do so with cuffs," said the King, "my creditors should have little reason to complain of an empty exchequer."

"And yet," said the Friar, resuming his demure hypocritical countenance, "I know not what penance I ought to perform for that most sacrilegious blow ——"

"Speak no more of it, brother," said the King; "after having stood so many cuffs from Paynims and misbelievers, I were void of reason to quarrel with the buffet of a clerk so holy as he of Copmanhurst. Yet, mine honest Friar, I think it would be best both for the church and thyself, that I should procure a licence to unfrock thee, and retain thee as a yeoman of our guard, serving in care of our person, as formerly in attendance upon the altar of Saint Dunstan."

"My Liege," said the Friar, "I humbly crave your pardon; and you would readily grant my excuse, did you but know how the sin of laziness has beset me. Saint Dunstan—may he be gracious to us!—stands quiet in his niche, though I should forget my orisons in killing a fat buck — I stay out of my cell sometimes a night, doing I wot not what — Saint Dunstan never complains — a quiet master he is, and a peaceful, as ever was made of wood. — But to be a yeoman in attendance on my sovereign the King — the honour is great, doubtless — yet, if I were but to step aside to comfort a widow in one corner, or to kill a deer in another, it would be, 'Where is the dog Priest?' says one. 'Who has seen the accursed Tuck?' says another. 'The unfrocked villain destroys more venison than half the country besides,' says one keeper; 'And is hunting after every shy doe in the country!' quoth a second. — In fine, good my Liege, I pray you to leave me as you found me; or, if in aught you desire to extend your benevolence to me, that I may be considered as the poor Clerk of Saint Dunstan's cell in Copmanhurst, to whom any small donation will be most thankfully accaptable."

[1] From the ballads of Robin Hood, we learn that this celebrated outlaw, when in disguise, sometimes assumed the name of Locksley, from a village where he was born, but where situated we are not distinctly told.

"I understand thee," said the King, "and the Holy Clerk shall have a grant of vert and venison in my woods of Warncliffe. Mark, however, I will but assign thee three bucks every season; but if that do not prove an apology for thy slaying thirty, I am no Christian knight nor true king."

"Your Grace may be well assured," said the Friar, "that, with the grace of Saint Dunstan, I shall find the way of multiplying your most bounteous gift."

"I nothing doubt it, good brother," said the King; "and as venison is but dry food, our cellarer shall have orders to deliver to thee a butt of sack, a runlet of Malvoisie, and three hogsheads of ale of the first strike, yearly — If that will not quench thy thirst, thou must come to court, and become acquainted with my butler."

"But for St Dunstan?" said the Friar —

"A cope, a stole, and an altar-cloth shalt thou also have," continued the King, crossing himself — "But we may not turn our game into earnest, lest God punish us for thinking more on our follies than on his honour and worship."

"I will answer for my patron," said the Priest, joyously.

"Answer for thyself, Friar," said King Richard, something sternly; but immediately stretching out his hand to the Hermit, the latter, somewhat abashed, bent his knee, and saluted it. "Thou dost less honour to my extended palm than to my clenched fist," said the Monarch; "thou didst only kneel to the one, and to the other didst prostrate thyself."

But the Friar, afraid perhaps of again giving offence by continuing the conversation in too jocose a style — a false step to be particularly guarded against by those who converse with monarchs — bowed profoundly, and fell into the rear.

At the same time, two additional personages appeared on the scene.

CHAPTER XLII.

All hail to the lordlings of high degree,
Who live not more happy, though greater than we!
Our pastimes to see,
Under every green tree,
In all the gay woodland, right welcome ye be.
MACDONALD.

THE new comers were Wilfred of Ivanhoe, on the Prior of Botolph's palfrey, and Gurth, who attended him, on the Knight's own war-horse. The astonishment of Ivanhoe was beyond bounds, when he saw his master besprinkled with blood, and six or seven dead bodies lying around in the little glade in which the battle had taken place. Nor was he less surprised to see Richard surrounded by so many silvan attendants, the outlaws, as they seemed to be, of the forest, and a perilous retinue therefore for a prince. He hesitated whether to address the King as the Black Knight-errant, or in what other manner to demean himself towards him. Richard saw his embarrassment.

"Fear not, Wilfred," he said, "to address Richard Plantagenet as himself, since thou seest him in the company of true English hearts, although it may be they have been urged a few steps aside by warm English blood."

"Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe," said the gallant Outlaw, stepping forward, "my assurances can add nothing to those of our sovereign; yet, let me say somewhat proudly, that of men who have suffered much, he hath not truer subjects than those who now stand around him."

"I cannot doubt it, brave man," said Wilfred, "since thou art of the number — But what mean these marks of death and danger? these slain men, and the bloody armour of my Prince?"

"Treason hath been with us, Ivanhoe," said the King; "but, thanks to these brave men, treason hath met its meed — But, now I bethink me, thou too art a traitor," said Richard, smiling; "a most disobedient traitor; for were not our orders positive, that thou shouldst repose thyself at Saint Botolph's until thy wound was healed?"

"It is healed," said Ivanhoe; "it is not of more consequence than the scratch of a bodkin. But why, oh, why, noble Prince, will you thus vex the hearts of your faithful servants, and expose your life by lonely journeys and rash adventures, as if it were of no more value than that of a mere knight-errant, who has no interest on earth but what lance and sword may procure him?"

"And Richard Plantagenet," said the King, "desires no more fame than his good lance and sword may acquire him — and Richard Plantagenet is prouder of achieving an adventure, with only his good sword, and his good arm to speed, than if he led to battle a host of a hundred thousand armed men."

"But your kingdom, my Liege," said Ivanhoe, "your kingdom is threatened with dissolution and civil war — your subjects menaced with every species of evil, if deprived of their sovereign in some of those dangers which it is your daily pleasure to incur, and from which you have but this moment narrowly escaped."

"Ho! ho! my kingdom and my subjects?" answered Richard, impatiently; "I tell thee, Sir Wilfred, the best of them are most willing to repay my follies in kind — For example, my very faithful servant, Wilfred of Ivanhoe, will not obey my positive commands, and yet reads his king a homily, because he does not walk exactly by his advice. Which of us has most reason to upbraid the other? — Yet forgive me, my faithful Wilfred. The time I have spent, and am yet to spend in concealment, is, as I explained to thee at Saint Botolph's, necessary to give my friends and faithful nobles time to assemble their forces, that when Richard's return is announced, he should be at the head of such a force as enemies shall tremble to face, and thus subdue the meditated treason, without even unsheathing a sword. Estoteville and Bohun will not be strong enough to move forward to York for twenty-four hours. I must have news of Salisbury from the south; and of Beauchamp, in Warwickshire; and of Multon and Percy in the north. The Chancellor must make sure of London. Too sudden an appearance would subject me to dangers, other than my lance and sword, though backed by the bow of bold Robin, or the quarter-staff of Friar Tuck, and the horn of the sage Wamba, may be able to rescue me from."

Wilfred bowed in submission, well knowing how vain it was to contend with the wild spirit of chivalry which so often impelled his master upon dangers which he might easily have avoided, or

rather, which it was unpardonable in him to have sought out. The young knight sighed, therefore, and held his peace; while Richard, rejoiced at having silenced his counsellor, though his heart acknowledged the justice of the charge he had brought against him, went on in conversation with Robin Hood. — "King of Outlaws," he said, "have you no refreshment to offer to your brother sovereign? for these dead knaves have found me both in exercise and appetite."

"In troth," replied the Outlaw, "for I scorn to lie to your Grace, our larder is chiefly supplied with"—— He stopped, and was somewhat embarrassed.

"With venison, I suppose?" said Richard, gaily; "better food at need there can be none— and truly, if a king will not remain at home and slay his own game, methinks he should not brawl too loud if he finds it killed to his hand."

"If your Grace, then," said Robin, "will again honour with your presence one of Robin Hood's places of rendezvous, the venison shall not be lacking; and a stoup of ale, and it may be a cup of reasonably good wine, to relish it withal."

The Outlaw accordingly led the way, followed by the buxom Monarch, more happy, probably, in this chance meeting with Robin Hood and his foresters, than he would have been in again assuming his royal state, and presiding over a splendid circle of peers and nobles. Novelty in society and adventure were the zest of life to Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and it had its highest relish when enhanced by dangers encountered and surmounted. In the lion-hearted King, the brilliant, but useless character, of a knight of romance, was in a great measure realized and revived; and the personal glory which he acquired by his own deeds of arms, was far more dear to his excited imagination, than that which a course of policy and wisdom would have spread around his government. Accordingly, his reign was like the course of a brilliant and rapid meteor, which shoots along the face of heaven, shedding around an unnecessary and portentous light, which is instantly swallowed up by universal darkness; his feats of chivalry furnishing themes for bards and minstrels, but affording none of those solid benefits to his country on which history loves to pause, and hold up as an example to posterity. But in his present company Richard shewed to the greatest imaginable advantage. He was gay, good-humoured, and fond of manhood in every rank of life.

Beneath a huge oak-tree the silvan repast was hastily prepared for the King of England, surrounded by men outlaws to his government, but who now formed his court and his guard. As the flagon went round, the rough foresters soon lost their awe for the presence of Majesty. The song and the jest were exchanged — the stories of former deeds were told with advantage; and at length, and while boasting of their successful infraction of the laws, no one recollected they were speaking in presence of their natural guardian. The merry King, nothing heeding his dignity any more than his company, laughed, quaffed, and jested among the jolly band. The natural and rough sense of Robin Hood led him to be desirous that the scene should be closed ere any thing should occur to disturb its harmony, the more especially that he observed Ivanhoe's brow clouded with anxiety.

"We are honoured," he said to Ivanhoe, apart, "by the presence of our gallant Sovereign; yet I would not that he dallied with time, which the circumstances of his kingdom may render precious."

"It is well and wisely spoken, brave Robin Hood," said Wilfred, apart; "and know, moreover, that they who jest with Majesty even in its gayest mood, are but toying with the lion's whelp, which, on slight provocation, uses both fangs and claws."

"You have touched the very cause of my fear," said the Outlaw; "my men are rough by practice and nature, the King is hasty as well as good-humoured; nor know I how soon cause of offence may arise, or how warmly it may be received— it is time this revel were broken off."

"It must be by your management then, gallant yeoman," said Ivanhoe; "for each hint I have essayed to give him serves only to induce him to prolong it."

"Must I so soon risk the pardon and favour of my Sovereign?" said Robin Hood, pausing for an instant; "but by Saint Christopher, it shall be so. I were undeserving his grace did I not peril it for his good. — Here, Scathlock, get thee behind yonder thicket, and wind me a Norman blast on thy bugle, and without an instant's delay, on peril of your life."

Scathlock obeyed his captain, and in less than five minutes the revellers were startled by the sound of his horn.

"It is the bugle of Malvoisin," said the Miller, starting to his feet, and seizing his bow. The Friar dropped the flagon, and grasped his quarter-staff. Wamba stopt short in the midst of a jest, and betook himself to sword and target. All the others stood to their weapons.

Men of their precarious course of life change readily from the banquet to the battle; and, to Richard, the exchange seemed but a succession of pleasure. He called for his helmet and the most cumbrous parts of his armour, which he had laid aside; and while Gurth was putting them on, he laid his strict injunctions on Wilfred, under pain of his highest displeasure, not to engage in the skirmish which he supposed was approaching.

"Thou hast fought for me an hundred times, Wilfred, — and I have seen it. Thou shalt this day look on, and see how Richard will fight for his friend and liegeman."

In the meantime, Robin Hood had sent off several of his followers in different directions, as if to reconnoitre the enemy; and when he saw the company effectually broken up, he approached Richard, who was now completely armed, and, kneeling down on one knee, craved pardon of his Sovereign.

"For what, good yeoman?" said Richard, somewhat impatiently. "Have we not already granted thee a full pardon for all transgressions? Thinkest thou our word is a feather, to be blown backward and forward between us? Thou canst not have had time to commit any new offence since that time?"

"Ay, but I have though," answered the yeoman, "if it be an offence to deceive my prince for his own advantage. The bugle you have heard was none of Malvoisin's, but blown by my direction, to break off the banquet, lest it trenched upon hours of dearer import than to be thus dallied with."

He then rose from his knee, folded his arms on his bosom, and in a manner rather respectful than submissive, awaited the answer of the King, — like

one who is conscious he may have given offence, yet is confident in the rectitude of his motive. The blood rushed in anger to the countenance of Richard; but it was the first transient emotion, and his sense of justice instantly subdued it.

"The King of Sherwood," he said, "grudges his venison and his wine-flask to the King of England? It is well, bold Robin!—but when you come to see me in merry London, I trust to be a less niggard host. Thou art right, however, good fellow. Let us therefore to horse and away—Wilfred has been impatient this hour. Tell me, bold Robin, hast thou never a friend in thy band, who, not content with advising, will needs direct thy motions, and look miserable when thou dost presume to act for thyself?"

"Such a one," said Robin, "is my Lieutenant, Little John, who is even now absent on an expedition as far as the borders of Scotland; and I will own to your Majesty, that I am sometimes displeased by the freedom of his counsels—but, when I think twice, I cannot be long angry with one who can have no motive for his anxiety save zeal for his master's service."

"Thou art right, good yeoman," answered Richard; "and if I had Ivanhoe, on the one hand, to give grave advice, and recommend it by the sad gravity of his brow, and thee, on the other, to trick me into what thou thinkest my own good, I should have as little the freedom of mine own will as any king in Christendom or Heathenesse.—But come, sirs, let us merrily on to Coningsburgh, and think no more on 't."

Robin Hood assured them that he had detached a party in the direction of the road they were to pass, who would not fail to discover and apprize them of any secret ambuscade; and that he had little doubt they would find the ways secure, or, if otherwise, would receive such timely notice of the danger as would enable them to fall back on a strong troop of archers, with which he himself proposed to follow on the same route.

The wise and attentive precautions adopted for his safety touched Richard's feelings, and removed any slight grudge which he might retain on account of the deception the Outlaw Captain had practised upon him. He once more extended his hand to Robin Hood, assured him of his full pardon and future favour, as well as his firm resolution to restrain the tyrannical exercise of the forest rights and other oppressive laws, by which so many English yeomen were driven into a state of rebellion. But Richard's good intentions towards the bold Outlaw were frustrated by the King's untimely death; and the Charter of the Forest was extorted from the unwilling hands of King John when he succeeded to his heroic brother.—As for the rest of Robin Hood's career, as well as the tale of his treacherous death, they are to be found in those black-letter garlands, once sold at the low and easy rate of one halfpenny,

"Now cheaply purchased at their weight in gold."

The Outlaw's opinion proved true; and the King, attended by Ivanhoe, Gurth, and Wamba, arrived, without any interruption, within view of the Castle of Coningsburgh, while the sun was yet in the horizon.

There are few more beautiful or striking scenes in England, than are presented by the vicinity of this ancient Saxon fortress. The soft and gentle river Don sweeps through an amphitheatre, in which cultivation is richly blended with woodland, and on a mount, ascending from the river, well defended by walls and ditches, rises this ancient edifice, which, as its Saxon name implies, was, previous to the Conquest, a royal residence of the kings of England. The outer walls have probably been added by the Normans, but the inner keep bears token of very great antiquity. It is situated on a mount at one angle of the inner court, and forms a complete circle of perhaps twenty-five feet in diameter. The wall is of immense thickness, and is propped or defended by six huge external buttresses which project from the circle, and rise up against the sides of the tower as if to strengthen or to support it. These massive buttresses are solid when they arise from the foundation, and a good way higher up; but are hollowed out towards the top, and terminate in a sort of turrets communicating with the interior of the keep itself. The distant appearance of this huge building, with these singular accompaniments, is as interesting to the lovers of the picturesque, as the interior of the castle is to the eager antiquary, whose imagination it carries back to the days of the Heptarchy. A barrow, in the vicinity of the castle, is pointed out as the tomb of the memorable Hengist; and various monuments, of great antiquity and curiosity, are shewn in the neighbouring churchyard.[1]

When Cœur-de-Lion and his retinue approached this rude yet stately building, it was not, as at present, surrounded by external fortifications. The Saxon architect had exhausted his art in rendering the main keep defensible, and there was no other circumvallation than a rude barrier of palisades.

A huge black banner, which floated from the top of the tower, announced that the obsequies of the late owner were still in the act of being solemnized. It bore no emblem of the deceased's birth or quality, for armorial bearings were then a novelty among the Norman chivalry themselves, and were totally unknown to the Saxons. But above the gate was another banner, on which the figure of a white horse, rudely painted, indicated the nation and rank of the deceased, by the well-known symbol of Hengist and his Saxon warriors.

All around the castle was a scene of busy commotion; for such funeral banquets were times of general and profuse hospitality, which not only every one who could claim the most distant connection with the deceased, but all passengers whatsoever, were invited to partake. The wealth and consequence of the deceased Athelstane, occasioned this custom to be observed in the fullest extent.

Numerous parties, therefore, were seen ascending and descending the hill on which the castle was situated; and when the King and his attendants entered the open and unguarded gates of the external barrier, the space within presented a scene not easily reconciled with the cause of the assemblage. In one place cooks were toiling to roast huge oxen, and fat sheep; in another, hogsheads of ale were set abroach, to be drained at the freedom of all comers. Groups of every description were to be seen devouring the food and swallowing the liquor thus abandoned to their discretion. The naked

[1] See Note L. *Castle of Coningsburgh.*

Saxon serf was drowning the sense of his half-year's hunger and thirst, in one day of gluttony and drunkenness — the more pampered burgess and guild-brother was eating his morsel with gust, or curiously criticising the quantity of the malt and the skill of the brewer. Some few of the poorer Norman gentry might also be seen, distinguished by their shaven chins and short cloaks, and not less so by their keeping together, and looking with great scorn on the whole solemnity, even while condescending to avail themselves of the good cheer which was so liberally supplied.

Mendicants were of course assembled by the score, together with strolling soldiers returned from Palestine, (according to their own account at least,) pedlars were displaying their wares, travelling mechanics were inquiring after employment, and wandering palmers, hedge-priests, Saxon minstrels, and Welsh bards, were muttering prayers, and extracting mistuned dirges from their harps, crowds, and rotes.[1] One sent forth the praises of Athelstane in a doleful panegyric; another, in a Saxon genealogical poem, rehearsed the uncouth and harsh names of his noble ancestry. Jesters and jugglers were not awanting, nor was the occasion of the assembly supposed to render the exercise of their profession indecorous or improper. Indeed the ideas of the Saxons on these occasions were as natural as they were rude. If sorrow was thirsty, there was drink — if hungry, there was food — if it sunk down upon and saddened the heart, here were the means supplied of mirth, or at least of amusement. Nor did the assistants scorn to avail themselves of those means of consolation, although, every now and then, as if suddenly recollecting the cause which had brought them together, the men groaned in unison, while the females, of whom many were present, raised up their voices and shrieked for very wo.

Such was the scene in the castle-yard at Coningsburgh when it was entered by Richard and his followers. The seneschal or steward deigned not to take notice of the groups of inferior guests who were perpetually entering and withdrawing, unless so far as was necessary to preserve order; nevertheless he was struck by the good mien of the Monarch and Ivanhoe, more especially as he imagined the features of the latter were familiar to him. Besides, the approach of two knights, for such their dress bespoke them, was a rare event at a Saxon solemnity, and could not but be regarded as a sort of honour to the deceased and his family. And in his sable dress, and holding in his hand his white wand of office, this important personage made way through the miscellaneous assemblage of guests, thus conducting Richard and Ivanhoe to the entrance of the tower. Gurth and Wamba speedily found acquaintances in the court-yard, nor presumed to intrude themselves any farther until their presence should be required.

[1] The crowth, or crowd, was a species of violin. The rote a sort of guitar, or rather hurdy-gurdy, the strings of which were managed by a wheel, from which the instrument took its name.

CHAPTER XLIII.

I found them winding of Marcello's corpse.
And there was such a solemn melody,
'Twixt doleful songs, tears, and sad elegies,—
Such as old grandames, watching by the dead,
Are wont to outwear the night with.

Old Play.

The mode of entering the great tower of Coningsburgh Castle is very peculiar, and partakes of the rude simplicity of the early times in which it was erected. A flight of steps, so deep and narrow as to be almost precipitous, leads up to a low portal in the south side of the tower, by which the adventurous antiquary may still, or at least could a few years since, gain access to a small stair within the thickness of the main wall of the tower, which leads up to the third story of the building, — the two lower being dungeons or vaults, which neither receive air nor light, save by a square hole in the third story, with which they seem to have communicated by a ladder. The access to the upper apartments in the tower, which consist in all of four stories, is given by stairs which are carried up through the external buttresses.

By this difficult and complicated entrance, the good King Richard, followed by his faithful Ivanhoe, was ushered into the round apartment which occupies the whole of the third story from the ground. Wilfred, by the difficulties of the ascent, gained time to muffle his face in his mantle, as it had been held expedient that he should not present himself to his father until the King should give him the signal.

There were assembled in this apartment, around a large oaken table, about a dozen of the most distinguished representatives of the Saxon families in the adjacent counties. These were all old, or, at least, elderly men; for the younger race, to the great displeasure of the seniors, had, like Ivanhoe, broken down many of the barriers which separated for half a century the Norman victors from the vanquished Saxons. The downcast and sorrowful looks of these venerable men, their silence and their mournful posture, formed a strong contrast to the levity of the revellers on the outside of the castle. Their gray locks and long full beards, together with their antique tunics and loose black mantles, suited well with the singular and rude apartment in which they were seated, and gave the appearance of a band of ancient worshippers of Woden, recalled to life to mourn over the decay of their national glory.

Cedric seated in equal rank among his countrymen, seemed yet, by common consent, to act as chief of the assembly. Upon the entrance of Richard (only known to him as the valorous Knight of the Fetterlock) he arose gravely, and gave him welcome by the ordinary salutation, *Waes hael*, raising at the same time a goblet to his head. The King, no stranger to the customs of his English subjects, returned the greeting with the appropriate words, *Drinc hael*, and partook of a cup, which was handed to him by the sewer. The same courtesy was offered to Ivanhoe, who pledged his father in silence, supplying the usual speech by an inclination of his head, lest his voice should have been recognized.

When this introductory ceremony was per-

formed, Cedric arose, and, extending his hand to Richard, conducted him into a small and very rude chapel, which was excavated, as it were, out of one of the external buttresses. As there was no opening, saving a very narrow loop-hole, the place would have been nearly quite dark but for two flambeaux or torches, which shewed, by a red and smoky light, the arched roof and naked walls, the rude altar of stone, and the crucifix of the same material.

Before this altar was placed a bier, and on each side of this bier kneeled three priests, who told their beads, and muttered their prayers, with the greatest signs of external devotion. For this service a splendid *soul-scat* was paid to the convent of Saint Edmund's by the mother of the deceased; and, that it might be fully deserved, the whole brethren, saving the lame Sacristan, had transferred themselves to Coningsburgh, where, while six of their number were constantly on guard in the performance of divine rites by the bier of Athelstane, the others failed not to take their share of the refreshments and amusements which went on at the castle. In maintaining this pious watch and ward, the good monks were particularly careful not to interrupt their hymns for an instant, lest Zernebock, the ancient Saxon Apollyon, should lay his clutches on the departed Athelstane. Nor were they less careful to prevent any unhallowed layman from touching the pall, which, having been that used at the funeral of Saint Edmund, was liable to be desecrated, if handled by the profane. If, in truth, these attentions could be of any use to the deceased, he had some right to expect them at the hands of the brethren of Saint Edmund's, since, besides a hundred mancuses of gold paid down as the soul-ransom, the mother of Athelstane had announced her intention of endowing that foundation with the better part of the lands of the deceased, in order to maintain perpetual prayers for his soul, and that of her departed husband.

Richard and Wilfred followed the Saxon Cedric into the apartment of death, where, as their guide pointed with solemn air to the untimely bier of Athelstane, they followed his example in devoutly crossing themselves, and muttering a brief prayer for the weal of the departed soul.

This act of pious charity performed, Cedric again motioned them to follow him, gliding over the stone floor with a noiseless tread; and, after ascending a few steps, opened with great caution the door of a small oratory, which adjoined to the chapel. It was about eight feet square, hollowed, like the chapel itself, out of the thickness of the wall; and the loop-hole, which enlightened it, being to the west, and widening considerably as it sloped inward, a beam of the setting sun found its way into its dark recess, and shewed a female of a dignified mien, and whose countenance retained the marked remains of majestic beauty. Her long mourning robes, and her flowing wimple of black cypress, enhanced the whiteness of her skin, and the beauty of her light-coloured and flowing tresses, which time had neither thinned nor mingled with silver. Her countenance expressed the deepest sorrow that is consistent with resignation. On the stone table before her stood a crucifix of ivory, beside which was laid a missal, having its pages richly illuminated, and its boards adorned with clasps of gold, and bosses of the same precious metal.

"Noble Edith," said Cedric, after having stood a moment silent, as if to give Richard and Wilfred time to look upon the lady of the mansion, "these are worthy strangers, come to take a part in thy sorrows. And this, in especial, is the valiant Knight who fought so bravely for the deliverance of him for whom we this day mourn."

"His bravery has my thanks," returned the lady; "although it be the will of Heaven that it should be displayed in vain. I thank, too, his courtesy, and that of his companion, which hath brought them hither to behold the widow of Adeling, the mother of Athelstane, in her deep hour of sorrow and lamentation. To your care, kind kinsman, I intrust them, satisfied that they will want no hospitality which these sad walls can yet afford."

The guests bowed deeply to the mourning parent, and withdrew with their hospitable guide.

Another winding stair conducted them to an apartment of the same size with that which they had first entered, occupying indeed the story immediately above. From this room, ere yet the door was opened, proceeded a low and melancholy strain of vocal music. When they entered, they found themselves in the presence of about twenty matrons and maidens of distinguished Saxon lineage. Four maidens, Rowena leading the choir, raised a hymn for the soul of the deceased, of which we have only been able to decipher two or three stanzas:—

Dust unto dust,
To this all must;
The tenant hath resign'd
The faded form
To waste and worm—
Corruption claims her kind.

Through paths unknown
Thy soul hath flown,
To seek the realms of wo,
Where fiery pain
Shall purge the stain
Of actions done below.

In that sad place,
By Mary's grace,
Brief may thy dwelling be!
Till prayers and alms,
And holy psalms,
Shall set the captive free.

While this dirge was sung, in a low and melancholy tone, by the female choristers, the others were divided into two bands, of which one was engaged in bedecking, with such embroidery as their skill and taste could compass, a large silken pall, destined to cover the bier of Athelstane, while the others busied themselves in selecting, from baskets of flowers placed before them, garlands, which they intended for the same mournful purpose. The behaviour of the maidens was decorous, if not marked with deep affliction; but now and then a whisper or a smile called forth the rebuke of the severer matrons, and here and there might be seen a damsel more interested in endeavouring to find out how her mourning-robe became her, than in the dismal ceremony for which they were preparing. Neither was this propensity (if we must needs confess the truth) at all diminished by the appearance of two strange knights, which occasioned some looking up, peeping, and whispering. Rowena alone, too proud to be vain, paid her greeting to her deliverer with a graceful courtesy Her demeanour was serious, but not dejected; and it may be doubted whether thoughts of Ivanhoe, and of the uncertainty of his fate, did not claim as

great a share in her gravity as the death of her kinsman.

To Cedric, however, who, as we have observed, was not remarkably clear-sighted on such occasions, the sorrow of his ward seemed so much deeper than any of the other maidens, that he deemed it proper to whisper the explanation—"She was the affianced bride of the noble Athelstane."—It may be doubted whether this communication went a far way to increase Wilfred's disposition to sympathize with the mourners of Coningsburgh.

Having thus formally introduced the guests to the different chambers in which the obsequies of Athelstane were celebrated under different forms, Cedric conducted them into a small room, destined, as he informed them, for the exclusive accommodation of honourable guests, whose more slight connection with the deceased might render them unwilling to join those who were immediately affected by the unhappy event. He assured them of every accommodation, and was about to withdraw when the Black Knight took his hand.

"I crave to remind you, noble Thane," he said, "that when we last parted, you promised, for the service I had the fortune to render you, to grant me a boon."

"It is granted ere named, noble Knight," said Cedric; "yet, at this sad moment——"

"Of that also," said the King, "I have bethought me—but my time is brief—neither does it seem to me unfit, that, when closing the grave on the noble Athelstane, we should deposit therein certain prejudices and hasty opinions."

"Sir Knight of the Fetterlock," said Cedric, colouring, and interrupting the King in his turn, "I trust your boon regards yourself and no other; for in that which concerns the honour of my house, it is scarce fitting that a stranger should mingle."

"Nor do I wish to mingle," said the King, mildly, "unless in so far as you will admit me to have an interest. As yet you have known me but as the Black Knight of the Fetterlock—Know me now as Richard Plantagenet."

"Richard of Anjou!" exclaimed Cedric, stepping backward with the utmost astonishment.

"No, noble Cedric—Richard of England!—whose deepest interest—whose deepest wish, is to see her sons united with each other.—And, how now, worthy Thane! hast thou no knee for thy prince?"

"To Norman blood," said Cedric, "it hath never bended."

"Reserve thine homage then," said the Monarch, "until I shall prove my right to it by my equal protection of Normans and English."

"Prince," answered Cedric, "I have ever done justice to thy bravery and thy worth—Nor am I ignorant of thy claim to the crown through thy descent from Matilda, niece to Edgar Atheling, and daughter to Malcolm of Scotland. But Matilda, though of the royal Saxon blood, was not the heir to the monarchy."

"I will not dispute my title with thee, noble Thane," said Richard, calmly; "but I will bid thee look around thee, and see where thou wilt find another to be put into the scale against it."

"And hast thou wandered hither, Prince, to tell me so?" said Cedric—"To upbraid me with the ruin of my race, ere the grave has closed o'er the last scion of Saxon royalty?"—His countenance darkened as he spoke.—"It was boldly—it was rashly done!"

"Not so, by the holy rood!" replied the King; "it was done in the frank confidence which one brave man may repose in another, without a shadow of danger."

"Thou sayest well, Sir King—for King I own thou art, and wilt be, despite of my feeble opposition.—I dare not take the only mode to prevent it, though thou hast placed the strong temptation within my reach!"

"And now to my boon," said the King, "which I ask not with one jot the less confidence, that thou hast refused to acknowledge my lawful sovereignty. I require of thee, as a man of thy word, on pain of being held faithless, man-sworn, and *nidering*,[1] to forgive and receive to thy paternal affection the good knight, Wilfred of Ivanhoe. In this reconciliation thou wilt own I have an interest—the happiness of my friend, and the quelling of dissention among my faithful people."

"And this is Wilfred!" said Cedric, pointing to his son.

"My father!—my father!" said Ivanhoe, prostrating himself at Cedric's feet, "grant me thy forgiveness!"

"Thou hast it, my son," said Cedric, raising him up. "The son of Hereward knows how to keep his word, even when it has been passed to a Norman. But let me see thee use the dress and costume of thy English ancestry—no short cloaks, no gay bonnets, no fantastic plumage in my decent household. He that would be the son of Cedric must shew himself of English ancestry.—Thou art about to speak," he added, sternly, "and I guess the topic. The Lady Rowena must complete two years' mourning, as for a betrothed husband—all our Saxon ancestors would disown us were we to treat of a new union for her ere the grave of him she should have wedded—him, so much the most worthy of her hand by birth and ancestry—is yet closed. The ghost of Athelstane himself would burst his bloody cerements, and stand before us to forbid such dishonour to his memory."

It seemed as if Cedric's words had raised a spectre; for, scarce had he uttered them ere the door flew open, and Athelstane, arrayed in the garments of the grave, stood before them, pale, haggard, and like something arisen from the dead![2]

The effect of this apparition on the persons present was utterly appalling. Cedric started back as far as the wall of the apartment would permit, and, leaning against it as one unable to support himself, gazed on the figure of his friend with eyes that seemed fixed, and a mouth which he appeared incapable of shutting. Ivanhoe crossed himself, repeating prayers in Saxon, Latin, or Norman-French, as they occurred to his memory, while Richard alternately said, *Benedicite*, and swore, *Mort de ma vie!*

In the meantime, a horrible noise was heard below stairs, some crying. "Secure the treacherous monks!"—others, "Down with them into the

[1] Infamous.

[2] The resuscitation of Athelstane has been much criticised, as too violent a breach of probability, even for a work of such fantastic character. It was a *tour-de-force*, to which the author was compelled to have recourse, by the vehement entreaties of his friend and printer, who was inconsolable on the Saxon being conveyed to the tomb.

dungeon !"—others, "Pitch them from the highest battlements !"

"In the name of God !" said Cedric, addressing what seemed the spectre of his departed friend, "if thou art mortal, speak ! — if a departed spirit, say for what cause thou dost revisit us, or if I can do aught that can set thy spirit at repose. — Living or dead, noble Athelstane, speak to Cedric !"

"I will," said the spectre, very composedly, "when I have collected breath, and when you give me time — Alive, saidst thou ? — I am as much alive as he can be who has fed on bread and water for three days, which seem three ages — Yes, bread and water, Father Cedric ! By Heaven, and all saints in it, better food hath not passed my weasand for three livelong days, and by God's providence it is that I am now here to tell it."

"Why, noble Athelstane," said the Black Knight, "I myself saw you struck down by the fierce Templar towards the end of the storm at Torquilstone, and as I thought, and Wamba reported, your skull was cloven through the teeth."

"You thought amiss, sir Knight," said Athelstane, "and Wamba lied. My teeth are in good order, and that my supper shall presently find—No thanks to the Templar though, whose sword turned in his hand, so that the blade struck me flatlings, being averted by the handle of the good mace with which I warded the blow; had my steel-cap been on, I had not valued it a rush, and had dealt him such a counter-buff as would have spoilt his retreat. But as it was, down I went, stunned, indeed, but unwounded. Other, of both sides, were beaten down and slaughtered above me, so that I never recovered my senses until I found myself in a coffin — (an open one, by good luck)—placed before the altar of the church of Saint Edmund's. I sneezed repeatedly — groaned — awakened, and would have arisen, when the Sacristan and Abbot, full of terror, came running at the noise, surprised doubtless, and no way pleased to find the man alive, whose heirs they had proposed themselves to be. I asked for wine — they gave me some, but it must have been highly medicated, for I slept yet more deeply than before, and wakened not for many hours. I found my arms swathed down — my feet tied so fast that mine ankles ache at the very remembrance — the place was utterly dark — the oubliette, as I suppose, of their accursed convent, and from the close, stifled, damp smell, I conceive it is also used for a place of sepulture. I had strange thoughts of what had befallen me, when the door of my dungeon creaked, and two villain monks entered. They would have persuaded me I was in purgatory, but I knew too well the pursy short-breathed voice of the Father Abbot. — Saint Jeremy! how different from that tone with which he used to ask me for another slice of the haunch ! — the dog has feasted with me from Christmas to Twelfth-night."

"Have patience, noble Athelstane," said the King, "take breath — tell your story at leisure — beshrew me but such a tale is as well worth listening to as a romance."

"Ay but, by the rood of Bromeholm, there was no romance in the matter !" said Athelstane. — "A barley loaf and a pitcher of water — that *they* gave me, the niggardly traitors, whom my father, and I myself, had enriched, when their best resources were the flitches of bacon and measures of corn, out of which they wheedled poor serfs and bondsmen, in exchange for their prayers — the nest of foul ungrateful vipers — barley bread and ditch water, to such a patron as I had been! I will smoke them out of their nest, though I be excommunicated !"

"But, in the name of Our Lady, noble Athelstane," said Cedric, grasping the hand of his friend, "how didst thou escape this imminent danger ? — did their hearts relent ?"

"Did their hearts relent !" echoed Athelstane.— "Do rocks melt with the sun ? I should have been there still, had not some stir in the Convent, which I find was their procession hitherward to eat my funeral feast, when they well knew how and where I had been buried alive, summoned the swarm out of their hive. I heard them droning out their death-psalms, little judging they were sung in respect for my soul by those who were thus famishing my body. They went, however, and I waited long for food — no wonder — the gouty Sacristan was even too busy with his own provender to mind mine. At length, down he came, with an unstable step and a strong flavour of wine and spices about his person. Good cheer had opened his heart, for he left me a nook of pasty and a flask of wine, instead of my former fare. I ate, drank, and was invigorated; when, to add to my good luck, the Sacristan, too totty to discharge his duty of turnkey fitly, locked the door beside the staple, so that it fell ajar. The light, the food, the wine, set my invention to work. The staple to which my chains were fixed, was more rusted than I or the villain Abbot had supposed. Even iron could not remain without consuming in the damps of that infernal dungeon."

"Take breath, noble Athelstane," said Richard, "and partake of some refreshment, ere you proceed with a tale so dreadful."

"Partake !" quoth Athelstane; "I have been partaking five times to-day — and yet a morsel of that savoury ham were not altogether foreign to the matter; and I pray you, fair sir, to do me reason in a cup of wine."

The guests, though still agape with astonishment, pledged their resuscitated landlord, who thus proceeded in his story: — He had indeed now many more auditors than those to whom it was commenced, for Edith, having given certain necessary orders for arranging matters within the Castle, had followed the dead-alive up to the stranger's apartment, attended by as many of the guests, male and female, as could squeeze into the small room, while others, crowding the staircase, caught up an erroneous edition of the story, and transmitted it still more inaccurately to those beneath, who again sent it forth to the vulgar without, in a fashion totally irreconcilable to the real fact. Athelstane, however, went on as follows, with the history of his escape :—

"Finding myself freed from the staple, I dragged myself up stairs as well as a man loaded with shackles, and emaciated with fasting, might; and after much groping about, I was at length directed, by the sound of a jolly roundelay, to the apartment where the worthy Sacristan, an it so please ye, was holding a devil's mass with a huge beetle-browed, broad-shouldered brother of the gray-frock and cowl, who looked much more like a thief than a clergyman. I burst in upon them, and the fashion of my grave-clothes, as well as the clanking

of my chains, made me more resemble an inhabitant of the other world than of this. Both stood aghast; but when I knocked down the Sacristan with my fist, the other fellow, his pot-companion, fetched a blow at me with a huge quarter-staff."

"This must be our Friar Tuck, for a count's ransom," said Richard, looking at Ivanhoe.

"He may be the devil, an he will," said Athelstane. "Fortunately he missed the aim; and on my approaching to grapple with him, took to his heels and ran for it. I failed not to set my own heels at liberty by means of the fetter-key, which hung amongst others at the sexton's belt; and I had thoughts of beating out the knave's brains with the bunch of keys, but gratitude for the nook of pasty and the flask of wine which the rascal had imparted to my captivity, came over my heart; so, with a brace of hearty kicks, I left him on the floor, pouched some baked meat, and a leathern bottle of wine, with which the two venerable brethren had been regaling, went to the stable, and found in a private stall mine own best palfrey, which, doubtless, had been set apart for the holy Father Abbot's particular use. Hither I came with all the speed the beast could compass — man and mother's son flying before me wherever I came, taking me for a spectre, the more especially as, to prevent my being recognized, I drew the corpse-hood over my face. I had not gained admittance into my own castle, had I not been supposed to be the attendant of a juggler who is making the people in the castle-yard very merry, considering they are assembled to celebrate their lord's funeral — I say the sewer thought I was dressed to bear a part in the tregetour's mummery, and so I got admission, and did but disclose myself to my mother, and eat a hasty morsel, ere I came in quest of you, my noble friend."

"And you have found me," said Cedric, "ready to resume our brave projects of honour and liberty. I tell thee, never will dawn a morrow so auspicious as the next, for the deliverance of the noble Saxon race."

"Talk not to me of delivering any one," said Athelstane; "it is well I am delivered myself. I am more intent on punishing that villain Abbot. He shall hang on the top of this Castle of Coningsburgh, in his cope and stole; and if the stairs be too strait to admit his fat carcass, I will have him craned up from without."

"But, my son," said Edith, "consider his sacred office."

"Consider my three days' fast," replied Athelstane; "I will have their blood every one of them. Front-de-Bœuf was burnt alive for a less matter, for he kept a good table for his prisoners, only put too much garlic in his last dish of pottage. But these hypocritical, ungrateful slaves, so often the self-invited flatterers at my board, who gave me neither pottage nor garlic, more or less, they die, by the soul of Hengist!"

"But the Pope, my noble friend," said Cedric ——

"But the devil, my noble friend," — answered Athelstane; "they die, and no more of them. Were they the best monks upon earth, the world would go on without them."

"For shame, noble Athelstane," said Cedric; "forget such wretches in the career of glory which lies open before thee. Tell this Norman prince, Richard of Anjou, that, lion-hearted as he is, he shall not hold undisputed the throne of Alfred, while a male descendant of the Holy Confessor lives to dispute it."

"How!" said Athelstane, "is this the noble King Richard?"

"It is Richard Plantagenet himself," said Cedric; "yet I need not remind thee that, coming hither a guest of free-will, he may neither be injured nor detained prisoner — thou well knowest thy duty to him as his host."

"Ay, by my faith!" said Athelstane; "and my duty as a subject besides, for I here tender him my allegiance, heart and hand."

"My son," said Edith, "think on thy royal rights!"

"Think on the freedom of England, degenerate Prince!" said Cedric.

"Mother and friend," said Athelstane, "a truce to your upbraidings — bread and water and a dungeon are marvellous mortifiers of ambition, and I rise from the tomb a wiser man than I descended into it. One half of those vain follies were puffed into mine ear by that perfidious Abbot Wolfram, and you may now judge if he is a counseller to be trusted. Since these plots were set in agitation, I have had nothing but hurried journeys, indigestions, blows and bruises, imprisonments and starvation; besides that they can only end in the murder of some thousands of quiet folk. I tell you, I will be king in my own domains, and no where else; and my first act of dominion shall be to hang the Abbot."

"And my ward Rowena," said Cedric — "I trust you intend not to desert her?"

"Father Cedric," said Athelstane, "be reasonable. The Lady Rowena cares not for me — she loves the little finger of my kinsman Wilfred's glove better than my whole person. There she stands to avouch it — Nay, blush not, kinswoman, there is no shame in loving a courtly knight better than a country franklin — and do not laugh neither, Rowena, for grave-clothes and a thin visage are, God knows, no matter of merriment — Nay, an thou wilt needs laugh, I will find thee a better jest — Give me thy hand, or rather lend it me, for I but ask it in the way of friendship. — Here, cousin Wilfred of Ivanhoe, in thy favour I renounce and abjure —— Hey! by Saint Dunstan, our cousin Wilfred hath vanished! — Yet, unless my eyes are still dazzled with the fasting I have undergone, I saw him stand there but even now."

All now looked round and inquired for Ivanhoe, but he had vanished. It was at length discovered that a Jew had been to seek him; and that, after very brief conference, he had called for Gurth and his armour, and had left the castle.

"Fair cousin," said Athelstane to Rowena, "could I think that this sudden disappearance of Ivanhoe was occasioned by other than the weightiest reason, I would myself resume ——"

But he had no sooner let go her hand, on first observing that Ivanhoe had disappeared, than Rowena, who had found her situation extremely embarrassing, had taken the first opportunity to escape from the apartment.

"Certainly," quoth Athelstane, "women are the least to be trusted of all animals, monks and abbots excepted. I am an infidel, if I expected not thanks from her, and perhaps a kiss to boot — These cursed grave-clothes have surely a spell on

them, every one flies from me.— To you I turn, noble King Richard, with the vows of allegiance, which, as a liege-subject ——"

But King Richard was gone also, and no one knew whither. At length it was learned that he had hastened to the court-yard, summoned to his presence the Jew who had spoken with Ivanhoe, and after a moment's speech with him, had called vehemently to horse, thrown himself upon a steed, compelled the Jew to mount another, and set off at a rate, which, according to Wamba, rendered the old Jew's neck not worth a penny's purchase.

"By my halidome!" said Athelstane, "it is certain that Zernebock hath possessed himself of my castle in my absence. I return in my grave-clothes, a pledge restored from the very sepulchre, and every one I speak to vanishes as soon as they hear my voice! — But it skills not talking of it. Come, my friends — such of you as are left, follow me to the banquet-hall, lest any more of us disappear — it is, I trust, as yet tolerably furnished, as becomes the obsequies of an ancient Saxon noble; and should we tarry any longer, who knows but the devil may fly off with the supper?"

CHAPTER XLIV.

> Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom,
> That they may break his foaming courser's back,
> And throw the rider headlong in the lists,
> A caitiff recreant!
>
> *Richard II.*

Our scene now returns to the exterior of the Castle, or Preceptory, of Templestowe, about the hour when the bloody die was to be cast for the life or death of Rebecca. It was a scene of bustle and life, as if the whole vicinity had poured forth its inhabitants to a village wake, or rural feast. But the earnest desire to look on blood and death, is not peculiar to those dark ages; though in the gladiatorial exercise of single combat and general tourney, they were habituated to the bloody spectacle of brave men falling by each other's hands. Even in our own days, when morals are better understood, an execution, a bruising match, a riot, or a meeting of radical reformers, collects, at considerable hazard to themselves, immense crowds of spectators, otherwise little interested, except to see how matters are to be conducted, or whether the heroes of the day are, in the heroic language of insurgent tailors, "flints" and "dunghills."

The eyes, therefore, of a very considerable multitude, were bent on the gate of the Preceptory of Templestowe, with the purpose of witnessing the procession; while still greater numbers had already surrounded the tilt-yard belonging to that establishment. This enclosure was formed on a piece of level ground adjoining to the Preceptory, which had been levelled with care, for the exercise of military and chivalrous sports. It occupied the brow of a soft and gentle eminence, was carefully palisaded around, and, as the Templars willingly invited spectators to be witnesses of their skill in feats of chivalry, was amply supplied with galleries and benches for their use.

On the present occasion, a throne was erected for the Grand Master at the east end, surrounded with seats of distinction for the Preceptors and Knights of the Order. Over these floated the sacred standard, called *Le Beau-seant*, which was the ensign, as its name was the battle-cry, of the Templars.

At the opposite end of the lists was a pile of fagots, so arranged around a stake, deeply fixed in the ground, as to leave a space for the victim whom they were destined to consume, to enter within the fatal circle in order to be chained to the stake by the fetters which hung ready for the purpose. Beside this deadly apparatus stood four black slaves, whose colour and African features, then so little known in England, appalled the multitude, who gazed on them as on demons employed about their own diabolical exercises. These men stirred not excepting now and then, under the direction of one who seemed their chief, to shift and replace the ready fuel. They looked not on the multitude. In fact, they seemed insensible of their presence, and of every thing save the discharge of their own horrible duty. And when, in speech with each other, they expanded their blubber lips, and shewed their white fangs, as if they grinned at the thoughts of the expected tragedy, the startled commons could scarcely help believing that they were actually the familiar spirits with whom the witch had communed, and who, her time being out, stood ready to assist in her dreadful punishment. They whispered to each other, and communicated all the feats which Satan had performed during that busy and unhappy period, not failing, of course, to give the devil rather more than his due.

"Have you not heard, Father Dennet," quoth one boor to another advanced in years, "that the devil has carried away bodily the great Saxon Thane, Athelstane of Coningsburgh?"

"Ay, but he brought him back though, by the blessing of God and Saint Dunstan."

"How's that?" said a brisk young fellow, dressed in a green cassock embroidered with gold, and having at his heels a stout lad bearing a harp upon his back, which betrayed his vocation. The Minstrel seemed of no vulgar rank; for, besides the splendour of his gaily broidered doublet, he wore around his neck a silver chain, by which hung the *wrest*, or key, with which he tuned his harp. On his right arm was a silver plate, which, instead of bearing, as usual, the cognizance or badge of the baron to whose family he belonged, had barely the word Sherwood engraved upon it. — "How mean you by that?" said the gay Minstrel mingling in the conversation of the peasants; "I came to seek one subject for my rhyme, and, by 'r Lady, I were glad to find two."

"It is well avouched," said the elder peasant, "that after Athelstane of Coningsburgh had been dead four weeks ——"

"That is impossible," said the Minstrel; "I saw him in life at the Passage of Arms at Ashby-de-la-Zouch."

"Dead, however, he was, or else translated," said the younger peasant; "for I heard the Monks of Saint Edmund's singing the death's hymn for him; and, moreover, there was a rich death-meal and dole at the Castle of Coningsburgh, as right was; and thither had I gone, but for Mabel Parkins, who ——"

"Ay, dead was Athelstane," said the old man, shaking his head, "and the more pity it was for the old Saxon blood ——"

"But, your story, my masters — your story," said the Minstrel, somewhat impatiently.

"Ay, ay — construe us the story," said a burly Friar, who stood beside them, leaning on a pole that exhibited an appearance between a pilgrim's staff and a quarter-staff, and probably acted as either when occasion served, — "Your story," said the stalwart churchman; "burn not daylight about it — we have short time to spare."

"An please your reverence," said Dennet, "a drunken priest came to visit the Sacristan at Saint Edmund's——"

"It does not please my reverence," answered the churchman, "that there should be such an animal as a drunken priest, or, if there were, that a layman should so speak him. Be mannerly, my friend, and conclude the holy man only wrapt in meditation, which makes the head dizzy and foot unsteady, as if the stomach were filled with new wine — I have felt it myself."

"Well, then," answered Father Dennet, "a holy brother came to visit the Sacristan at Saint Edmund's — a sort of hedge-priest is the visiter, and kills half the deer that are stolen in the forest, who loves the tinkling of a pint-pot better than the sacring-bell, and deems a flitch of bacon worth ten of his breviary; for the rest, a good fellow and a merry, who will flourish a quarter-staff, draw a bow, and dance a Cheshire round, with e'er a man in Yorkshire."

"That last part of thy speech, Dennet," said the Minstrel, "has saved thee a rib or twain."

"Tush, man, I fear him not," said Dennet; "I am somewhat old and stiff, but when I fought for the bell and ram at Doncaster——"

"But the story — the story, my friend," again said the Minstrel.

"Why, the tale is but this — Athelstane of Coningsburgh was buried at Saint Edmund's."

"That's a lie, and a loud one," said the Friar, "for I saw him borne to his own Castle of Coningsburgh."

"Nay, then, e'en tell the story yourself, my masters," said Dennet, turning sulky at these repeated contradictions; and it was with some difficulty that the boor could be prevailed on, by the request of his comrade and the Minstrel, to renew his tale. — "These two *sober* friars," said he at length, "since this reverend man will needs have them such, had continued drinking good ale and wine, and what not, for the best part of a summer's day, when they were aroused by a deep groan, and a clanking of chains, and the figure of the deceased Athelstane entered the apartment, saying, 'Ye evil shepherds!——'"

"It is false," said the Friar, hastily, "he never spoke a word."

"So ho! Friar Tuck," said the Minstrel, drawing him apart from the rustics; "we have started a new hare, I find."

"I tell thee, Allan-a-Dale," said the Hermit, "I saw Athelstane of Coningsburgh as much as bodily eyes ever saw a living man. He had his shroud on, and all about him smelt of the sepulchre — A butt of sack will not wash it out of my memory."

"Pshaw!" answered the Minstrel; "thou dost but jest with me!"

"Never believe me," said the Friar, "an I fetched not a knock at him with my quarter-staff that would have felled an ox, and it glided through his body as it might through a pillar of smoke!"

"By saint Hubert," said the Minstrel, "but it is a wondrous tale, and fit to be put in metre to the ancient tune, 'Sorrow came to the old Friar.'"

"Laugh, if ye list," said Friar Tuck; "but an ye catch me singing on such a theme, may the next ghost or devil carry me off with him headlong! No, no — I instantly formed the purpose of assisting at some good work, such as the burning of a witch, a judicial combat, or the like matter of godly service, and therefore am I here."

As they thus conversed, the heavy bell of the church of Saint Michael of Templestowe, a venerable building, situated in a hamlet at some distance from the Preceptory, broke short their argument. One by one the sullen sounds fell successively on the ear, leaving but sufficient space for each to die away in distant echo, ere the ear was again filled by repetition of the iron knell. These sounds, the signal of the approaching ceremony, chilled with awe the hearts of the assembled multitude, whose eyes were now turned to the Preceptory, expecting the approach of the Grand Master, the champion, and the criminal.

At length the drawbridge fell, the gates opened, and a knight, bearing the great standard of the Order, sallied from the castle, preceded by six trumpets, and followed by the Knights Preceptors, two and two, the Grand Master coming last, mounted on a stately horse, whose furniture was of the simplest kind. Behind him came Brian-de-Bois-Guilbert, armed cap-a-pie in bright armour, but without his lance, shield, and sword, which were borne by his two esquires behind him. His face, though partly hidden by a long plume which floated down from his barret-cap, bore a strong and mingled expression of passion, in which pride seemed to contend with irresolution. He looked ghastly pale, as if he had not slept for several nights, yet reined his pawing war-horse with the habitual ease and grace proper to the best lance of the Order of the Temple. His general appearance was grand and commanding; but, looking at him with attention, men read that in his dark features from which they willingly withdrew their eyes.

On either side rode Conrade of Mont-Fitchet, and Albert de Malvoisin, who acted as godfathers to the champion. They were in their robes of peace, the white dress of the Order. Behind them followed other Companions of the Temple, with a long train of esquires and pages clad in black, aspirants to the honour of being one day Knights of the Order. After these neophytes came a guard of warders on foot, in the same sable livery, amidst whose partisans might be seen the pale form of the accused, moving with a slow but undismayed step towards the scene of her fate. She was stript of all her ornaments, lest perchance there should be among them some of those amulets which Satan was supposed to bestow upon his victims, to deprive them of the power of confession even when under the torture. A coarse white dress, of the simplest form, had been substituted for her Oriental garments; yet there was such an exquisite mixture of courage and resignation in her look, that even in this garb, and with no other ornament than her long black tresses, each eye wept that looked upon her, and the most hardened bigot regretted the fate

that had converted a creature so goodly into a vessel of wrath, and a waged slave of the devil.

A crowd of inferior personages belonging to the Preceptory followed the victim, all moving with the utmost order, with arms folded, and looks bent upon the ground.

This slow procession moved up the gentle eminence, on the summit of which was the tilt-yard, and, entering the lists, marched once around them from right to left, and when they had completed the circle, made a halt. There was then a momentary bustle, while the Grand Master and all his attendants, excepting the champion and his godfathers, dismounted from their horses, which were immediately removed out of the lists by the esquires, who were in attendance for that purpose.

The unfortunate Rebecca was conducted to the black chair placed near the pile. On her first glance at the terrible spot where preparations were making for a death alike dismaying to the mind and painful to the body, she was observed to shudder and shut her eyes, praying internally doubtless, for her lips moved though no speech was heard. In the space of a minute she opened her eyes, looked fixedly on the pile as if to familiarize her mind with the object, and then slowly and naturally turned away her head.

Meanwhile, the Grand Master had assumed his seat; and when the chivalry of his order was placed around and behind him, each in his due rank, a loud and long flourish of the trumpets announced that the Court were seated for judgment. Malvoisin, then, acting as godfather of the champion, stepped forward, and laid the glove of the Jewess, which was the pledge of battle, at the feet of the Grand Master.

"Valorous Lord, and reverend Father," said he, "here standeth the good Knight, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, Knight Preceptor of the Order of the Temple, who, by accepting the pledge of battle which I now lay at your reverence's feet, hath become bound to do his devoir in combat this day, to maintain that this Jewish maiden, by name Rebecca, hath justly deserved the doom passed upon her in a Chapter of this most Holy Order of the Temple of Zion, condemning her to die as a sorceress;—here, I say, he standeth, such battle to do, knightly and honourable, if such be your noble and sanctified pleasure."

"Hath he made oath," said the Grand Master, "that his quarrel is just and honourable? Bring forward the Crucifix and the *Te igitur*."

"Sir, and most reverend father," answered Malvoisin, readily, "our brother here present hath already sworn to the truth of his accusation in the hand of the good Knight Conrade de Mont-Fitchet; and otherwise he ought not to be sworn, seeing that his adversary is an unbeliever, and may take no oath."

This explanation was satisfactory, to Albert's great joy; for the wily knight had foreseen the great difficulty, or rather impossibility, of prevailing upon Brian de Bois-Guilbert to take such an oath before the assembly, and had invented this excuse to escape the necessity of his doing so.

The Grand Master, having allowed the apology of Albert Malvoisin, commanded the herald to stand forth and do his devoir. The trumpets then again flourished, and a herald, stepping forward, proclaimed aloud,—"Oyez, oyez, oyez.—Here standeth the good Knight, Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, ready to do battle with any knight of free blood, who will sustain the quarrel allowed and allotted to the Jewess Rebecca, to try by champion, in respect of lawful essoine of her own body; and to such champion the reverend and valorous Grand Master here present allows a fair field, and equal partition of sun and wind, and whatever else appertains to a fair combat." The trumpets again sounded, and there was a dead pause of many minutes.

"No champion appears for the appellant," said the Grand Master. "Go, herald, and ask her whether she expects any one to do battle for her in this her cause." The herald went to the chair in which Rebecca was seated, and Bois-Guilbert suddenly turning his horse's head toward that end of the lists, in spite of hints on either side from Malvoisin and Mont-Fitchet, was by the side of Rebecca's chair as soon as the herald.

"Is this regular, and according to the law of combat?" said Malvoisin, looking to the Grand Master.

"Albert de Malvoisin, it is," answered Beaumanoir; "for in this appeal to the judgment of God, we may not prohibit parties from having that communication with each other, which may best tend to bring forth the truth of the quarrel."

In the meantime, the herald spoke to Rebecca in these terms:—"Damsel, the Honourable and Reverend the Grand Master demands of thee, if thou art prepared with a champion to do battle this day in thy behalf, or if thou dost yield thee as one justly condemned to a deserved doom?"

"Say to the Grand Master," replied Rebecca, "that I maintain my innocence, and do not yield me as justly condemned, lest I become guilty of mine own blood. Say to him, that I challenge such delay as his forms will permit, to see if God, whose opportunity is in man's extremity, will raise me up a deliverer; and when such uttermost space is passed, may His holy will be done!" The herald retired to carry this answer to the Grand Master.

"God forbid," said Lucas Beaumanoir, "that Jew or Pagan should impeach us of injustice!—Until the shadows be cast from the west to the eastward, will we wait to see if a champion shall appear for this unfortunate woman. When the day is so far passed, let her prepare for death."

The herald communicated the words of the Grand Master to Rebecca, who bowed her head submissively, folded her arms, and, looking up towards heaven, seemed to expect that aid from above which she could scarce promise herself from man. During this awful pause, the voice of Bois-Guilbert broke upon her ear—it was but a whisper, yet it startled her more than the summons of the herald had appeared to do.

"Rebecca," said the Templar, "dost thou hear me?"

"I have no portion in thee, cruel, hard-hearted man," said the unfortunate maiden.

"Ay, but dost thou understand my words?" said the Templar; "for the sound of my voice is frightful in mine own ears. I scarce know on what ground we stand, or for what purpose they have brought us hither.—This listed space—that chair—these fagots—I know their purpose, and yet it appears to me like something unreal—the fearful picture of a vision, which appals my sense

with hideous fantasies, but convinces not my reason."

"My mind and senses keep touch and time," answered Rebecca, "and tell me alike that these fagots are destined to consume my earthly body, and open a painful but a brief passage to a better world."

"Dreams, Rebecca, — dreams," answered the Templar; "idle visions, rejected by the wisdom of your own wiser Sadducees. Hear me, Rebecca," he said, proceeding with animation; "a better chance hast thou for life and liberty than yonder knaves and dotard dream of. Mount thee behind me on my steed — on Zamor, the gallant horse that never failed his rider. I won him in single fight from the Soldan of Trebizond — mount, I say, behind me — in one short hour is pursuit and inquiry far behind — a new world of pleasure opens to thee — to me a new career of fame. Let them speak the doom which I despise, and erase the name of Bois-Guilbert from their list of monastic slaves! I will wash out with blood whatever blot they may dare to cast on my scutcheon."

"Tempter," said Rebecca, "begone!—Not in this last extremity canst thou move me one hair's-breadth from my resting-place — surrounded as I am by foes, I hold thee as my worst and most deadly enemy — avoid thee, in the name of God!"

Albert Malvoisin, alarmed and impatient at the duration of their conference, now advanced to interrupt it.

"Hath the maiden acknowledged her guilt?" he demanded of Bois-Guilbert; "or is she resolute in her denial?"

"She is indeed *resolute*," said Bois-Guilbert.

"Then," said Malvoisin, "must thou, noble brother, resume thy place to attend the issue — The shades are changing on the circle of the dial — Come, brave Bois-Guilbert — come, thou hope of our holy Order, and soon to be its head."

As he spoke in this soothing tone, he laid his hand on the knight's bridle, as if to lead him back to his station.

"False villain! what meanest thou by thy hand on my rein?" said Sir Brian, angrily. And shaking off his companion's grasp, he rode back to the upper end of the lists.

"There is yet spirit in him," said Malvoisin apart to Mont-Fitchet, "were it well directed — but, like the Greek fire, it burns whatever approaches it."

The Judges had now been two hours in the lists, awaiting in vain the appearance of a champion.

"And reason good," said Friar Tuck, "seeing she is a Jewess — and yet, by mine Order, it is hard that so young and beautiful a creature should perish without one blow being struck in her behalf! Were she ten times a witch, provided she were but the least bit of a Christian, my quarter-staff should ring noon on the steel cap of yonder fierce Templar, ere he carried the matter off thus."

It was, however, the general belief that no one could or would appear for a Jewess, accused of sorcery; and the knights, instigated by Malvoisin, whispered to each other, that it was time to declare the pledge of Rebecca forfeited. At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain advancing towards the lists. A hundred voices exclaimed, "A champion! a champion!" And despite the prepossessions and prejudices of the multitude, they shouted unanimously as the knight rode into the tilt-yard. The second glance, however, served to destroy the hope that his timely arrival had excited. His horse, urged for many miles to its utmost speed, appeared to reel from fatigue, and the rider, however undauntedly he presented himself in the lists, either from weakness, weariness, or both, seemed scarce able to support himself in the saddle.

To the summons of the herald, who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger knight answered readily and boldly, "I am a good knight and noble, come hither to sustain with lance and sword the just and lawful quarrel of this damsel, Rebecca, daughter of Isaac of York; to uphold the doom pronounced against her to be false and truthless, and to defy Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as a traitor, murderer, and liar; as I will prove in this field with my body against his, by the aid of God, of Our Lady, and of Monseigneur Saint George, the good knight."

"The stranger must first shew," said Malvoisin, "that he is good knight, and of honourable lineage. The Temple sendeth not forth her champions against nameless men."

"My name," said the Knight, raising his helmet, "is better known, my lineage more pure, Malvoisin, than thine own. I am Wilfred of Ivanhoe."

"I will not fight with thee at present," said the Templar, in a changed and hollow voice. "Get thy wounds healed, purvey thee a better horse, and it may be I will hold it worth my while to scourge out of thee this boyish spirit of bravade."

"Ha! proud Templar," said Ivanhoe, "hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? Remember the lists at Acre—remember the Passage of Arms at Ashby — remember thy proud vaunt in the halls of Rotherwood, and the gage of your gold chain against my reliquary, that thou wouldst do battle with Wilfred of Ivanhoe, and recover the honour thou hadst lost! By that reliquary, and the holy relic it contains, I will proclaim thee, Templar, a coward in every court in Europe — in every Preceptory of thine Order — unless thou do battle without farther delay."

Bois-Guilbert turned his countenance irresolutely towards Rebecca, and then exclaimed, looking fiercely at Ivanhoe, "Dog of a Saxon! take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!"

"Does the Grand Master allow me the combat?" said Ivanhoe.

"I may not deny what thou hast challenged," said the Grand Master, "provided the maiden accepts thee as her champion. Yet I would thou wert in better plight to do battle. An enemy of our Order hast thou ever been, yet would I have thee honourably met with."

"Thus — thus as I am, and not otherwise," said Ivanhoe; "it is the judgment of God — to his keeping I commend myself. — Rebecca," said he, riding up to the fatal chair, "dost thou accept of me for thy champion?"

"I do," she said — "I do," fluttered by an emotion which the fear of death had been unable to produce, "I do accept thee as the champion whom Heaven hath sent me. Yet, no — no — thy wounds are uncured — Meet not that proud man — why shouldst thou perish also?"

But Ivanhoe was already at his post, and had

closed his visor, and assumed his lance. Bois-Guilbert did the same; and his esquire remarked, as he clasped his visor, that his face, which had, notwithstanding the variety of emotions by which he had been agitated, continued during the whole morning of an ashy paleness, was now become suddenly very much flushed.

The herald, then, seeing each champion in his place, uplifted his voice, repeating thrice—"*Faites vos devoirs, preux chevaliers!*" After the third cry, he withdrew to one side of the lists, and again proclaimed, that none, on peril of instant death, should dare, by word, cry, or action, to interfere with or disturb this fair field of combat. The Grand Master, who held in his hand the gage of battle, Rebecca's glove, now threw it into the lists, and pronounced the fatal signal words, *Laissez aller.*

The trumpets sounded, and the knights charged each other in full career. The wearied horse of Ivanhoe, and its no less exhausted rider, went down, as all had expected, before the well-aimed lance and vigorous steed of the Templar. This issue of the combat all had foreseen; but although the spear of Ivanhoe did but, in comparison, touch the shield of Bois-Guilbert, that champion, to the astonishment of all who beheld it, reeled in his saddle, lost his stirrups, and fell in the lists.

Ivanhoe, extricating himself from his fallen horse, was soon on foot, hastening to mend his fortune with his sword; but his antagonist arose not. Wilfred, placing his foot on his breast, and the sword's point to his throat, commanded him to yield him, or die on the spot. Bois-Guilbert returned no answer.

"Slay him not, Sir Knight," cried the Grand Master, "unshriven and unabsolved—kill not body and soul! We allow him vanquished."

He descended into the lists, and commanded them to unhelm the conquered champion. His eyes were closed—the dark red flush was still on his brow. As they looked on him in astonishment, the eyes opened—but they were fixed and glazed. The flush passed from his brow, and gave way to the pallid hue of death. Unscathed by the lance of his enemy, he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions.

"This is indeed the judgment of God," said the Grand Master, looking upwards—"*Fiat voluntas tua!*"

CHAPTER XLV.

So! now 'tis ended, like an old wife's story.
WEBSTER.

When the first moments of surprise were over, Wilfred of Ivanhoe demanded of the Grand Master, as judge of the field, if he had manfully and rightfully done his duty in the combat?

"Manfully and rightfully hath it been done," said the Grand Master; "I pronounce the maiden free and guiltless—The arms and the body of the deceased knight are at the will of the victor."

"I will not despoil him of his weapons," said the Knight of Ivanhoe, "nor condemn his corpse to shame—he hath fought for Christendom—God's arm, no human hand, hath this day struck him down. But let his obsequies be private, as becomes those of a man who died in an unjust quarrel.—And for the maiden——"

He was interrupted by a clattering of horses' feet, advancing in such numbers, and so rapidly, as to shake the ground before them; and the Black Knight galloped into the lists. He was followed by a numerous band of men-at-arms, and several knights in complete armour.

"I am too late," he said, looking around him, "I had doomed Bois-Guilbert for mine own property.—Ivanhoe, was this well, to take on thee such a venture, and thou scarce able to keep thy saddle?"

"Heaven, my Liege," answered Ivanhoe, "hath taken this proud man for its victim. He was not to be honoured in dying as your will had designed."

"Peace be with him," said Richard, looking steadfastly on the corpse, "if it may be so—he was a gallant knight, and has died in his steel harness full knightly. But we must waste no time—Bohun, do thine office!"

A knight stepped forward from the King's attendants, and, laying his hand on the shoulder of Albert de Malvoisin, said, "I arrest thee of high treason."

The Grand Master had hitherto stood astonished at the appearance of so many warriors.—He now spoke.

"Who dares to arrest a Knight of the Temple of Zion, within the girth of his own Preceptory, and in the presence of the Grand Master? and by whose authority is this bold outrage offered?"

"I make the arrest," replied the Knight—"I, Henry Bohun, Earl of Essex, Lord High Constable of England."

"And he arrests Malvoisin," said the King, raising his visor, "by the order of Richard Plantagenet, here present.—Conrade Mont-Fitchet, it is well for thee thou art born no subject of mine.—But for thee, Malvoisin, thou diest with thy brother Philip, ere the world be a week older."

"I will resist thy doom," said the Grand Master.

"Proud Templar," said the King, "thou canst not—look up, and behold the Royal Standard of England floats over thy towers instead of thy Temple banner!—Be wise, Beaumanoir, and make no bootless opposition—Thy hand is in the lion's mouth."

"I will appeal to Rome against thee," said the Grand Master, "for usurpation on the immunities and privileges of our Order."

"Be it so," said the King; "but for thine own sake tax me not with usurpation now. Dissolve thy Chapter, and depart with thy followers to thy next Preceptory, (if thou canst find one,) which has not been made the scene of treasonable conspiracy against the King of England—Or, if thou wilt, remain, to share our hospitality, and behold our justice."

"To be a guest in the house where I should command?" said the Templar; "never!—Chaplains, raise the Psalm *Quare fremuerunt Gentes?*—Knights, squires, and followers of the Holy Temple, prepare to follow the banner of *Beauseant!*"

The Grand Master spoke with a dignity which confronted even that of England's king himself, and inspired courage into his surprised and dismayed followers. They gathered around him like the sheep around the watch-dog, when they hear

the baying of the wolf. But they evinced not the timidity of the scared flock — there were dark brows of defiance, and looks which menaced the hostility they dared not to proffer in words. They drew together in a dark line of spears, from which the white cloaks of the knights were visible among the dusky garments of their retainers, like the lighter-coloured edges of a sable cloud. The multitude, who had raised a clamorous shout of reprobation, paused and gazed in silence on the formidable and experienced body to which they had unwarily bade defiance, and shrunk back from their front.

The Earl of Essex, when he beheld them pause in their assembled force, dashed the rowels into his charger's sides, and galloped backwards and forwards to array his followers, in opposition to a band so formidable. Richard alone, as if he loved the danger his presence had provoked, rode slowly along the front of the Templars, calling aloud, "What, sirs! Among so many gallant knights, will none dare splinter a spear with Richard? — Sirs of the Temple! your ladies are but sunburned, if they are not worth the shiver of a broken lance!"

"The Brethren of the Temple," said the Grand Master, riding forward in advance of their body, "fight not on such idle and profane quarrel — and not with thee, Richard of England, shall a Templar cross lance in my presence. The Pope and Princes of Europe shall judge our quarrel, and whether a Christian Prince has done well in bucklering the cause which thou hast to-day adopted. If unassailed, we depart assailing no one. To thine honour we refer the armour and household goods of the Order which we leave behind us, and on thy conscience we lay the scandal and offence thou hast this day given to Christendom."

With these words, and without waiting a reply, the Grand Master gave the signal of departure. Their trumpets sounded a wild march of an Oriental character, which formed the usual signal for the Templars to advance. They changed their array from a line to a column of march, and moved off as slowly as their horses could step, as if to shew it was only the will of their Grand Master, and no fear of the opposing and superior force which compelled them to withdraw.

"By the splendour of Our Lady's brow!" said King Richard, "it is pity of their lives that these Templars are not so trusty as they are disciplined and valiant."

The multitude, like a timid cur which waits to bark till the object of its challenge has turned his back, raised a feeble shout as the rear of the squadron left the ground.

During the tumult which attended the retreat of the Templars, Rebecca saw and heard nothing — she was locked in the arms of her aged father, giddy, and almost senseless, with the rapid change of circumstances around her. But one word from Isaac at length recalled her scattered feelings.

"Let us go," he said, "my dear daughter, my recovered treasure — let us go to throw ourselves at the feet of the good youth."

"Not so," said Rebecca, "O no — no — no — I must not at this moment dare to speak to him — Alas! I should say more than —— No, my father, let us instantly leave this evil place."

"But, my daughter," said Isaac, "to leave him who hath come forth like a strong man with his spear and shield, holding his life as nothing, so he might redeem thy captivity; and thou, too, the daughter of a people strange unto him and his — this is service to be thankfully acknowledged."

"It is — it is — most thankfully — most devoutly acknowledged," said Rebecca — "it shall be still more so — but not now — for the sake of thy beloved Rachel, father, grant my request — not now!"

"Nay, but," said Isaac, insisting, "they will deem us more thankless than mere dogs!"

"But thou seest, my dear father, that King Richard is in presence, and that ——"

"True, my best — my wisest Rebecca! — Let us hence — let us hence! — Money he will lack, for he has just returned from Palestine, and, as they say, from prison — and pretext for exacting it, should he need any, may arise out of my simple traffic with his brother John. Away, away, let us hence!"

And hurrying his daughter in his turn, he conducted her from the lists, and by means of conveyance which he had provided, transported her safely to the house of the Rabbi Nathan.

The Jewess, whose fortunes had formed the principal interest of the day, having now retired unobserved, the attention of the populace was transferred to the Black Knight. They now filled the air with "Long life to Richard with the Lion's Heart, and down with the usurping Templars!"

"Notwithstanding all this lip-loyalty," said Ivanhoe to the Earl of Essex, "it was well the King took the precaution to bring thee with him, noble Earl, and so many of thy trusty followers."

The Earl smiled and shook his head.

"Gallant Ivanhoe," said Essex, "dost thou know our Master so well, and yet suspect him of taking so wise a precaution! I was drawing towards York, having heard that Prince John was making head there, when I met King Richard, like a true knighterrant, galloping hither to achieve in his own person this adventure of the Templar and the Jewess, with his own single arm. I accompanied him with my band, almost maugre his consent."

"And what news from York, brave Earl?" said Ivanhoe; "will the rebels bide us there?"

"No more than December's snow will bide July's sun," said the Earl; "they are dispersing; and who should come posting to bring us the news, but John himself!"

"The traitor! the ungrateful insolent traitor!" said Ivanhoe; "did not Richard order him into confinement?"

"Oh! he received him," answered the Earl, "as if they had met after a hunting party; and, pointing to me and our men-at-arms, said, 'Thou seest, brother, I have some angry men with me — thou wert best go to our mother, carry her my duteous affection, and abide with her until men's minds are pacified.'"

"And this was all he said?" inquired Ivanhoe "would not any one say that this Prince invites men to treason by his clemency?"

"Just," replied the Earl, "as the man may be said to invite death, who undertakes to fight a combat, having a dangerous wound unhealed."

"I forgive thee the jest, Lord Earl," said Ivanhoe; "but, remember, I hazarded but my own life — Richard, the welfare of his kingdom."

"Those," replied Essex, "who are specially care-

less of their own welfare, are seldom remarkably attentive to that of others—But let us haste to the castle, for Richard meditates punishing some of the subordinate members of the conspiracy, though he has pardoned their principal."

From the judicial investigations which followed on this occasion, and which are given at length in the Wardour Manuscript, it appears that Maurice de Bracy escaped beyond seas, and went into the service of Philip of France; while Philip de Malvoisin, and his brother Albert, the Preceptor of Templestowe, were executed, although Waldemar Fitzurse, the soul of the conspiracy, escaped with banishment; and Prince John, for whose behoof it was undertaken, was not even censured by his good-natured brother. No one, however, pitied the fate of the two Malvoisins, who only suffered the death which they had both well deserved, by many acts of falsehood, cruelty, and oppression.

Briefly after the judicial combat, Cedric the Saxon was summoned to the court of Richard, which, for the purpose of quieting the counties that had been disturbed by the ambition of his brother, was then held at York. Cedric tush'd and pshaw'd more than once at the message—but he refused not obedience. In fact, the return of Richard had quenched every hope that he had entertained of restoring a Saxon dynasty in England; for, whatever head the Saxons might have made in the event of a civil war, it was plain that nothing could be done under the undisputed dominion of Richard, popular as he was by his personal good qualities and military fame, although his administration was wilfully careless, now too indulgent, and now allied to despotism.

But, moreover, it could not escape even Cedric's reluctant observation, that his project for an absolute union among the Saxons, by the marriage of Rowena and Athelstane, was now completely at an end, by the mutual dissent of both parties concerned. This was, indeed, an event which, in his ardour for the Saxon cause, he could not have anticipated; and even when the disinclination of both was broadly and plainly manifested, he could scarce bring himself to believe that two Saxons of royal descent should scruple, on personal grounds, at an alliance so necessary for the public weal of the nation. But it was not the less certain: Rowena had always expressed her repugnance to Athelstane, and now Athelstane was no less plain and positive in proclaiming his resolution never to pursue his addresses to the Lady Rowena. Even the natural obstinacy of Cedric sunk beneath these obstacles, where he, remaining on the point of junction, had the task of dragging a reluctant pair up to it, one with each hand. He made, however, a last vigorous attack on Athelstane, and he found that resuscitated sprout of Saxon royalty engaged, like country squires of our own day, in a furious war with the clergy.

It seems that, after all his deadly menaces against the Abbot of Saint Edmund's, Athelstane's spirit of revenge, what between the natural indolent kindness of his own disposition, what through the prayers of his mother Edith, attached, like most ladies, (of the period,) to the clerical order, had terminated in his keeping the Abbot and his monks in the dungeons of Coningsburgh for three days on a meagre diet. For this atrocity the Abbot menaced him with excommunication, and made out a dreadful list of complaints in the bowels and stomach, suffered by himself and his monks, in consequence of the tyrannical and unjust imprisonment they had sustained. With this controversy, and with the means he had adopted to counteract this clerical persecution, Cedric found the mind of his friend Athelstane so fully occupied, that it had no room for another idea. And when Rowena's name was mentioned, the noble Athelstane prayed leave to quaff a full goblet to her health, and that she might soon be the bride of his kinsman Wilfred. It was a desperate case therefore. There was obviously no more to be made of Athelstane; or, as Wamba expressed it, in a phrase which has descended from Saxon times to ours, he was a cock that would not fight.

There remained betwixt Cedric and the determination which the lovers desired to come to, only two obstacles,—his own obstinacy, and his dislike of the Norman dynasty. The former feeling gradually gave way before the endearments of his ward, and the pride which he could not help nourishing in the fame of his son. Besides, he was not insensible to the honour of allying his own line to that of Alfred, when the superior claims of the descendant of Edward the Confessor were abandoned for ever. Cedric's aversion to the Norman race of kings was also much undermined,—first, by consideration of the impossibility of ridding England of the new dynasty, a feeling which goes far to create loyalty in the subject to the king *de facto;* and, secondly, by the personal attention of King Richard, who delighted in the blunt humour of Cedric, and, to use the language of the Wardour Manuscript, so dealt with the noble Saxon, that, ere he had been a guest at court for seven days, he had given his consent to the marriage of his ward Rowena and his son Wilfred of Ivanhoe.

The nuptials of our hero, thus formally approved by his father, were celebrated in the most august of temples, the noble Minster of York. The King himself attended, and from the countenance which he afforded on this and other occasions to the distressed and hitherto degraded Saxons, gave them a safer and more certain prospect of attaining their just rights, than they could reasonably hope from the precarious chance of a civil war. The Church gave her full solemnities, graced with all the splendour which she of Rome knows how to apply with such brilliant effect.

Gurth, gallantly apparelled, attended as esquire upon his young master whom he had served so faithfully, and the magnanimous Wamba, decorated with a new cap and a most gorgeous set of silver bells. Sharers of Wilfred's dangers and adversity, they remained, as they had a right to expect, the partakers of his more prosperous career.

But besides this domestic retinue, these distinguished nuptials were celebrated by the attendance of the high-born Normans, as well as Saxons, joined with the universal jubilee of the lower orders, that marked the marriage of two individuals as a pledge of the future peace and harmony betwixt two races, which, since that period, have been so completely mingled, that the distinction has become wholly invisible. Cedric lived to see this union approximate towards its completion; for as the two nations mixed in society and formed intermarriages with each other, the Normans abated their scorn, and the Saxons were refined from their rusticity. But

it was not until the reign of Edward the Third that the mixed language, now termed English, was spoken at the court of London, and that the hostile distinction of Norman and Saxon seems entirely to have disappeared.

It was upon the second morning after this happy bridal, that the Lady Rowena was made acquainted by her handmaid Elgitha, that a damsel desired admission to her presence, and solicited that their parley might be without witness. Rowena wondered, hesitated, became curious, and ended by commanding the damsel to be admitted, and her attendants to withdraw.

She entered — a noble and commanding figure, the long white veil, in which she was shrouded, overshadowing rather than concealing the elegance and majesty of her shape. Her demeanour was that of respect, unmingled by the least shade either of fear, or of a wish to propitiate favour. Rowena was ever ready to acknowledge the claims, and attend to the feelings of others. She arose, and would have conducted her lovely visiter to a seat; but the stranger looked at Elgitha, and again intimated a wish to discourse with the Lady Rowena alone. Elgitha had no sooner retired with unwilling steps, than, to the surprise of the Lady of Ivanhoe, her fair visitant kneeled on one knee, pressed her hands to her forehead, and bending her head to the ground, in spite of Rowena's resistance, kissed the embroidered hem of her tunic.

"What means this, lady?" said the surprised bride; "or why do you offer me a deference so unusual?"

"Because to you, Lady of Ivanhoe," said Rebecca, rising up and resuming the usual quiet dignity of her manner, "I may lawfully, and without rebuke, pay the debt of gratitude which I owe to Wilfred of Ivanhoe. I am — forgive the boldness which has offered to you the homage of my country — I am the unhappy Jewess, for whom your husband hazarded his life against such fearful odds in the tilt-yard of Templestowe."

"Damsel," said Rowena, "Wilfred of Ivanhoe on that day rendered back but in slight measure your unceasing charity towards him in his wounds and misfortunes. Speak, is there aught remains in which he or I can serve thee?"

"Nothing," said Rebecca, calmly, "unless you will transmit to him my grateful farewell."

"You leave England then?" said Rowena, scarce recovering the surprise of this extraordinary visit.

"I leave it, lady, ere this moon again changes. My father hath a brother high in favour with Mohammed Boabdil, King of Grenada — thither we go, secure of peace and protection, for the payment of such ransom as the Moslem exact from our people."

"And are you not then as well protected in England?" said Rowena. "My husband has favour with the King — the King himself is just and generous."

"Lady," said Rebecca, "I doubt it not — but the people of England are a fierce race, quarreling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is an heartless dove — Issachar an overlaboured drudge, which stoops between two burdens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours, and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during her wanderings."

"But you, maiden," said Rowena — "you surely can have nothing to fear. She who nursed the sick-bed of Ivanhoe," she continued, rising with enthusiasm — "she can have nothing to fear in England, where Saxon and Norman will contend who shall most do her honour."

"Thy speech is fair, lady," said Rebecca, "and thy purpose fairer; but it may not be — there is a gulf betwixt us. Our breeding, our faith, alike forbid either to pass over it. Farewell — yet, ere I go, indulge me one request. The bridal-veil hangs over thy face; deign to raise it, and let me see the features of which fame speaks so highly."

"They are scarce worthy of being looked upon," said Rowena; "but, expecting the same from my visitant, I remove the veil." She took it off accordingly; and, partly from the consciousness of beauty, partly from bashfulness, she blushed so intensely, that cheek, brow, neck, and bosom, were suffused with crimson. Rebecca blushed also, but it was a momentary feeling; and, mastered by higher emotions, past slowly from her features like the crimson cloud, which changes colour when the sun sinks beneath the horizon.

"Lady," she said, "the countenance you have deigned to shew me will long dwell in my remembrance. There reigns in it gentleness and goodness; and if a tinge of the world's pride or vanities may mix with an expression so lovely, how should we chide that which is of earth for bearing some colour of its original? Long, long will I remember your features, and bless God that I leave my noble deliverer united with——"

She stopped short — her eyes filled with tears. She hastily wiped them, and answered to the anxious inquiries of Rowena — "I am well, lady — well. But my heart swells when I think of Torquilstone and the lists of Templestowe. — Farewell. One, the most trifling part of my duty, remains undischarged. Accept this casket — startle not at its contents."

Rowena opened the small silver-chased casket, and perceived a carcanet, or necklace, with ear-jewels, of diamonds, which were obviously of immense value.

"It is impossible," she said, tendering back the casket. "I dare not accept a gift of such consequence."

"Yet keep it, lady," returned Rebecca. — "You have power, rank, command, influence; we have wealth, the source both of our strength and weakness; the value of these toys, ten times multiplied, would not influence half so much as your slightest wish. To you, therefore, the gift is of little value — and to me, what I part with is of much less. Let me not think you deem so wretchedly ill of my nation as your commons believe. Think ye that I prize these sparkling fragments of stone above my liberty? or that my father values them in comparison to the honour of his only child? Accept them, lady — to me they are valueless. I will never wear jewels more."

"You are then unhappy!" said Rowena, struck with the manner in which Rebecca uttered the last words. "Oh, remain with us — the counsel of holy men will wean you from your erring law, and I will be a sister to you."

"No, lady," answered Rebecca, the same calm melancholy reigning in her soft voice and beautiful features — "that may not be. I may not change the faith of my fathers like a garment unsuited to the climate in which I seek to dwell, and unhappy, lady, I will not be. He, to whom I dedicate my future life, will be my comforter, if I do His will."

"Have you then convents, to one of which you mean to retire?" asked Rowena.

"No, lady," said the Jewess; "but among our people, since the time of Abraham downwards, have been women who have devoted their thoughts to Heaven, and their actions to works of kindness to men, tending the sick, feeding the hungry, and relieving the distressed. Among these will Rebecca be numbered. Say this to thy lord, should he chance to inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved."

There was an involuntary tremor on Rebecca's voice, and a tenderness of accent, which perhaps betrayed more than she would willingly have expressed. She hastened to bid Rowena adieu.

"Farewell," she said. "May He, who made both Jew and Christian, shower down on you his choicest blessings! The bark that wafts us hence will be under weigh ere we can reach the port."

She glided from the apartment, leaving Rowena surprised as if a vision had passed before her. The fair Saxon related the singular conference to her husband, on whose mind it made a deep impression. He lived long and happily with Rowena, for they were attached to each other by the bonds of early affection, and they loved each other the more, from the recollection of the obstacles which had impeded their union. Yet it would be inquiring too curiously to ask, whether the recollection of Rebecca's beauty and magnanimity did not recur to his mind more frequently than the fair descendant of Alfred might altogether have approved.

Ivanhoe distinguished himself in the service of Richard, and was graced with farther marks of the royal favour. He might have risen still higher, but for the premature death of the heroic Cœur-de-Lion, before the Castle of Chaluz, near Limoges. With the life of a generous, but rash and romantic monarch, perished all the projects which his ambition and his generosity had formed; to whom may be applied, with a slight alteration, the lines composed by Johnson for Charles of Sweden —

> His fate was destined to a foreign strand,
> A petty fortress and an "humble" hand;
> He left the name at which the world grew pale,
> To point a moral, or adorn a TALE.

END OF IVANHOE.

NOTES

TO

Ivanhoe.

Note A, p. 474. THE RANGER OF THE FOREST, THAT CUTS THE FORECLAWS OFF OUR DOGS.

A most sensible grievance of those aggrieved times were the Forest Laws. These oppressive enactments were the produce of the Norman Conquest, for the Saxon laws of the chase were mild and humane; while those of William, enthusiastically attached to the exercise and its rights, were to the last degree tyrannical. The formation of the New Forest, bears evidence to his passion for hunting, where he reduced many a happy village to the condition of that one commemorated by my friend, Mr William Stewart Rose:

> "Amongst the ruins of the church
> The midnight raven found a perch,
> A melancholy place;
> The ruthless Conqueror cast down,
> Wo worth the deed, that little town,
> To lengthen out his chase."

The disabling dogs, which might be necessary for keeping flocks and herds, from running at the deer, was called *lawing*, and was in general use. The Charter of the Forest, designed to lessen those evils, declares that inquisition, or view, for lawing dogs, shall be made every third year, and shall be then done by the view and testimony of lawful men, not otherwise; and they whose dogs shall be then found unlawed, shall give three shillings for mercy, and for the future no man's ox shall be taken for lawing. Such lawing also shall be done by the assize commonly used, and which is, that three claws shall be cut off without the ball of the right foot. See on this subject the Historical Essay on the Magna Charta of King John, (a most beautiful volume,) by Richard Thomson.

Note B, p. 476. NEGRO SLAVES.

The severe accuracy of some critics has objected to the complexion of the slaves of Brian de Bois-Guilbert, as being totally out of costume and propriety. I remember the same objection being made to a set of sable functionaries, whom my friend, Mat Lewis, introduced as the guards and mischief-doing satellites of the wicked Baron, in his Castle Spectre. Mat treated the objection with great contempt, and averred in reply, that he made the slaves black in order to obtain a striking effect of contrast, and that, could he have derived a similar advantage from making his heroine blue, blue she should have been.

I do not pretend to plead the immunities of my order so highly as this; but neither will I allow that the author of a modern antique romance is obliged to confine himself to the introduction of those manners only which can be proved to have absolutely existed in the times he is depicting, so that he restrain himself to such as are plausible and natural, and contain no obvious anachronism. In this point of view, what can be more natural, than that the Templars, who, we know, copied closely the luxuries of the Asiatic warriors with whom they fought, should use the service of the enslaved Africans, whom the fate of war transferred to new masters? I am sure, if there are no precise proofs of their having done so, there is nothing, on the other hand, that can entitle us positively to conclude that they never did. Besides, there is an instance in romance.

John of Rampayne, an excellent juggler and minstrel, undertook to effect the escape of Audulf de Bracy, by presenting himself in disguise at the court of the king, where he was confined. For this purpose, "he stained his hair and his whole body entirely as black as jet, so that nothing was white but his teeth," and succeeded in imposing himself on the king, as an Ethiopian minstrel. He effected, by stratagem, the escape of the prisoner. Negroes, therefore, must have been known in England in the dark ages.[1]

1 Dissertation on Romance and Minstrelsy, prefixed to Ritson's Ancient Metrical Romances, p. clxxxvii.

Note C, p. 486. LANGUAGE OF THE CHASE.

There was no language which the Normans more formally separated from that of common life than the terms of the chase. The objects of their pursuit, whether bird or animal, changed their name each year, and there were a hundred conventional terms, to be ignorant of which was to be without one of the distinguishing marks of a gentleman. The reader may consult Dame Juliana Berners' book on the subject. The origin of this science was imputed to the celebrated Sir Tristrem, famous for his tragic intrigue with the beautiful Ysolte. As the Normans reserved the amusement of hunting strictly to themselves, the terms of this formal jargon were all taken from the French language.

Note D, p. 528. MINSTRELSY.

The realm of France, it is well known, was divided betwixt the Norman and Teutonic race, who spoke the language in which the word Yes is pronounced as *oui*, and the inhabitants of the southern regions, whose speech, bearing some affinity to the Italian, pronounced the same word *oc*. The poets of the former race were called *Minstrels*, and their poems *Lays*: those of the latter were termed *Troubadours*, and their compositions called *sirventes*, and other names. Richard, a professed admirer of the joyous science in all its branches, could imitate either the minstrel or troubadour. It is less likely that he should have been able to compose or sing an English ballad; yet so much do we wish to assimilate Him of the Lion Heart to the band of warriors whom he led, that the anachronism, if there be one, may readily be forgiven.

Note E, p. 539. BATTLE OF STAMFORD.

A great topographical blunder occurred here in former editions. The bloody battle alluded to in the text, fought and won by King Harold, over his brother the rebellious Tosti, and an auxiliary force of Danes or Norsemen, was said, in the text, and a corresponding note, to have taken place at Stamford in Leicestershire, and upon the river Welland. This is a mistake, into which the author has been led by trusting to his memory, and so confounding two places of the same name. The Stamford, Strangford, or Staneford, at which the battle really was fought, is a ford upon the river Derwent, at the distance of about seven miles from York, and situated in that large and opulent county. A long wooden bridge over the Derwent, the site of which, with one remaining buttress, is still shewn to the curious traveller, was furiously contested. One Norwegian long defended it by his single arm, and was at length pierced with a spear thrust through the planks of the bridge from a boat beneath.

The neighbourhood of Stamford, on the Derwent, contains some memorials of the battle. Horse-shoes, swords, and the heads of halberds, or bills, are often found there; one place is called the "Danes' well," another the "Battle flats." From a tradition that the weapon with which the Norwegian champion was slain, resembled a pear, or, as others say, that the trough or boat in which the soldier floated under the bridge to strike the blow, had such a shape, the country people usually begin a great market, which is held at Stamford, with an entertainment called the Pear-pie feast, which after all may be a corruption of the Spear-pie feast. For more particulars, Drake's History of York may be referred to. The author's mistake was pointed out to him, in the most obliging manner, by Robert Belt, Esq. of Bossal House. The battle was fought in 1066.

Note F, p. 541. THE RANGE OF IRON BARS ABOVE THAT GLOWING CHARCOAL.

This horrid species of torture may remind the reader of that to which the Spaniards subjected Guatimozin, in order to

extort a discovery of his concealed wealth. But, in fact, an instance of similar barbarity is to be found nearer home, and occurs in the annals of Queen Mary's time, containing so many other examples of atrocity. Every reader must recollect, that after the fall of the Catholic Church, and the Presbyterian Church Government had been established by law, the rank, and especially the wealth, of the Bishops, Abbots, Priors, and so forth, were no longer vested in ecclesiastics, but in lay impropriators of the church revenues, or, as the Scottish lawyers called them, *titulars* of the temporalities of the benefice, though having no claim to the spiritual character of their predecessors in office.

Of these laymen, who were thus invested with ecclesiastical revenues, some were men of high birth and rank, like the famous Lord James Stewart, the Prior of St Andrews, who did not fail to keep for their own use the rents, lands, and revenues of the church. But if, on the other hand, the titulars were men of inferior importance, who had been inducted into the office by the interest of some powerful person, it was generally understood that the new Abbot should grant for his patron's benefit such leases and conveyances of the church lands and tithes as might afford their protector the lion's share of the booty. This was the origin of those who were wittily termed Tulchan[1] Bishops, being a sort of imaginary prelate, whose image was set up to enable his patron and principal to plunder the benefice under his name.

There were other cases, however, in which men who had got grants of these secularized benefices, were desirous of retaining them for their own use, without having the influence sufficient to establish their purpose; and these became frequently unable to protect themselves, however unwilling to submit to the exactions of the feudal tyrant of the district.

Bannatyne, secretary to John Knox, recounts a singular course of oppression practised on one of those titular abbots, by the Earl of Cassilis in Ayrshire, whose extent of feudal influence was so wide that he was usually termed the King of Carrick. We give the fact as it occurs in Bannatyne's Journal, only premising that the Journalist held his master's opinions, both with respect to the Earl of Cassilis as an opposer of the king's party, and as being a detester of the practice of granting church revenues to titulars, instead of their being devoted to pious uses, such as the support of the clergy, expense of schools, and the relief of the national poor. He mingles in the narrative, therefore, a well deserved feeling of execration against the tyrant who employed the torture, with a tone of ridicule towards the patient, as if, after all, it had not been ill bestowed on such an equivocal and amphibious character as a titular abbot. He entitles his narrative,

"THE EARL OF CASSILIS' TYRANNY AGAINST A QUICK (*i. e.* LIVING) MAN.

"Master Allan Stewart, friend to Captain James Stewart of Cardonall, by means of the Queen's corrupted court, obtained the Abbey of Crossraguel. The said Earl thinking himself greater than any king in those quarters, determined to have that whole benefice (as he hath divers others) to pay at his pleasure; and because he could not find sic security as his insatiable appetite required, this shift was devised: The said Mr Allan being in company with the Laird of Bargany, (also a Kennedy,) was, by the Earl and his friends, enticed to leave the safeguard which he had with the Laird, and come to make good cheer with the said Earl. The simplicity of the imprudent man was suddenly abused; and so he passed his time with them certain days, which he did in Maybole with Thomas Kennedie, uncle to the said Earl: after which the said Mr Allan passed, with quiet company, to visit the place and bounds of Crossraguel, [his abbacy,] of which the said Earl being surely advertised, determined to put in practice the tyranny which long before he had conceived. And so, as king of the country, apprehended the said Mr Allan, and carried him to the house of Denure, where for a season he was honourably treated, (gif a prisoner can think any entertainment pleasing;) but after that certain days were spent, and that the Earl could not obtain the feus of Crossraguel according to his awin appetite, he determined to prove gif a collation could work that which neither dinner nor supper could do for a long time. And so the said Mr Allan was carried to a secret chamber: with him passed the honourable Earl, his worshipful brother, and such as were appointed to be servants at that banquet. In the chamber there was a grit iron chimlay, under it a fire; other grit provision was not seen. The first course was,—'My Lord Abbot,' (said the Earl,) 'it will please you confess here, that with your own consent you remain in my company, because ye durst not commit yourself to the hands of others.' The Abbot answered, 'Would you, my lord, that I should make a manifest lie for your pleasure? The truth is, my lord, it is against my will that I am here; neither yet have I any pleasure in your company.' 'But ye shall remain with me nevertheless, at this time,' said the Earl. 'I am not able to resist your will and pleasure,' said the Abbot, 'in this place.' 'Ye must then obey me,' said the Earl,—and with that were presented unto him certain letters to subscribe, amongst which there was a five years' tack, and a nineteen years' tack, and a charter of feu of all the lands of Crossraguel, with all the clauses necessary for the Earl to hasten him to hell. For gif adultery, sacrilege, oppression, barbarous cruelty, and theft heaped upon theft, deserve hell, the great King of Carrick can no more escape hell for ever, than the imprudent Abbot escaped the fire for a season as follows.

"After that the Earl spied repugnance, and saw that he could not come to his purpose by fair means, he commanded his cooks to prepare the banquet: and so first they flayed the sheep, that is, they took off the Abbot's cloathes even to his skin, and next they bound him to the chimney—his legs to the one end, and his arms to the other; and so they began to beet [*i. e.* feed] the fire sometimes to his buttocks, sometimes to his legs, sometimes to his shoulders and arms; and that the roast might not burn, but that it might rest in soppe, they spared not flambing with oil, (basting as a cook bastes roasted meat;) Lord, look thou to sic cruelty! And that the crying of the miserable man should not be heard, they closed his mouth that the voice might be stopped. It may be suspected that some partisan of the King's [Darnley's] murder was there. In that torment they held the poor man, till that often he cried for God's sake to despatch him; for he had as meikle gold in his awin purse as would buy powder enough to shorten his pain. The famous King of Carrick and his cooks perceiving the roast to be aneuch, commanded it to be tane fra the fire, and the Earl himself began the grace in this manner:—'*Benedicite, Jesus Maria*, you are the most obstinate man that ever I saw; gif I had known that ye had been so stubborn, I would not for a thousand crowns have handled you so; I never did so to man before you.' And yet he returned to the same practice within two days, and ceased not till that he obtained his formost purpose, that is, that he had got all his pieces subscryvit alsweill as ane half-roasted hand could do it. The Earl thinking himself sure enough so long as he had the half-roasted Abbot in his awin keeping, and yet being ashamed of his presence by reason of his former cruelty, left the place of Denure in the hands of certain of his servants, and the half-roasted Abbot to be kept there as prisoner. The Laird of Bargany, out of whose company the said Abbot had been enticed, understanding, (not the extremity,) but the retaining of the man, sent to the court, and raised letters of deliverance of the person of the man according to the order, which being disobeyed, the said Earl for his contempt was denounced rebel, and put to the horne. But yet hope was there none, neither to the afflicted to be delivered, neither yet to the purchaser [*i. e.* procurer] of the letters to obtain any comfort thereby; for in that time God was despised, and the lawful authority was contemned in Scotland, in hope of the sudden return and regiment of that cruel murderer of her awin husband, of whose lords the said Earl was called one; and yet, oftener than once, he was solemnly sworn to the King and to his Regent."

The Journalist then recites the complaint of the injured Allan Stewart, Commendator of Crossraguel, to the Regent and Privy Council, averring his having been carried, partly by flattery, partly by force, to the black vault of Denure, a strong fortalice, built on a rock overhanging the Irish channel, where its ruins are still visible. Here he stated he had been required to execute leases and conveyances of the whole churches and parsonages belonging to the Abbey of Crossraguel, which he utterly refused as an unreasonable demand, and the more so that he had already conveyed them to John Stewart of Cardonall, by whose interest he had been made Commendator. The complainant proceeds to state, that he was, after many menaces, stript, bound, and his limbs exposed to fire in the manner already described, till, compelled by excess of agony, he subscribed the charter and leases presented to him, of the contents of which he was totally ignorant. A few days afterwards, being again required to execute a ratification of these deeds before a notary and witnesses, and refusing to do so, he was once more subjected to the same torture, until his agony was so excessive that he exclaimed, "Fye on you, why do you not strike your whingers into me, or blow me up with a barrel of powder, rather than torture me thus unmercifully?" upon which the Earl commanded Alexander Richard, one of his attendants, to stop the patient's mouth with a napkin, which was done accordingly. Thus he was once more compelled to submit to their tyranny. The petition concluded with stating, that the Earl, under pretence of the deeds thus iniquitously obtained, had taken possession of the whole place and living of Crossraguel, and enjoyed the profits thereof for three years.

The doom of the Regent and Council shews singularly the total interruption of justice at this calamitous period, even in the most clamant cases of oppression. The Council declined interference with the course of the ordinary justice of the county, (which was completely under the said Earl of Cassilis' control,) and only enacted, that he should forbear molestation of the unfortunate Commendator, under the surety of two thousand pounds Scots. The Earl was appointed also to keep the peace towards the celebrated George Buchanan, who had a pension out of the same Abbacy, to a similar extent, and under the like penalty.

1 A *Tulchan* is a calf's skin stuffed, and placed before a cow who has lost its calf, to induce the animal to part with her milk. The resemblance between such a Tulchan and a Bishop named to transmit the temporalities of a benefice to some powerful patron, is easily understood.

The consequences are thus described by the Journalist already quoted.

"The said Laird of Bargany perceiving that the ordinar justice could neither help the oppressed, nor yet the afflicted, applied his mind to the next remedy, and in the end, by his servants, took the house of Denure, where the poor Abbot was kept prisoner. The bruit flew fra Carrick to Galloway, and so suddenly assembled herd and hyre-man that pertained to the band of the Kennedies; and so within a few hours was the house of Denure environed again. The master of Cassilis was the frackast [*i. e.* the readiest or boldest] and would not stay, but in his heat would lay fire to the dungeon, with no small boasting that all enemies within the house should die.

"He was required and admonished by those that were within to be more moderate, and not to hazard himself so foolishly. But no admonition would help, till that the wind of an hacquebute blasted his shoulder, and then ceased he from further pursuit in fury. The Laird of Bargany had before purchest [obtained] of the authorities, letters, charging all faithfull subjects to the King's Majesty, to assist him against that cruel tyrant and mansworn traitor, the Earl of Cassilis; which letters, with his private writings, he published, and shortly found sic concurrence of Kyle and Cunynghame with his other friends, that the Carrick company drew back fra the house: and so the other approached, furnished the house with more men, delivered the said Mr Allan, and carried him to Ayr, where, publicly at the market cross of the said town, he declared how cruelly he was entreated, and how the murdered King suffered not sic torment as he did, excepting only he escaped the death; and, therefore, publicly did revoke all things that were done in that extremity, and especially he revoked the subscription of the three writings, to wit, of a fyve yeir tack and nineteen year tack, and of a charter of feu. And so the house remained, and remains (till this day, the 7th of February, 1571,) in the custody of the said Laird of Bargany and of his servants. And so cruelty was disappointed of proffeit present, and shall be eternallie punished, unless he earnestly repent. And this far for the cruelty committed, to give occasion unto others, and to such as hate the monstrous dealing of degenerate nobility, to look more diligently upon their behaviours, and to paint them forth unto the world, that they themselves may be ashamed of their own beastliness, and that the world may be advertised and admonished to abhor, detest, and avoid the company of all sic tyrants, who are not worthy of the society of men, but ought to be sent suddenly to the devil, with whom they must burn without end, for their contempt of God, and cruelty committed against his creatures. Let Cassilis and his brother be the first to be the example unto others. Amen. Amen."[1]

This extract has been somewhat amended or modernized in orthography, to render it more intelligible to the general reader. I have to add, that the Kennedies of Bargany, who interfered in behalf of the oppressed Abbot, were themselves a younger branch of the Cassilis family, but held different politics, and were powerful enough in this, and other instances, to bid them defiance.

The ultimate issue of this affair does not appear; but as the house of Cassilis are still in possession of the greater part of the feus and leases which belonged to Crossraguel Abbey, it is probable the talons of the King of Carrick were strong enough, in those disorderly times, to retain the prey which they had so mercilessly fixed upon.

I may also add, that it appears by some papers in my possession, that the officers or Country Keepers on the border, were accustomed to torment their prisoners by binding them to the iron bars of their chimneys, to extort confession.

Note G, p. 567. "Something resembling a bar of iron, and a padlock painted blue on the black shield."

The author has been here upbraided with false heraldry, in having charged metal upon metal. It should be remembered, however, that heraldry had only its first rude origin during the crusades, and that all the minutiæ of the fantastic science were the work of time, and introduced at a much later period. Those who think otherwise must suppose that the Goddess of *Armoirers*, like the Goddess of Arms, sprung into the world completely equipped in all the gaudy trappings of the department she presides over.

Additional Note.

In corroboration of what is above stated, it may be observed, that the arms, which were assumed by Godfrey of Boulogne himself, after the conquest of Jerusalem, was a cross counter patent cantoned with four little crosses or, upon a field azure, displaying thus metal upon metal. The heralds have tried to explain this undeniable fact in different modes—but Ferne gallantly contends, that a prince of Godfrey's qualities should not be bound by the ordinary rules. The Scottish Nisbet, and the same Ferne, insist that the chiefs of the Crusade must have assigned to Godfrey this extraordinary and unwonted coat-of-arms, in order to induce those who should behold them to make inquiries; and hence give them the name of *arma inquirenda*. But with reverence to these grave authorities, it seems unlikely that the assembled princes of Europe should have adjudged to Godfrey a coat armorial so much contrary to the general rule, if such rule had then existed; at any rate it proves that metal upon metal, now accounted a solecism in heraldry, was admitted in other cases similar to that in the text. See Ferne's *Blazon of Gentrie*, p. 238. Edition 1586. Nisbet's *Heraldry*, vol. i. p. 113. Second edition.

[1] Bannatyne's Journal.

Note H, p. 578. Ulrica's Death Song.

It will readily occur to the antiquary, that these verses are intended to imitate the antique poetry of the Scalds—the minstrels of the old Scandinavians—the race, as the Laureate so happily terms them,

> "Stern to inflict, and stubborn to endure,
> Who smiled in death."

The poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, after their civilization and conversion, was of a different and softer character; but in the circumstances of Ulrica, she may be not unnaturally supposed to return to the wild strains which animated her forefathers during the time of Paganism and untamed ferocity.

Note I, p. 582. Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

The interchange of a cuff with the jolly priest is not entirely out of character with Richard I., if romances read him aright. In the very curious romance on the subject of his adventures in the Holy Land, and his return from thence, it is recorded how he exchanged a pugilistic favour of this nature, while a prisoner in Germany. His opponent was the son of his principal warder, and was so imprudent as to give the challenge to this barter of buffets. The King stood forth like a true man, and received a blow which staggered him. In requital, having previously waxed his hand, a practice unknown, I believe, to the gentlemen of the modern fancy, he returned the box on the ear with such interest as to kill his antagonist on the spot.—*See, in Ellis's Specimens of English Romance, that of Cœur-de-Lion.*

Note K, p. 586. Hedge-Priests.

It is curious to observe, that in every state of society, some sort of ghostly consolation is provided for the members of the community, though assembled for purposes diametrically opposite to religion. A gang of beggars have their Patrico, and the banditti of the Apennines have among them persons acting as monks and priests, by whom they are confessed, and who perform mass before them. Unquestionably, such reverend persons, in such a society, must accommodate their manners and their morals to the community in which they live; and if they can occasionally obtain a degree of reverence for their supposed spiritual gifts, are, on most occasions, loaded with unmerciful ridicule, as possessing a character inconsistent with all around them.

Hence the fighting parson in the old play of Sir John Oldcastle, and the famous friar of Robin Hood's band. Nor were such characters ideal. There exists a monition of the Bishop of Durham against irregular churchmen of this class, who associated themselves with Border robbers, and desecrated the holiest offices of the priestly function, by celebrating them for the benefit of thieves, robbers, and murderers, amongst ruins and in caverns of the earth, without regard to canonical form, and with torn and dirty attire, and maimed rites, altogether improper for the occasion.

Note L, p. 618. Castle of Coningsburgh.

When I last saw this interesting ruin of ancient days, one of the very few remaining examples of Saxon fortification, I was strongly impressed with the desire of tracing out a sort of theory on the subject, which, from some recent acquaintance with the architecture of the ancient Scandinavians, seemed to me peculiarly interesting. I was, however, obliged by circumstances to proceed on my journey, without leisure to take more than a transient view of Coningsburgh. Yet the idea dwells so strongly in my mind, that I feel considerably tempted to write a page or two in detailing at least the outline of my hypothesis, leaving better antiquaries to correct or refute conclusions which are perhaps too hastily drawn.

Those who have visited the Zetland Islands, are familiar with the description of castles called by the inhabitants Burghs; and by the Highlanders—for they are also to be found both in the Western Isles and on the mainland—Duns. Pennant has engraved a view of the famous Dun-Dornadilla in Glenelg; and there are many others, all of them built after a peculiar mode of architecture, which argues a people in the most primitive state of society. The most perfect specimen is that upon the island of Mousa, near to the mainland of Zetland, which is probably in the same state as when inhabited.

It is a single round tower, the wall curving in slightly, and then turning outward again in the form of a dice-box, so that the defenders on the top might the better protect the base. It is formed of rough stones, selected with care, and laid in courses or circles, with much compactness, but without cement of any kind. The tower has never, to appearance, had roofing of any sort; a fire was made in the centre of the space which it encloses, and originally the building was probably little more than

a wall drawn as a sort of screen around the great council fire of the tribe. But, although the means or ingenuity of the builders did not extend so far as to provide a roof, they supplied the want by constructing apartments in the interior of the walls of the tower itself. The circumvallation formed a double enclosure, the inner side of which was, in fact, two feet or three feet distant from the other, and connected by a concentric range of long flat stones, thus forming a series of concentric rings or stories of various heights, rising to the top of the tower. Each of these stories or galleries has four windows, facing directly to the points of the compass, and rising of course regularly above each other. These four perpendicular ranges of windows admitted air, and, the fire being kindled, heat, or smoke at least, to each of the galleries. The access from gallery to gallery is equally primitive. A path, on the principle of an inclined plane, turns round and round the building like a screw, and gives access to the different stories, intersecting each of them in its turn, and thus gradually rising to the top of the wall of the tower. On the outside there are no windows; and I may add, that an enclosure of a square, or sometimes a round form, gave the inhabitants of the Burgh an opportunity to secure any sheep or cattle which they might possess

Such is the general architecture of that very early period when the Northmen swept the seas, and brought to their rude houses, such as I have described them, the plunder of polished nations. In Zetland there are several scores of these Burghs, occupying in every case, capes, headlands, islets, and similar places of advantage singularly well chosen. I remember the remains of one upon an island in a small lake near Lerwick, which at high tide communicates with the sea, the access to which is very ingenious, by means of a causeway or dike, about three or four inches under the surface of the water. This causeway makes a sharp angle in its approach to the Burgh. The inhabitants, doubtless, were well acquainted with this, but strangers, who might approach in a hostile manner, and were ignorant of the curve of the causeway, would probably plunge into the lake, which is six or seven feet in depth at the least. This must have been the device of some Vauban or Cohorn of those early times.

The style of these buildings evinces that the architect possessed neither the art of using lime or cement of any kind, nor the skill to throw an arch, construct a roof, or erect a stair; and yet, with all this ignorance, shewed great ingenuity in selecting the situation of Burghs, and regulating the access to them, as well as neatness and regularity in the erection, since the buildings themselves shew a style of advance in the arts scarcely consistent with the ignorance of so many of the principal branches of architectural knowledge.

I have always thought, that one of the most curious and valuable objects of antiquaries has been to trace the progress of society, by the efforts made in early ages to improve the rudeness of their first expedients, until they either approach excellence, or, as is most frequently the case, are supplied by new and fundamental discoveries, which supersede both the earlier and ruder system, and the improvements which have been ingrafted upon it. For example, if we conceive the recent discovery of gas to be so much improved and adapted to domestic use, as to supersede all other modes of producing domestic light; we can already suppose, some centuries afterwards, the heads of a whole Society of Antiquaries half turned by the discovery of a pair of patent snuffers, and by the learned theories which would be brought forward to account for the form and purpose of so singular an implement.

Following some such principle, I am inclined to regard the singular Castle of Coningsburgh — I mean the Saxon part of it — as a step in advance from the rude architecture, if it deserves the name, which must have been common to the Saxons as to other Northmen. The builders had attained the art of using cement, and of roofing a building, — great improvements on the original Burgh But in the round keep, a shape only seen in the most ancient castles — the chambers excavated in the thickness of the walls and buttresses — the difficulty by which access is gained from one story to those above it, Coningsburgh still retains the simplicity of its origin, and shews by what slow degrees man proceeded from occupying such rude and inconvenient lodgings, as were afforded by the galleries of the Castle of Mousa, to the more splendid accommodations of the Norman castles, with all their stern and Gothic graces.

I am ignorant if these remarks are new, or if they will be confirmed by closer examination; but I think, that, on a hasty observation, Coningsburgh offers means of curious study to those who may wish to trace the history of architecture back to the times preceding the Norman Conquest.

It would be highly desirable that a cork model should be taken of the Castle of Mousa, as it cannot be well understood by a plan.

The Castle of Coningsburgh is thus described :—

" The castle is large, the outer walls standing on a pleasant ascent from the river, but much overtopt by a high hill, on which the town stands, situated at the head of a rich and magnificent vale, formed by an amphitheatre of woody hills, in which flows the gentle Don. Near the castle is a barrow, said to be Hengist's tomb. The entrance is flanked to the left by a round tower, with a sloping base, and there are several similar in the outer wall; the entrance has piers of a gate, and on the east side the ditch and bank are double and very steep. On the top of the churchyard wall is a tombstone, on which are cut in high relief, two ravens, or such like birds. On the south side of the churchyard lies an ancient stone, ridged like a coffin on which is carved a man on horseback; and another man with a shield encountering a vast winged serpent, and a man bearing a shield behind him. It was probably one of the rude crosses not uncommon in churchyards in this county. See it engraved on the plate of crosses for this volume, plate 14, fig. 1. The name of Coningsburgh, by which this castle goes in the old editions of the *Britannia*, would lead one to suppose it the residence of the Saxon kings. It afterwards belonged to King Harold. The Conqueror bestowed it on William de Warren, with all its privileges and jurisdiction, which are said to have extended over twenty-eight towns. At the corner of the area, which is of an irregular form, stands the great tower, or keep, placed on a small hill of its own dimensions, on which lie six vast projecting buttresses, ascending in a steep direction to prop and support the building, and continued upwards up the side as turrets. The tower within forms a complete circle, twenty-one feet in diameter, the walls fourteen feet thick. The ascent into the tower is by an exceeding deep flight of steep steps, four feet and a half wide, on the south side leading to a low doorway, over which is a circular arch crossed by a great transom stone Within this door is the staircase, which ascends straight through the thickness of the wall, not communicating with the room on the first floor, in whose centre is the opening to the dungeon. Neither of these lower rooms is lighted except from a hole in the floor of the third story; the room in which, as well as in that above it, is finished with compact smooth stonework, both having chimney-pieces, with an arch resting on triple-clustered pillars. In the third story, or guard-chamber, is a small recess with a loop-hole, probably a bedchamber, and in that floor above a niche for a saint or holy-water pot. Mr King imagines this a Saxon castle of the first ages of the Heptarchy. Mr Watson thus describes it : — From the first floor to the second story, (third from the ground,) is a way by a stair in the wall five feet wide. The next staircase is approached by a ladder, and ends at the fourth story from the ground. Two yards from the door, at the head of this stair, is an opening nearly east, accessible by treading on the ledge of the wall, which diminishes eight inches each story; and this last opening leads into a room or chapel ten feet by twelve, and fifteen or sixteen high, arched with freestone, and supported by small circular columns of the same, the capitals and arches Saxon. It has an east window, and on each side in the wall, about four feet from the ground, a stone basin, with a hole and iron pipe to convey the water into or through the wall. This chapel is one of the buttresses, but no sign of it without, for even the window, though large within, is only a long narrow loop-hole, scarcely to be seen without. On the left side of this chapel is a small oratory, eight by six in the thickness of the wall, with a niche in the wall, and enlightened by a like loop-hole. The fourth stair from the ground, ten feet west from the chapel door, leads to the top of the tower through the thickness of the wall, which at top is but three yards. Each story is about fifteen feet high, so that the tower will be seventy-five feet from the ground. The inside forms a circle, whose diameter may be about twelve feet. The well at the bottom of the dungeon is piled with stones." — GOUGH'S *Edition of Camden' Britannia*. Second Edition, vol. iii. p. 267.

THE

MONASTERY.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

With all his Illustrations and Notes.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK.

MDCCCLIX.

The Monastery.

INTRODUCTION—(1830.)

It would be difficult to assign any good reason why the author of Ivanhoe, after using, in that work, all the art he possessed to remove the personages, action, and manners of the tale, to a distance from his own country, should choose for the scene of his next attempt the celebrated ruins of Melrose, in the immediate neighbourhood of his own residence. But the reason, or caprice, which dictated his change of system, has entirely escaped his recollection, nor is it worth while to attempt recalling what must be a matter of very little consequence.

The general plan of the story was, to conjoin two characters in that bustling and contentious age, who, thrown into situations which gave them different views on the subject of the Reformation, should, with the same sincerity and purity of intention, dedicate themselves, the one to the support of the sinking fabric of the Catholic Church, the other to the establishment of the Reformed doctrines. It was supposed that some interesting subjects for narrative might be derived from opposing two such enthusiasts to each other in the path of life, and contrasting the real worth of both with their passions and prejudices. The localities of Melrose suited well the scenery of the proposed story; the ruins themselves form a splendid theatre for any tragic incident which might be brought forward; joined to the vicinity of the fine river, with all its tributary streams, flowing through a country which has been the scene of so much fierce fighting, and is rich with so many recollections of former times, and lying almost under the immediate eye of the author, by whom they were to be used in composition.

The situation possessed farther recommendations. On the opposite bank of the Tweed might be seen the remains of ancient enclosures, surrounded by sycamores and ash-trees of considerable size. These had once formed the crofts or arable ground of a village, now reduced to a single hut, the abode of a fisherman, who also manages a ferry. The cottages, even the church which once existed there, have sunk into vestiges hardly to be traced without visiting the spot, the inhabitants having gradually withdrawn to the more prosperous town of Galashiels, which has risen into consideration, within two miles of their neighbourhood. Superstitious eld, however, has tenanted the deserted groves with aerial beings, to supply the want of the mortal tenants who have deserted it. The ruined and abandoned churchyard of Boldside has been long believed to be haunted by the Fairies, and the deep broad current of the Tweed, wheeling in moonlight round the foot of the steep bank, with the number of trees originally planted for shelter round the fields of the cottagers, but now presenting the effect of scattered and detached groves, fill up the idea which one would form in imagination for a scene that Oberon and Queen Mab might love to revel in. There are evenings when the spectator might believe, with Father Chaucer, that the

> —— "Queen of Faery,
> With harp, and pipe, and symphony,
> Were dwelling in the place."

Another, and even a more familiar refuge of the elfin race, (if tradition is to be trusted,) is the glen of the river, or rather brook, named the Allen, which falls into the Tweed from the northward, about a quarter of a mile above the present bridge. As the streamlet finds its way behind Lord Somerville's hunting-seat, called the Pavilion, its valley has been popularly termed the Fairy Dean, or rather the Nameless Dean, because of the supposed ill luck attached by the popular faith of ancient times, to any one who might name or allude to the race, whom our fathers distinguished as the Good Neighbours, and the Highlanders called Daoine Shie, or Men of Peace; rather by way of compliment, than on account of any particular idea of friendship or pacific relation which either Highlander or Borderer entertained towards the irritable beings whom they thus distinguished, or supposed them to bear to humanity.[1]

[1] See Rob Roy, Note G. *Fairy Superstition.*

In evidence of the actual operations of the fairy people even at this time, little pieces of calcareous matter are found in the glen after a flood, which either the labours of those tiny artists, or the eddies of the brook among the stones, have formed into a fantastic resemblance of cups, saucers, basins, and the like, in which children who gather them pretend to discern fairy utensils.

Besides these circumstances of romantic locality, *mea paupera regna* (as Captain Dalgetty denominates his territory of Drumthwacket) are bounded by a small but deep lake, from which eyes that yet look on the light are said to have seen the water-bull ascend, and shake the hills with his roar.

Indeed, the country around Melrose, if possessing less of romantic beauty than some other scenes in Scotland, is connected with so many associations of a fanciful nature, in which the imagination takes delight, as might well induce one even less attached to the spot than the author, to accommodate, after a general manner, the imaginary scenes he was framing to the localities to which he was partial. But it would be a misapprehension to suppose, that, because Melrose may in general pass for Kennaquhair, or because it agrees with scenes of the Monastery in the circumstances of the drawbridge, the mill-dam, and other points of resemblance, that therefore an accurate or perfect local similitude is to be found in all the particulars of the picture. It was not the purpose of the author to present a landscape copied from nature, but a piece of composition, in which a real scene, with which he is familiar, had afforded him some leading outlines. Thus the resemblance of the imaginary Glendearg with the real vale of the Allen, is far from being minute, nor did the author aim at identifying them. This must appear plain to all who know the actual character of the Glen of Allen, and have taken the trouble to read the account of the imaginary Glendearg. The stream in the latter case is described as wandering down a romantic little valley, shifting itself, after the fashion of such a brook, from one side to the other, as it can most easily find its passage, and touching nothing in its progress that gives token of cultivation. It rises near a solitary tower, the abode of a supposed church vassal, and the scene of several incidents in the Romance.

The real Allen, on the contrary, after traversing the romantic ravine called the Nameless Dean, thrown off from side to side alternately, like a billiard ball repelled by the sides of the table on which it has been played, and in that part of its course resembling the stream which pours down Glendearg, may be traced upwards into a more open country, where the banks retreat farther from each other, and the vale exhibits a good deal of dry ground, which has not been neglected by the active cultivators of the district. It arrives, too, at a sort of termination, striking in itself, but totally irreconcilable with the narrative of the Romance. Instead of a single peel-house, or border tower of defence, such as Dame Glendinning is supposed to have inhabited, the head of the Allen, about five miles above its junction with the Tweed, shews three ruins of Border houses, belonging to different proprietors, and each, from the desire of mutual support so natural to troublesome times, situated at the extremity of the property of which it is the principal messuage. One of these is the ruinous mansion-house of Hillslap, formerly the property of the Cairncrosses, and now of Mr Innes of Stow; a second the tower of Colmslie, an ancient inheritance of the Borthwick family, as is testified by their crest, the Goat's Head, which exists on the ruin; a third, the house of Langshaw, also ruinous, but near which the proprietor, Mr Baillie of Jerviswood and Mellerstain, has built a small shooting box.

All these ruins, so strangely huddled together in a very solitary spot, have recollections and traditions of their own, but none of them bear the most distant resemblance to the descriptions in the Romance of the Monastery; and as the author could hardly have erred so grossly regarding a spot within a morning's ride of his own house, the inference is, that no resemblance was intended. Hillslap is remembered by the humours of the last inhabitants, two or three elderly ladies, of the class of Miss Raylands, in the Old Manor House, though less important by birth and fortune. Colmslie is commemorated in song:—

> Colmslie stands on Colmslie hill,
> The water it flows round Colmslie mill;
> The mill and the kiln gang bonnily,
> And it 's up with the whippers of Colmslie!

Langshaw, although larger than the other mansions assembled at the head of the supposed Glendearg, has nothing about it more remarkable than the inscription of the present proprietor over his shooting lodge—*Utinam hanc etiam viris impleam amicis*—a modest wish, which I know no one more capable of attaining upon an extended scale, than the gentleman who has expressed it upon a limited one.

Having thus shewn that I could say something of these desolated towers, which the desire of social intercourse, or the facility of mutual defence, had drawn together at the head of this Glen, I need not add any farther reason to shew, that there is no resemblance between them and the solitary habitation of Dame Elspeth Glendinning. Beyond these dwellings are some remains of natural wood, and a considerable portion of morass and bog; but I would not advise any who may be curious in localities, to spend time in looking for the fountain and holly-tree of the White Lady.

While I am on the subject I may add, that Captain Clutterbuck, the imaginary editor of the Monastery, has no real prototype in the village of Melrose or neighbourhood, that ever I saw or heard of. To give some individuality to this personage, he is described as a character which sometimes

occurs in actual society — a person who, having spent his life within the necessary duties of a technical profession, from which he has been at length emancipated, finds himself without any occupation whatever, and is apt to become the prey of ennui, until he discerns some petty subject of investigation commensurate to his talents, the study of which gives him employment in solitude; while the conscious possession of information peculiar to himself, adds to his consequence in society. I have often observed, that the lighter and trivial branches of antiquarian study are singularly useful in relieving vacuity of such a kind, and have known them serve many a Captain Clutterbuck to retreat upon; I was therefore a good deal surprised, when I found the antiquarian Captain identified with a neighbour and friend of my own, who could never have been confounded with him by any one who had read the book, and seen the party alluded to. This erroneous identification occurs in a work entitled, "Illustrations of the Author of Waverley, being Notices and Anecdotes of real Characters, Scenes, and Incidents, supposed to be described in his works, by Robert Chambers." This work was, of course, liable to many errors, as any one of the kind must be, whatever may be the ingenuity of the author, which takes the task of explaining what can be only known to another person. Mistakes of place or inanimate things referred to, are of very little moment; but the ingenious author ought to have been more cautious of attaching real names to fictitious characters. I think it is in the Spectator we read of a rustic wag, who, in a copy of "The Whole Duty of Man," wrote opposite to every vice the name of some individual in the neighbourhood, and thus converted that excellent work into a libel on a whole parish.

The scenery being thus ready at the author's hand, the reminiscences of the country were equally favourable. In a land where the horses remained almost constantly saddled, and the sword seldom quitted the warrior's side — where war was the natural and constant state of the inhabitants, and peace only existed in the shape of brief and feverish truces — there could be no want of the means to complicate and extricate the incidents of his narrative at pleasure. There was a disadvantage, notwithstanding, in treading this Border district, for it had been already ransacked by the author himself, as well as others; and unless presented under a new light, was likely to afford ground to the objection of *Crambe bis cocta*.

To attain the indispensable quality of novelty, something, it was thought, might be gained by contrasting the character of the vassals of the church with those of the dependants of the lay barons, by whom they were surrounded. But much advantage could not be derived from this. There were, indeed, differences betwixt the two classes, but, like tribes in the mineral and vegetable world, which, resembling each other to common eyes, can be sufficiently well discriminated by naturalists, they were yet too similar, upon the whole, to be placed in marked contrast with each other.

Machinery remained — the introduction of the supernatural and marvellous; the resort of distressed authors since the days of Horace, but whose privileges as a sanctuary have been disputed in the present age, and well-nigh exploded. The popular belief no longer allows the possibility of existence to the race of mysterious beings which hovered betwixt this world and that which is invisible. The fairies have abandoned their moonlight turf; the witch no longer holds her black orgies in the hemlock dell; and

> "Even the last lingering phantom of the brain,
> The churchyard ghost, is now at rest again."

From the discredit attached to the vulgar and more common modes in which the Scottish superstition displays itself, the author was induced to have recourse to the beautiful, though almost forgotten, theory of astral spirits, or creatures of the elements, surpassing human beings in knowledge and power, but inferior to them, as being subject, after a certain space of years, to a death which is to them annihilation, as they have no share in the promise made to the sons of Adam. These spirits are supposed to be of four distinct kinds, as the elements from which they have their origin, and are known, to those who have studied the cabalistical philosophy, by the names of Sylphs, Gnomes, Salamanders, and Naiads, as they belong to the elements of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water. The general reader will find an entertaining account of these elementary spirits in the French book, entitled, "Entretiens de Compte du Gabalis." The ingenious Compte de la Motte Fouqué composed, in German, one of the most successful productions of his fertile brain, where a beautiful and even afflicting effect is produced by the introduction of a water-nymph, who loses the privilege of immortality, by consenting to become accessible to human feelings, and uniting her lot with that of a mortal, who treats her with ingratitude.

In imitation of an example so successful, the White Lady of Avenel was introduced into the following sheets. She is represented as connected with the family of Avenel by one of those mystic ties, which, in ancient times, were supposed to exist, in certain circumstances, between the creatures of the elements and the children of men. Such instances of mysterious union are recognized in Ireland, in the real Milesian families, who are possessed of a Banshie; and they are known among the traditions of the Highlands, which, in many cases, attached an immortal being or spirit to the service of particular families or tribes. These demons, if they are to be called so, announced good or evil fortune to the families connected with them; and though some only condescended to meddle with matters of importance, others, like the

May Mollach, or Maid of the Hairy Arms, condescended to mingle in ordinary sports, and even to direct the Chief how to play at draughts.

There was, therefore, no great violence in supposing such a being as this to have existed, while the elementary spirits were believed in; but it was more difficult to describe or imagine its attributes and principles of action. Shakspeare, the first of authorities in such a case, has painted Ariel, that beautiful creature of his fancy, as only approaching so near to humanity as to know the nature of that sympathy which the creatures of clay felt for each other, as we learn from the expression—"Mine would, if I were human." The inferences from this are singular, but seem capable of regular deduction. A being, however superior to man in length of life—in power over the elements—in certain perceptions respecting the present, the past, and the future, yet still incapable of human passions, of sentiments of moral good and evil, of meriting future rewards or punishments, belongs rather to the class of animals, than of human creatures, and must therefore be presumed to act more from temporary benevolence or caprice, than from any thing approaching to feeling or reasoning. Such a being's superiority in power can only be compared to that of the elephant or lion, who are greater in strength than man, though inferior in the scale of creation. The partialities which we suppose such spirits to entertain must be like those of the dog; their sudden starts of passion, or the indulgence of a frolic, or mischief, may be compared to those of the numerous varieties of the cat. All these propensities are, however, controlled by the laws which render the elementary race subordinate to the command of man—liable to be subjected by his science, (so the sect of Gnostics believed, and on this turned the Rosicrucian philosophy,) or to be overpowered by his superior courage and daring, when it set their illusions at defiance.

It is with reference to this idea of the supposed spirits of the elements, that the White Lady of Avenel is represented as acting a varying, capricious, and inconsistent part in the pages assigned to her in the narrative; manifesting interest and attachment to the family with whom her destinies are associated, but evincing whim, and even a species of malevolence, towards other mortals, as the Sacristan and the Border robber, whose incorrect life subjected them to receive petty mortifications at her hand. The White Lady is scarcely supposed, however, to have possessed either the power or the inclination to do more than inflict terror or create embarrassment, and is always subjected by those mortals, who, by virtuous resolution, and mental energy, could assert superiority over her. In these particulars she seems to constitute a being of a middle class, between the *esprit follet* who places its pleasure in misleading and tormenting mortals, and the benevolent Fairy of the East, who uniformly guides, aids, and supports them.

Either, however, the author executed his purpose indifferently, or the public did not approve of it; for the White Lady of Avenel was far from being popular. He does not now make the present statement, in the view of arguing readers into a more favourable opinion on the subject, but merely with the purpose of exculpating himself from the charge of having wantonly intruded into the narrative a being of inconsistent powers and propensities.

In the delineation of another character, the author of the Monastery failed, where he hoped for some success. As nothing is so successful a subject of ridicule as the fashionable follies of the time, it occurred to him that the more serious scenes of his narrative might be relieved by the humour of a cavaliero of the age of Queen Elizabeth. In every period, the attempt to gain and maintain the highest rank of society, has depended on the power of assuming and supporting a certain fashionable kind of affectation, usually connected with some vivacity of talent and energy of character, but distinguished at the same time by a transcendent flight, beyond sound reason and common sense; both faculties too vulgar to be admitted into the estimate of one who claims to be esteemed "a choice spirit of the age." These, in their different phases, constitute the gallants of the day, whose boast it is to drive the whims of fashion to extremity.

On all occasions, the manners of the sovereign, the court, and the time, must give the tone to the peculiar description of qualities by which those who would attain the height of fashion must seek to distinguish themselves. The reign of Elizabeth, being that of a maiden queen, was distinguished by the decorum of the courtiers, and especially the affectation of the deepest deference to the sovereign. After the acknowledgment of the Queen's matchless perfections, the same devotion was extended to beauty as it existed among the lesser stars in her court, who sparkled, as it was the mode to say, by her reflected lustre. It is true, that gallant knights no longer vowed to Heaven, the peacock, and the ladies, to perform some feat of extravagant chivalry, in which they endangered the lives of others as well as their own; but although their chivalrous displays of personal gallantry seldom went farther in Elizabeth's days than the tilt-yard, where barricades, called barriers, prevented the shock of the horses, and limited the display of the cavaliers' skill to the comparatively safe encounter of their lances, the language of the lovers to their ladies was still in the exalted terms which Amadis would have addressed to Oriana, before encountering a dragon for her sake. This tone of romantic gallantry found a clever but conceited author, to reduce it to a species of constitution and form, and lay down the courtly manner of conversation,

in a pedantic book, called Euphues and his England. Of this, a brief account is given in the text, to which it may now be proper to make some additions.

The extravagance of Euphuism, or a symbolical jargon of the same class, predominates in the romances of Calprenade and Scuderi, which were read for the amusement of the fair sex of France during the long reign of Louis XIV., and were supposed to contain the only legitimate language of love and gallantry. In this reign they encountered the satire of Molière and Boileau. A similar disorder, spreading into private society, formed the ground of the affected dialogue of the *Précieuses*, as they were styled, who formed the coterie of the Hotel de Rambouillet, and afforded Molière matter for his admirable comedy, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. In England, the humour does not seem to have long survived the accession of James I.

The author had the vanity to think that a character, whose peculiarities should turn on extravagances which were once universally fashionable, might be read in a fictitious story with a good chance of affording amusement to the existing generation, who, fond as they are of looking back on the actions and manners of their ancestors, might be also supposed to be sensible of their absurdities. He must fairly acknowledge that he was disappointed, and that the Euphuist, far from being accounted a well drawn and humorous character of the period, was condemned as unnatural and absurd.

It would be easy to account for this failure, by supposing the defect to arise from the author's want of skill, and, probably, many readers may not be inclined to look farther. But, as the author himself can scarcely be supposed willing to acquiesce in this final cause, if any other can be alleged, he has been led to suspect, that, contrary to what he originally supposed, his subject was injudiciously chosen, in which, and not in his mode of treating it, lay the source of the want of success.

The manners of a rude people are always founded on nature, and therefore the feelings of a more polished generation immediately sympathize with them. We need no numerous notes, no antiquarian dissertations, to enable the most ignorant to recognize the sentiments and diction of the characters of Homer; we have but, as Lear says, to strip off our lendings — to set aside the factitious principles and adornments which we have received from our comparatively artificial system of society, and our natural feelings are in unison with those of the bard of Chios and the heroes who live in his verses. It is the same with a great part of the narratives of my friend Mr Cooper. We sympathize with his Indian chiefs and back-woodsmen, and acknowledge, in the characters which he presents to us, the same truth of human nature by which we should feel ourselves influenced if placed in the same condition. So much is this the case, that though it is difficult, or almost impossible, to reclaim a savage, bred from his youth to war and the chase, to the restraints and the duties of civilized life, nothing is more easy or common, than to find men who have been educated in all the habits and comforts of improved society, willing to exchange them for the wild labours of the hunter and the fisher. The very amusements most pursued and relished by men of all ranks, whose constitutions permit active exercise, are hunting, fishing, and in some instances, war, the natural and necessary business of the savage of Dryden, where his hero talks of being

> — "As free as nature first made man,
> When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

But although the occupations, and even the sentiments, of human beings in a primitive state, find access and interest in the minds of the more civilized part of the species, it does not therefore follow, that the national tastes, opinions, and follies, of one civilized period, should afford either the same interest or the same amusement to those of another. These generally, when driven to extravagance, are founded, not upon any natural taste proper to the species, but upon the growth of some peculiar cast of affectation, with which mankind in general, and succeeding generations in particular, feel no common interest or sympathy. The extravagances of coxcombry in manners and apparel are indeed the legitimate, and often the successful objects of satire, during the time when they exist. In evidence of this, theatrical critics may observe how many dramatic *jeux d' esprit* are well received every season, because the satirist levels at some well known or fashionable absurdity; or, in the dramatic phrase, "shoots folly as it flies." But when the peculiar kind of folly keeps the wing no longer, it is reckoned but waste of powder to pour a discharge of ridicule on what has ceased to exist; and the pieces in which such forgotten absurdities are made the subject of ridicule, fall quietly into oblivion with the follies which gave them fashion, or only continue to exist on the scene, because they contain some other more permanent interest than that which connects them with manners and follies of a temporary character.

This, perhaps, affords a reason why the comedies of Ben Jonson, founded upon system, or what the age termed humours,—by which was meant factitious and affected characters, superinduced on that which was common to the rest of their race,— in spite of acute satire, deep scholarship, and strong sense, do not now afford general pleasure, but are confined to the closet of the antiquary, whose studies have assured him that the personages of the dramatist were once, though they are now no longer, portraits of existing nature.

Let us take another example of our hypothesis from Shakspeare himself, who, of all authors, drew

his portraits for all ages. With the whole sum of the idolatry which affects us at his name, the mass of readers peruse, without amusement, the characters formed on the extravagances of temporary fashion; and the Euphuist Don Armado, the pedant Holofernes, even Nym and Pistol, are read with little pleasure by the mass of the public, being portraits of which we cannot recognize the humour, because the originals no longer exist. In like manner, while the distresses of Romeo and Juliet continue to interest every bosom, Mercutio, drawn as an accurate representation of the finished fine gentleman of the period, and as such received by the unanimous approbation of contemporaries, has so little to interest the present age, that, stripped of all his puns and quirks of verbal wit, he only retains his place in the scene, in virtue of his fine and fanciful speech upon dreaming, which belongs to no particular age, and because he is a personage whose presence is indispensable to the plot.

We have already prosecuted perhaps too far an argument, the tendency of which is to prove, that the introduction of an humorist, acting, like Sir Piercie Shafton, upon some forgotten and obsolete model of folly, once fashionable, is rather likely to awaken the disgust of the reader, as unnatural, than find him food for laughter. Whether owing to this theory, or whether to the more simple and probable cause of the author's failure in the delineation of the subject he had proposed to himself, the formidable objection of *incredulus odi* was applied to the Euphuist, as well as to the White Lady of Avenel; and the one was denounced as unnatural, while the other was rejected as impossible.

There was little in the story to atone for these failures in two principal points. The incidents were inartificially huddled together. There was no part of the intrigue to which deep interest was found to apply; and the conclusion was brought about, not by incidents arising out of the story itself, but in consequence of public transactions, with which the narrative has little connection, and which the reader had little opportunity to become acquainted with.

This, if not a positive fault, was yet a great defect in the Romance. It is true, that not only the practice of some great authors in this department, but even the general course of human life itself, may be quoted in favour of this more obvious, and less artificial practice, of arranging a narrative. It is seldom that the same circle of personages who have surrounded an individual at his first outset in life, continue to have an interest in his career till his fate comes to a crisis. On the contrary, and more especially if the events of his life be of a varied character, and worth communicating to others, or to the world, the hero's later connections are usually totally separated from those with whom he began the voyage, but whom the individual has outsailed, or who have drifted astray, or foundered on the passage. This hackneyed comparison holds good in another point. The numerous vessels of so many different sorts, and destined for such different purposes, which are launched in the same mighty ocean, although each endeavours to pursue its own course, are in every case more influenced by the winds and tides, which are common to the element which they all navigate, than by their own separate exertions. And it is thus in the world, that, when human prudence has done its best, some general, perhaps national, event, destroys the schemes of the individual, as the casual touch of a more powerful being sweeps away the web of the spider.

Many excellent romances have been composed in this view of human life, where the hero is conducted through a variety of detached scenes, in which various agents appear and disappear, without, perhaps, having any permanent influence on the progress of the story. Such is the structure of Gil Blas, Roderick Random, and the lives and adventures of many other heroes, who are described as running through different stations of life, and encountering various adventures, which are only connected with each other by having happened to be witnessed by the same individual, whose identity unites them together, as the string of a necklace links the beads, which are otherwise detached.

But though such an unconnected course of adventures is what most frequently occurs in nature, yet the province of the romance writer being artificial, there is more required from him than a mere compliance with the simplicity of reality,—just as we demand from the scientific gardener, that he shall arrange, in curious knots and artificial parterres, the flowers which "nature boon" distributes freely on hill and dale. Fielding, accordingly, in most of his novels, but especially in Tom Jones, his *chef-d'œuvre*, has set the distinguished example of a story regularly built and consistent in all its parts, in which nothing occurs, and scarce a personage is introduced, that has not some share in tending to advance the catastrophe.

To demand equal correctness and felicity in those who may follow in the track of that illustrious novelist, would be to fetter too much the power of giving pleasure, by surrounding it with penal rules; since of this sort of light literature it may be especially said—*tout genre est permis, hors le genre ennuyeux*. Still, however, the more closely and happily the story is combined, and the more natural and felicitous the catastrophe, the nearer such a composition will approach the perfection of the novelist's art; nor can an author neglect this branch of his profession, without incurring proportional censure.

For such censure the Monastery gave but too much occasion. The intrigue of the Romance, neither very interesting in itself, nor very happily detailed, is at length finally disentangled by the breaking out of national hostilities between England and Scotland, and the as sudden renewal of the truce. Instances of this kind, it is true, cannot in

reality have been uncommon, but the resorting to such, in order to accomplish the catastrophe, as by a *tour de force*, was objected to as inartificial, and not perfectly intelligible to the general reader.

Still the Monastery, though exposed to severe and just criticism, did not fail, judging from the extent of its circulation, to have some interest for the public. And this, too, was according to the ordinary course of such matters; for it very seldom happens that literary reputation is gained by a single effort, and still more rarely is it lost by a solitary miscarriage.

The author, therefore, had his days of grace allowed him, and time, if he pleased, to comfort himself with the burden of the old Scots song,

"If it isna weel bobbit,
We 'll bob it again."

ABBOTSFORD,
1st November, 1830.

INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE

FROM

CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK,

LATE OF HIS MAJESTY'S —— REGIMENT OF INFANTRY,

TO

THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY."

SIR,

ALTHOUGH I do not pretend to the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, like many whom I believe to be equally strangers to you, I am nevertheless interested in your publications, and desire their continuance;—not that I pretend to much taste in fictitious composition, or that I am apt to be interested in your grave scenes, or amused by those which are meant to be lively. I will not disguise from you, that I have yawned over the last interview of MacIvor and his sister, and fell fairly asleep while the schoolmaster was reading the humours of Dandie Dinmont. You see, sir, that I scorn to solicit your favour in a way to which you are no stranger. If the papers I enclose you are worth nothing, I will not endeavour to recommend them by personal flattery, as a bad cook pours rancid butter upon stale fish. No, sir! what I respect in you, is the light you have occasionally thrown on national antiquities, a study which I have commenced rather late in life, but to which I am attached with the devotion of a first love, because it is the only study I ever cared a farthing for.

You shall have my history, sir, (it will not reach to three volumes,) before that of my manuscript; and as you usually throw out a few lines of verse (by way of skirmishers, I suppose) at the head of each division of prose, I have had the luck to light upon a stanza in the schoolmaster's copy of Burns which describes me exactly. I love it the better, because it was originally designed for Captain Grose, an excellent antiquary, though, like yourself, somewhat too apt to treat with levity his own pursuits:

'Tis said he was a soldier bred,
And ane wad rather fa'en than fled;
But now he 's quit the spurtle blade,
And dog-skin wallet,
And ta'en the—antiquarian trade,
I think they call it.

I never could conceive what influenced me, when a boy, in the choice of a profession. Military zeal and ardour it was not, which made me stand out for a commission in the Scots Fusiliers, when my tutors and curators wished to bind me apprentice to old David Stiles, Clerk to his Majesty's Signet. I say, military zeal it was *not*; for I was no fighting boy in my own person, and cared not a penny to read the history of the heroes who turned the world upside down in former ages. As for courage, I had, as I have since discovered, just as much of it as served my turn, and not one grain of surplus. I soon found out, indeed, that in action there was more danger in running away than in standing fast; and besides, I could not afford to lose my commission, which was my chief means of

support. But, as for that overboiling valour, which I have heard many of *ours* talk of, though I seldom observed that it influenced them in the actual affair — that exuberant zeal, which courts Danger as a bride, — truly my courage was of a complexion much less ecstatical.

Again, the love of a red coat, which, in default of all other aptitudes to the profession, has made many a bad soldier and some good ones, was an utter stranger to my disposition. I cared not a "bodle" for the company of the misses: Nay, though there was a boarding-school in the village, and though we used to meet with its fair inmates at Simon Lightfoot's weekly Practising, I cannot recollect any strong emotions being excited on these occasions, excepting the infinite regret with which I went through the polite ceremonial of presenting my partner with an orange, thrust into my pocket by my aunt for this special purpose, but which, had I dared, I certainly would have secreted for my own personal use. As for vanity, or love of finery for itself, I was such a stranger to it, that the difficulty was great to make me brush my coat, and appear in proper trim upon parade. I shall never forget the rebuke of my old Colonel on a morning when the King reviewed a brigade of which ours made part. "I am no friend to extravagance, Ensign Clutterbuck," said he; "but, on the day when we are to pass before the Sovereign of the kingdom, in the name of God I would have at least shewn him an inch of clean linen."

Thus, a stranger to the ordinary motives which lead young men to make the army their choice, and without the least desire to become either a hero or a dandy, I really do not know what determined my thoughts that way, unless it were the happy state of half-pay indolence, enjoyed by Captain Doolittle, who had set up his staff of rest in my native village. Every other person had, or seemed to have, something to do, less or more. They did not, indeed, precisely go to school and learn tasks, that last of evils in my estimation; but it did not escape my boyish observation, that they were all bothered with something or other like duty or labour — all but the happy Captain Doolittle. The minister had his parish to visit, and his preaching to prepare, though perhaps he made more fuss than he needed about both. The laird had his farming and improving operations to superintend; and, besides, he had to attend trustee meetings, and lieutenancy meetings, and head-courts, and meetings of justices, and what not — was as early up, (that I detested,) and as much in the open air, wet and dry, as his own grieve. The shopkeeper (the village boasted but one of eminence) stood indeed pretty much at his ease behind his counter, for his custom was by no means overburdensome; but still he enjoyed his *status*, as the Bailie calls it, upon condition of tumbling all the wares in his booth over and over, when any one chose to want a yard of muslin, a mousetrap, an ounce of caraways, a paper of pins, the Sermons of Mr Peden, or the Life of Jack the Giant-Queller, (not Killer, as usually erroneously written and pronounced. — See my essay on the true history of this worthy, where real facts have in a peculiar degree been obscured by fable.) In short, all in the village were under the necessity of doing something which they would rather have left undone, excepting Captain Doolittle, who walked every morning in the open street, which formed the high mall of our village, in a blue coat with a red neck, and played at whist the whole evening, when he could make up a party. This happy vacuity of all employment appeared to me so delicious, that it became the primary hint, which, according to the system of Helvetius, as the minister says, determined my infant talents towards the profession I was destined to illustrate.

But who, alas! can form a just estimate of their future prospects in this deceitful world? I was not long engaged in my new profession, before I discovered, that if the independent indolence of half-pay was a paradise, the officer must pass through the purgatory of duty and service in order to gain admission to it. Captain Doolittle might brush his blue coat with the red neck, or leave it unbrushed, at his pleasure; but Ensign Clutterbuck had no such option. Captain Doolittle might go to bed at ten o'clock, if he had a mind; but the Ensign must make the rounds in his turn. What was worse, the Captain might repose under the tester of his tent-bed until noon, if he was so pleased; but the Ensign, God help him, had to appear upon parade at peep of day. As for duty, I made that as easy as I could, had the sergeant to whisper to me the words of command and bustled through as other folks did. Of service, I saw enough for an indolent man — was buffeted up and down the world, and visited both the East and West Indies, Egypt, and other distant places, which my youth had scarce dreamed of. The French I saw, and felt too; witness two fingers on my right hand, which one of their cursed hussars took off with his sabre as neatly as an hospital surgeon. At length the death of an old aunt, who left me some fifteen hundred pounds, snugly vested in the three per cents, gave me the long-wished-for opportunity of retiring, with the prospect of enjoying a clean shirt and a guinea four times a-week at least.

For the purpose of commencing my new way of life, I selected for my residence the village of Kennaquhair, in the south of Scotland, celebrated for the ruins of its magnificent Monastery, intending there to lead my future life in the *otium cum dignitate* of half-pay and annuity. I was not long, however, in making the grand discovery, that in order to enjoy leisure, it is absolutely necessary it should be preceded by occupation. For some time, it was delightful to wake at daybreak, dreaming of the reveillé — then to recollect my happy emancipation from the slavery that doomed me to start

at a piece of clattering parchment, turn on my other side, damn the parade, and go to sleep again. But even this enjoyment had its termination; and time, when it became a stock entirely at my own disposal, began to hang heavy on my hand.

I angled for two days, during which time I lost twenty hooks, and several scores of yards of gut and line, and caught not even a minnow. Hunting was out of the question, for the stomach of a horse by no means agrees with the half-pay establishment. When I shot, the shepherds and ploughmen, and my very dog, quizzed me every time that I missed, which was, generally speaking, every time I fired. Besides, the country gentlemen in this quarter like their game, and began to talk of prosecutions and interdicts. I did not give up fighting the French to commence a domestic war with the "pleasant men of Teviotdale," as the song calls them; so I e'en spent three days (very agreeably) in cleaning my gun, and disposing it upon two hooks over my chimney-piece.

The success of this accidental experiment set me on trying my skill in the mechanical arts. Accordingly, I took down and cleaned my landlady's cuckoo-clock, and in so doing, silenced that companion of the spring for ever and a day. I mounted a turning-lathe, and in attempting to use it, I very nearly cribbed off, with an inch-and-half former, one of the fingers which the hussar had left me.

Books I tried, both those of the little circulating library, and of the more rational subscription collection maintained by this intellectual people. But neither the light reading of the one, nor the heavy artillery of the other, suited my purpose. I always fell asleep at the fourth or fifth page of history or disquisition; and it took me a month's hard reading to wade through a half-bound trashy novel, during which I was pestered with applications to return the volumes, by every half-bred milliner's miss about the place. In short, during the hours when all the town besides had something to do, I had nothing for it, but to walk in the churchyard, and whistle till it was dinner-time.

During these promenades, the Ruins necessarily forced themselves on my attention, and, by degrees, I found myself engaged in studying the more minute ornaments, and at length the general plan, of this noble structure. The old sexton aided my labours, and gave me his portion of traditional lore. Every day added something to my stock of knowledge respecting the ancient state of the building; and at length I made discoveries concerning the purpose of several detached and very ruinous portions of it, the use of which had hitherto been either unknown altogether or erroneously explained.

The knowledge which I thus acquired I had frequent opportunities of retailing to those visiters whom the progress of a Scottish tour brought to visit this celebrated spot. Without encroaching on the privilege of my friend the sexton, I became gradually an assistant Cicerone in the task of description and explanation, and often (seeing a fresh party of visiters arrive) has he turned over to me those to whom he had told half his story, with the flattering observation, "What needs I say ony mair about it? There's the Captain kens mair anent it than I do, or any man in the town." Then would I salute the strangers courteously, and expatiate to their astonished minds upon crypts and chancels, and naves, arches, Gothic and Saxon architraves, mullions and flying buttresses. It not unfrequently happened, that an acquaintance which commenced in the Abbey concluded in the inn, which served to relieve the solitude as well as the monotony of my landlady's shoulder of mutton, whether roast, cold, or hashed.

By degrees my mind became enlarged; I found a book or two which enlightened me on the subject of Gothic architecture, and I read now with pleasure, because I was interested in what I read about. Even my character began to dilate and expand. I spoke with more authority at the club, and was listened to with deference, because on one subject, at least, I possessed more information than any of its members. Indeed, I found that even my stories about Egypt, which, to say truth, were somewhat thread-bare, were now listened to with more respect than formerly. "The Captain," they said, "had something in him after a',—there were few folk kend sae muckle about the Abbey."

With this general approbation waxed my own sense of self-importance, and my feeling of general comfort. I ate with more appetite, I digested with more ease, I lay down at night with joy, and slept sound till morning, when I arose with a sense of busy importance, and hied me to measure, to examine, and to compare the various parts of this interesting structure. I lost all sense and consciousness of certain unpleasant sensations of a nondescript nature, about my head and stomach, to which I had been in the habit of attending, more for the benefit of the village apothecary than my own, for the pure want of something else to think about. I had found out an occupation unwittingly, and was happy because I had something to do. In a word, I had commenced local antiquary, and was not unworthy of the name.

Whilst I was in this pleasing career of busy idleness, for so it might at best be called, it happened that I was one night sitting in my little parlour, adjacent to the closet which my landlady calls my bedroom, in the act of preparing for an early retreat to the realms of Morpheus. Dugdale's Monasticon, borrowed from the library at A——, was lying on the table before me, flanked by some excellent Cheshire cheese, (a present, by the way, from an honest London citizen, to whom I had explained the difference betwixt a Gothic and a Saxon arch,) and a glass of Vanderhagen's best ale. Thus armed at all points against my old enemy

Time, I was leisurely and deliciously preparing for bed — now reading a line of old Dugdale — now sipping my ale, or munching my bread and cheese — now undoing the strings at my breeches' knees, or a button or two of my waistcoat, until the village clock should strike ten, before which time I make it a rule never to go to bed. A loud knocking, however, interrupted my ordinary process on this occasion, and the voice of my honest landlord of the George was heard vociferating,[1] "What the deevil, Mrs Grimslees, the Captain is no in his bed? and a gentleman at our house has ordered a fowl and minced collops, and a bottle of sherry, and has sent to ask him to supper, to tell him all about the Abbey."

"Na," answered Luckie Grimslees, in the true sleepy tone of a Scottish matron when ten o'clock is going to strike, "he's no in his bed, but I'se warrant him no gae out at this time o' night to keep folks sitting up waiting for him — the Captain 's a decent man."

I plainly perceived this last compliment was made for my hearing, by way both of indicating and of recommending the course of conduct which Mrs Grimslees desired I should pursue. But I had not been knocked about the world for thirty years and odd, and lived a bluff bachelor all the while, to come home and be put under petticoat government by my landlady. Accordingly I opened my chamber-door, and desired my old friend David to walk up stairs.

"Captain," said he, as he entered, "I am as glad to find you up as if I had hooked a twenty pound saumon. There's a gentleman up yonder that will not sleep sound in his bed this blessed night, unless he has the pleasure to drink a glass of wine with you."

"You know, David," I replied, with becoming dignity, "that I cannot with propriety go out to visit strangers at this time of night, or accept of invitations from people of whom I know nothing."

David swore a round oath, and added, "Was ever the like heard of? He has ordered a fowl and egg sauce, a pancake and minched collops, and a bottle of sherry — D'ye think I wad come and ask you to go to keep company with ony bit English rider, that sups on toasted cheese, and a cheerer of rum-toddy? This is a gentleman every inch of him, and a virtuoso, a clean virtuoso — a sad-coloured stand of claithes, and a wig like the curled back of a mug-ewe. The very first question he speered was about the auld drawbrig that has been at the bottom of the water these twal score years — I have seen the fundations when we were sticking saumon — And how the deevil suld he ken ony thing about the old drawbrig, unless he were a virtuoso?"[2]

David being a virtuoso in his own way, and moreover a landholder and heritor, was a qualified judge of all who frequented his house, and therefore I could not avoid again tying the strings of my knees.

"That's right, Captain," vociferated David; "you twa will be as thick as three in a bed an ance ye forgather. I haena seen the like o' him my very sell since I saw the great Doctor Samuel Johnson on his tower through Scotland, whilk tower is lying in my back-parlour for the amusement of my guests, wi' the twa boards torn aff."

"Then the gentleman is a scholar, David?"

"I'se uphaud him a scholar," answered David · "he has a black coat on, or a brown ane, at ony rate."

"Is he a clergyman?"

"I am thinking no, for he looked after his horse's supper before he spoke o' his ain," replied mine host.

"Has he a servant?" demanded I.

"Nae servant," answered David; "but a grand face he has o' his ain, that wad gar ony body be willing to serve him that looks upon him."

"And what makes him think of disturbing me? Ah, David, this has been some of your chattering; you are perpetually bringing your guests on my shoulders, as if it were my business to entertain every man who comes to the George."

"What the deil wad ye hae me do, Captain?" answered mine host; "a gentleman lights down, and asks me in a most earnest manner, what man of sense and learning there is about our town, that can tell him about the antiquities of the place, and specially about the auld Abbey — ye wadna hae me tell the gentleman a lee? and ye ken weel eneugh there is naebody in the town can say a reasonable word about it, be it no yoursell, except the bedral, and he is as fou as a piper by this time. So, says I, there 's Captain Clutterbuck, that 's a very civil gentleman, and has little to do forby telling a' the auld cracks about the Abbey, and dwells just hard by. Then says the gentleman to me, 'Sir,' says he, very civilly, 'have the goodness to step to Captain Clutterbuck with my compliments, and say I am a stranger, who have been led to these parts chiefly by the fame of these Ruins, and that I would call upon him, but the hour is late.' And mair he said that I have forgotten, but I weel remember it ended, — 'And, landlord, get a bottle of your best sherry, and supper for two.' — Ye wadna have had me refuse to do the gentleman's bidding, and me a publican?"

[1] The George was, and is, the principal inn in the village of Kennaquhair, or Melrose. But the landlord of the period was not the same civil and quiet person by whom the inn is now kept. David Kyle, a Melrose proprietor of no little importance, a first-rate person of consequence in whatever belonged to the business of the town, was the original owner and landlord of the inn. Poor David! like many other busy men, took so much care of public affairs, as in some degree to neglect his own. There are persons still alive at Kennaquhair who can recognize him and his peculiarities in the following sketch of mine Host of the George.

[2] There is more to be said about this old bridge hereafter. See Note C.

"Well, David," said I, "I wish your virtuoso had taken a fitter hour — but as you say he is a gentleman ——"

"I 'se uphaud him that — the order speaks for itsell — a bottle of sherry — minched collops and a fowl — that's speaking like a gentleman, I trow? — That 's right, Captain, button weel up, the night's raw — but the water 's clearing for a' that; we'll be on 't neist night wi' my Lord's boats, and we 'll hae ill luck if I dinna send you a kipper to relish your ale at e'en."[1]

In five minutes after this dialogue, I found myself in the parlour of the George, and in the presence of the stranger.

He was a grave personage, about my own age, (which we shall call about fifty,) and really had, as my friend David expressed it, something in his face that inclined men to oblige and to serve him. Yet this expression of authority was not at all of the cast which I have seen in the countenance of a general of brigade, neither was the stranger's dress at all martial. It consisted of a uniform suit of iron-gray clothes, cut in rather an old-fashioned form. His legs were defended with strong leathern gambadoes, which, according to an antiquarian contrivance, opened at the sides, and were secured by steel clasps. His countenance was worn as much by toil and sorrow as by age, for it intimated that he had seen and endured much. His address was singularly pleasing and gentlemanlike, and the apology which he made for disturbing me at such an hour, and in such a manner, was so well and handsomely expressed, that I could not reply otherwise than by declaring my willingness to be of service to him.

"I have been a traveller to-day, sir," said he, "and I would willingly defer the little I have to say till after supper, for which I feel rather more appetized than usual."

We sate down to table, and notwithstanding the stranger's alleged appetite, as well as the gentle preparation of cheese and ale which I had already laid aboard, I really believe that I of the two did the greater honour to my friend David's fowl and minced collops.

When the cloth was removed, and we had each made a tumbler of negus, of that liquor which hosts call Sherry, and guests call Lisbon, I perceived that the stranger seemed pensive, silent, and somewhat embarrassed, as if he had something to communicate which he knew not well how to introduce. To pave the way for him, I spoke of the ancient ruins of the Monastery, and of their history. But, to my great surprise, I found I had met my match with a witness. The stranger not only knew all that I could tell him, but a great deal more; and, what was still more mortifying, he was able, by reference to dates, charters, and other evidence of facts, that, as Burns says, "downa be disputed," to correct many of the vague tales which I had adopted on loose and vulgar tradition, as well as to confute more than one of my favourite theories on the subject of the old monks and their dwellings, which I had sported freely in all the presumption of superior information. And here I cannot but remark, that much of the stranger's arguments and inductions rested upon the authority of Mr Deputy Register of Scotland,[2] and his lucubrations; a gentleman whose indefatigable research into the national records is like to destroy my trade, and that of all local antiquaries, by substituting truth instead of legend and romance. Alas! I would the learned gentleman did but know how difficult it is for us dealers in petty wares of antiquity to —

> Pluck from our memories a rooted "legend,"
> Raze out the written records of our brain,
> Or cleanse our bosoms of that perilous stuff —

and so forth. It would, I am sure, move his pity to think how many old dogs he hath set to learn new tricks, how many venerable parrots he hath taught to sing a new song, how many gray heads he hath addled by vain attempts to exchange their old *Mumpsimus* for his new *Sumpsimus*. But let it pass. *Humana perpessi sumus* — All changes round us, past, present, and to come; that which was history yesterday becomes fable to-day, and the truth of to-day is hatched into a lie by to-morrow.

Finding myself like to be overpowered in the Monastery, which I had hitherto regarded as my citadel, I began, like a skilful general, to evacuate that place of defence, and fight my way through the adjacent country. I had recourse to my acquaintance with the families and antiquities of the neighbourhood, ground on which I thought I might skirmish at large without its being possible for the stranger to meet me with advantage. But I was mistaken.

The man in the iron-gray suit shewed a much more minute knowledge of these particulars than I had the least pretension to. He could tell the very year in which the family of De Haga first settled on their ancient barony.[3] Not a Thane within reach but he knew his family and connections, how many of his ancestors had fallen by the sword of the English, how many in domestic brawl, and how many by the hand of the executioner for march-treason. Their castles he was acquainted with from turret to foundation-stone; and as for the miscel-

[1] The nobleman whose boats are mentioned in the text, is the late kind and amiable Lord Sommerville, an intimate friend of the author. David Kyle was a constant and privileged attendant when Lord Sommerville had a party for spearing salmon; on such occasions, eighty or a hundred fish were often killed between Gleamer and Leaderfoot.

[2] Thomas Thomson, Esq., whose well-deserved panegyric ought to be found on another page than one written by an intimate friend of thirty years' standing.

[3] The family of De Haga, modernized into Haig, of Bemerside, is of the highest antiquity, and is the subject of one of the prophecies of Thomas the Rhymer: —

> Betide, betide, whate'er betide,
> Haig shall be Haig of Bemerside

laneous antiquities scattered about the country, he knew every one of them, from a *cromlech* to a *cairn*, and could give as good an account of each as if he had lived in the time of the Danes or Druids.

I was now in the mortifying predicament of one who suddenly finds himself a scholar when he came to teach, and nothing was left for me but to pick up as much of his conversation as I could, for the benefit of the next company. I told, indeed, Allan Ramsay's story of the Monk and Miller's Wife, in order to retreat with some honour under cover of a parting volley. Here, however, my flank was again turned by the eternal stranger.

"You are pleased to be facetious, sir," said he; "but you cannot be ignorant, that the ludicrous incident you mentioned is the subject of a tale much older than that of Allan Ramsay."

I nodded, unwilling to acknowledge my ignorance, though, in fact, I knew no more what he meant than did one of my friend David's post-horses.

"I do not allude," continued my omniscient companion, "to the curious poem published by Pinkerton from the Maitland Manuscript, called the Fryars of Berwick, although it presents a very minute and amusing picture of Scottish manners during the reign of James V.; but rather to the Italian novelist, by whom, so far as I know, the story was first printed, although unquestionably he first took his original from some ancient *fabliau*."[1]

"It is not to be doubted," answered I, not very well understanding, however, the proposition to which I gave such unqualified assent.

"Yet," continued my companion, "I question much, had you known my situation and profession, whether you would have pitched upon this precise anecdote for my amusement."

This observation he made in a tone of perfect good-humour. I pricked up my ears at the hint, and answered as politely as I could, that my ignorance of his condition and rank could be the only cause of my having stumbled on any thing disagreeable; and that I was most willing to apologize for my unintentional offence, so soon as I should know wherein it consisted.

"Nay, no offence, sir," he replied; "offence can only exist where it is taken. I have been too long accustomed to more severe and cruel misconstructions, to be offended at a popular jest, though directed at my profession."

"Am I to understand, then," I answered, "that I am speaking with a Catholic clergyman?"

"An unworthy monk of the order of Saint Benedict," said the stranger, "belonging to a community of your own countrymen, long established in France, and scattered unhappily by the events of the Revolution."

"Then," said I, "you are a native Scotchman, and from this neighbourhood?"

"Not so," answered the monk; "I am a Scotchman by extraction only, and never was in this neighbourhood during my whole life."

"Never in this neighbourhood, and yet so minutely acquainted with its history, its traditions, and even its external scenery! You surprise me, sir," I replied.

"It is not surprising," he said, "that I should have that sort of local information, when it is considered, that my uncle, an excellent man, as well as a good Scotchman, the head also of our religious community, employed much of his leisure in making me acquainted with these particulars; and that I myself, disgusted with what has been passing around me, have for many years amused myself, by digesting and arranging the various scraps of information which I derived from my worthy relative, and other aged brethren of our order."

"I presume, sir," said I, "though I would by no means intrude the question, that you are now returned to Scotland with a view to settle amongst your countrymen, since the great political catastrophe of our time has reduced your corps?"

"No, sir," replied the Benedictine, "such is not my intention. A European potentate, who still cherishes the Catholic faith, has offered us a retreat within his dominions, where a few of my scattered brethren are already assembled, to pray to God for blessings on their protector, and pardon to their enemies. No one, I believe, will be able to object to us under our new establishment, that the extent of our revenues will be inconsistent with our vows of poverty and abstinence; but, let us strive to be thankful to God, that the snare of temporal abundance is removed from us."

"Many of your convents abroad, sir," said I, "enjoyed very handsome incomes—and yet, allowing for times, I question if any were better provided for than the Monastery of this village. It is said to have possessed nearly two thousand pounds in yearly money-rent, fourteen chalders and nine bolls of wheat, fifty-six chalders five bolls barley, forty-four chalders and ten bolls oats, capons and poultry, butter, salt, carriage and arriage, peats and kain, wool and ale."

"Even too much of all these temporal goods, sir," said my companion, "which, though well intended by the pious donors, served only to make the establishment the envy and the prey of those by whom it was finally devoured."

"In the meanwhile, however," I observed, "the monks had an easy life of it, and, as the old song goes,

> —— made gude kale
> On Fridays when they fasted."

"I understand you, sir," said the Benedictine; "it is difficult, saith the proverb, to carry a full cup without spilling. Unquestionably the wealth of the community, as it endangered the safety of

[1] It is curious to remark at how little expense of invention successive ages are content to receive amusement. The same story which Ramsay and Dunbar have successively handled, forms also the subject of the modern farce, No Song, no Supper.

the establishment by exciting the cupidity of others, was also in frequent instances a snare to the brethren themselves. And yet we have seen the revenues of convents expended, not only in acts of beneficence and hospitality to individuals, but in works of general and permanent advantage to the world at large. The noble folio collection of French historians, commenced in 1737, under the inspection and at the expense of the community of Saint Maur, will long shew that the revenues of the Benedictines were not always spent in self-indulgence, and that the members of that order did not uniformly slumber in sloth and indolence, when they had discharged the formal duties of their rule."

As I knew nothing earthly at the time about the community of Saint Maur and their learned labours, I could only return a mumbling assent to this proposition. I have since seen this noble work in the library of a distinguished family, and I must own I am ashamed to reflect, that in so wealthy a country as ours, a similar digest of our historians should not be undertaken, under the patronage of the noble and the learned, in rivalry of that which the Benedictines of Paris executed at the expense of their own conventual funds.

"I perceive," said the ex-Benedictine, smiling, "that your heretical prejudices are too strong to allow us poor brethren any merit, whether literary or spiritual."

"Far from it, sir," said I; "I assure you I have been much obliged to monks in my time. When I was quartered in a Monastery in Flanders, in the campaign of 1793, I never lived more comfortably in my life. They were jolly fellows the Flemish Canons, and right sorry was I to leave my good quarters, and to know that my honest hosts were to be at the mercy of the Sans-Culottes. But *fortune de la guerre!*"

The poor Benedictine looked down and was silent. I had unwittingly awakened a train of bitter reflections, or rather I had touched somewhat rudely upon a chord which seldom ceased to vibrate of itself. But he was too much accustomed to this sorrowful train of ideas to suffer it to overcome him. On my part, I hastened to atone for my blunder. "If there was any object of his journey to this country in which I could, with propriety, assist him, I begged to offer him my best services." I own I laid some little emphasis on the words "with propriety," as I felt it would ill become me, a sound Protestant, and a servant of government so far as my half-pay was concerned, to implicate myself in any recruiting which my companion might have undertaken in behalf of foreign seminaries, or in any similar design for the advancement of Popery, which, whether the Pope be actually the old lady of Babylon or no, it did not become me in any manner to advance or countenance.

My new friend hastened to relieve my indecision. "I was about to request your assistance, sir," he said, "in a matter which cannot but interest you as an antiquary, and a person of research. But I assure you it relates entirely to events and persons removed to the distance of two centuries and a half. I have experienced too much evil from the violent unsettlement of the country in which I was born, to be a rash labourer in the work of innovation in that of my ancestors."

I again assured him of my willingness to assist him in any thing that was not contrary to my allegiance or religion.

"My proposal," he replied, "affects neither.—May God bless the reigning family in Britain! They are not, indeed, of that dynasty to restore which my ancestors struggled and suffered in vain; but the Providence who has conducted his present Majesty to the throne, has given him the virtues necessary to his time — firmness and intrepidity — a true love of his country, and an enlightened view of the dangers by which she is surrounded. — For the religion of these realms, I am contented to hope that the great Power, whose mysterious dispensation has rent them from the bosom of the church, will, in his own good time and manner, restore them to its holy pale. The efforts of an individual obscure and humble as myself, might well retard, but could never advance, a work so mighty."

"May I then inquire, sir," said I, "with what purpose you seek this country?"

Ere my companion replied, he took from his pocket a clasped paper book, about the size of a regimental orderly-book, full, as it seemed, of memoranda; and drawing one of the candles close to him, (for David, as a strong proof of his respect for the stranger, had indulged us with two,) he seemed to peruse the contents very earnestly.

"There is among the ruins of the western end of the Abbey church," said he, looking up to me, yet keeping the memorandum-book half open, and occasionally glancing at it, as if to refresh his memory, "a sort of recess or chapel beneath a broken arch, and in the immediate vicinity of one of those shattered Gothic columns which once supported the magnificent roof, whose fall has now encumbered that part of the building with its ruins."

"I think," said I, "that I know whereabouts you are. Is there not in the side wall of the chapel, or recess which you mention, a large carved stone, bearing a coat of arms, which no one hitherto has been able to decipher?"

"You are right," answered the Benedictine; and again consulting his memoranda, he added, "the arms on the dexter side are those of Glendinning, being a cross parted by a cross indented and countercharged of the same; and on the sinister three spur-rowels for those of Avenel; they are two ancient families, now almost extinct in this country — the arms *part y per pale.*"

"I think," said I, "there is no part of this

ancient structure with which you are not as well acquainted as was the mason who built it. But if your information be correct, he who made out these bearings must have had better eyes than mine."

"His eyes," said the Benedictine, "have long been closed in death; probably when he inspected the monument it was in a more perfect state, or he may have derived his information from the tradition of the place."

"I assure you," said I, "that no such tradition now exists. I have made several reconnoissances among the old people, in hopes to learn something of the armorial bearings, but I never heard of such a circumstance. It seems odd that you should have acquired it in a foreign land."

"These trifling particulars," he replied, "were formerly looked upon as more important, and they were sanctified to the exiles who retained recollection of them, because they related to a place dear indeed to memory, but which their eyes could never again behold. It is possible, in like manner, that on the Potomac or Susquehannah, you may find traditions current concerning places in England, which are utterly forgotten in the neighbourhood where they originated. But to my purpose. In this recess, marked by the armorial bearings, lies buried a treasure, and it is in order to remove it that I have undertaken my present journey."

"A treasure!" echoed I, in astonishment.

"Yes," replied the monk, "an inestimable treasure, for those who know how to use it rightly."

I own my ears did tingle a little at the word treasure, and that a handsome tilbury, with a neat groom in blue and scarlet livery, having a smart cockade on his glazed hat, seemed as it were to glide across the room before my eyes, while a voice, as of a crier, pronounced in my ear, "Captain Clutterbuck's tilbury — drive up." But I resisted the devil, and he fled from me.

"I believe," said I, "all hidden treasure belongs either to the king or the lord of the soil; and as I have served his majesty, I cannot concern myself in any adventure which may have an end in the Court of Exchequer."

"The treasure I seek," said the stranger, smiling, "will not be envied by princes or nobles, — it is simply the heart of an upright man."

"Ah! I understand you," I answered; "some relic, forgotten in the confusion of the Reformation. I know the value which men of your persuasion put upon the bodies and limbs of saints. I have seen the Three Kings of Cologne."

"The relics which I seek, however," said the Benedictine, "are not precisely of that nature. The excellent relative whom I have already mentioned, amused his leisure hours with putting into form the traditions of his family, particularly some remarkable circumstances which took place about the first breaking out of the schism of the church in Scotland. He became so much interested in his own labours, that at length he resolved that the heart of one individual, the hero of his tale, should rest no longer in a land of heresy, now deserted by all his kindred. As he knew where it was deposited, he formed the resolution to visit his native country for the purpose of recovering this valued relic. But age, and at length disease, interfered with his resolution, and it was on his deathbed that he charged me to undertake the task in his stead. The various important events which have crowded upon each other, our ruin and our exile, have for many years obliged me to postpone this delegated duty. Why, indeed, transfer the relics of a holy and worthy man to a country, where religion and virtue are become the mockery of the scorner? I have now a home, which I trust may be permanent, if any thing in this earth can be termed so. Thither will I transport the heart of the good father, and beside the shrine which it shall occupy, I will construct my own grave."

"He must, indeed, have been an excellent man," replied I, "whose memory, at so distant a period, calls forth such strong marks of regard."

"He was, as you justly term him," said the ecclesiastic, "indeed excellent — excellent in his life and doctrine — excellent, above all, in his self-denied and disinterested sacrifice of all that life holds dear to principle and to friendship. But you shall read his history. I shall be happy at once to gratify your curiosity, and to shew my sense of your kindness, if you will have the goodness to procure me the means of accomplishing my object."

I replied to the Benedictine, that, as the rubbish amongst which he proposed to search was no part of the ordinary burial-ground, and as I was on the best terms with the sexton, I had little doubt that I could procure him the means of executing his pious purpose.

With this promise we parted for the night; and on the ensuing morning I made it my business to see the sexton, who, for a small gratuity, readily granted permission of search, on condition, however, that he should be present himself, to see that the stranger removed nothing of intrinsic value.

"To banes, and skulls, and hearts, if he can find ony, he shall be welcome," said this guardian of the ruined Monastery, "there's plenty a' about, an he's curious of them; but if there be ony picts" (meaning perhaps *pyx*) "or chalishes, or the like of such Popish veshells of gold and silver, deil hae me an I conneeve at their being removed."

The sexton also stipulated, that our researches should take place at night, being unwilling to excite observation, or give rise to scandal.

My new acquaintance and I spent the day as became lovers of hoar antiquity. We visited every corner of these magnificent ruins again and again during the forenoon; and, having made a comfortable dinner at David's, we walked in the afternoon to such places in the neighbourhood as

ancient tradition or modern conjecture had rendered markworthy. Night found us in the interior of the ruins, attended by the sexton, who carried a dark lantern, and stumbling alternately over the graves of the dead, and the fragments of that architecture, "which they doubtless trusted would have canopied their bones till doomsday."

I am by no means particularly superstitious, and yet there was that in the present service which I did not very much like. There was something awful in the resolution of disturbing, at such an hour, and in such a place, the still and mute sanctity of the grave. My companions were free from this impression — the stranger from his energetic desire to execute the purpose for which he came — and the sexton from habitual indifference. We soon stood in the aisle, which, by the account of the Benedictine, contained the bones of the family of Glendinning, and were busily employed in removing the rubbish from a corner which the stranger pointed out. If a half-pay Captain could have represented an ancient Border-knight, or an ex-Benedictine of the nineteenth century a wizard monk of the sixteenth, we might have aptly enough personified the search after Michael Scott's lamp and book of magic power. But the sexton would have been *de trop* in the group.[1]

Ere the stranger, assisted by the sexton in his task, had been long at work, they came to some hewn stones, which seemed to have made part of a small shrine, though now displaced and destroyed.

"Let us remove these with caution, my friend," said the stranger, "lest we injure that which I come to seek."

"They are prime stanes," said the sexton, "picked free every ane of them; — warse than the best wad never serve the monks, I'se warrant."

A minute after he had made this observation, he exclaimed, "I hae fund something now that stands again' the spade, as if it were neither earth nor stane."

The stranger stooped eagerly to assist him.

"Na, na, haill o' my ain," said the sexton; "nae halves or quarters;" — and he lifted from amongst the ruins a small leaden box.

"You will be disappointed, my friend," said the Benedictine, "if you expect any thing there but the mouldering dust of a human heart, closed in an inner case of porphyry."

I interposed as a neutral party, and taking the box from the sexton, reminded him, that if there were treasure concealed in it, still it could not become the property of the finder. I then proposed, that as the place was too dark to examine the contents of the leaden casket, we should adjourn to David's, where we might have the advantage of light and fire while carrying on our investigation. The stranger requested us to go before, assuring us that he would follow in a few minutes.

I fancy that old Mattocks suspected these few minutes might be employed in effecting farther discoveries amongst the tombs, for he glided back through a side-aisle to watch the Benedictine's motions, but presently returned, and told me in a whisper, that "the gentleman was on his knees amang the cauld stanes, praying like ony saunt."

I stole back, and beheld the old man actually employed as Mattocks had informed me. The language seemed to be Latin; and as the whispered, yet solemn accent, glided away through the ruined aisles, I could not help reflecting how long it was since they had heard the forms of that religion, for the exercise of which they had been reared at such cost of time, taste, labour, and expense. "Come away, come away," said I; "let us leave him to himself, Mattocks; this is no business of ours."

"My certes, no, Captain," said Mattocks; "ne'ertheless, it winna be amiss to keep an ee on him. My father, rest his saul, was a horse-couper, and used to say he never was cheated in a naig in his life, saving by a west-country whig frae Kilmarnock, that said a grace ower a dram o' whisky. But this gentleman will be a Roman, I'se warrant?"

"You are perfectly right in that, Saunders," said I.

"Ay, I have seen twa or three of their priests that were chased ower here some score o' years syne. They just danced like mad when they looked on the friars' heads, and the nuns' heads, in the cloister yonder; they took to them like auld acquaintance like. — Od, he is not stirring yet, mair than he were a through-stane![2] I never kend a Roman, to say kend him, but ane — mair by token, he was the only ane in the town to ken — and that was auld Jock of the Pend. It wad hae been lang ere ye fand Jock praying in the Abbey in a thick night, wi' his knees on a cauld stane. Jock likit a kirk wi' a chimley in 't. Mony a merry ploy I hae had wi' him down at the inn yonder; and when he died, decently I wad hae earded him; but, or I gat his grave weel howkit, some of the quality, that were o' his ain unhappy persuasion, had the corpse whirried away up the water, and buried him after their ain pleasure, doubtless — they kend best. I wad hae made nae great charge. I wadna hae excised Johnnie, dead or alive. — Stay, see — the strange gentleman is coming."

"Hold the lantern to assist him, Mattocks," said I. — "This is rough walking, sir."

[1] This is one of those passages which must now read awkwardly, since every one knows that the Novelist and the author of the Lay of the Minstrel, is the same person. But before the avowal was made, the author was forced into this and similar offences against good taste, to meet an argument, often repeated, that there was something very mysterious in the Author of Waverley's reserve concerning Sir Walter Scott, an author sufficiently voluminous at least. I had a great mind to remove the passages from this edition, but the more candid way is to explain how they came there.

[2] A tombstone.

"Yes," replied the Benedictine; "I may say with a poet, who is doubtless familiar to you ——"

I should be surprised if he were, thought I internally.

The stranger continued:

"Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
Have my old feet stumbled at graves!"

"We are now clear of the churchyard," said I, "and have but a short walk to David's, where I hope we shall find a cheerful fire to enliven us after our night's work,"

We entered, accordingly, the little parlour, into which Mattocks was also about to push himself with sufficient effrontery, when David, with a most astounding oath, expelled him by head and shoulders, d—ning his curiosity, that would not let gentlemen be private in their own inn. Apparently mine host considered his own presence as no intrusion, for he crowded up to the table on which I had laid down the leaden box. It was frail and wasted, as might be guessed, from having lain so many years in the ground. On opening it, we found deposited within, a case made of porphyry, as the stranger had announced to us.

"I fancy," he said, "gentlemen, your curiosity will not be satisfied,—perhaps I should say that your suspicions will not be removed,—unless I undo this casket; yet it only contains the mouldering remains of a heart, once the seat of the noblest thoughts."

He undid the box with great caution; but the shrivelled substance which it contained bore now no resemblance to what it might once have been, the means used having been apparently unequal to preserve its shape and colour, although they were adequate to prevent its total decay. We were quite satisfied, notwithstanding, that it was, what the stranger asserted, the remains of a human heart; and David readily promised his influence in the village, which was almost co-ordinate with that of the bailie himself, to silence all idle rumours. He was, moreover, pleased to favour us with his company to supper; and having taken the lion's share of two bottles of sherry, he not only sanctioned with his plenary authority the stranger's removal of the heart, but, I believe, would have authorized the removal of the Abbey itself, were it not that it happens considerably to advantage the worthy publican's own custom.

The object of the Benedictine's visit to the land of his forefathers being now accomplished, he announced his intention of leaving us early in the ensuing day, but requested my company to breakfast with him before his departure. I came accordingly, and when we had finished our morning's meal, the priest took me apart, and pulling from his pocket a large bundle of papers, he put them into my hands. "These," said he, "Captain Clutterbuck, are genuine Memoirs of the sixteenth century, and exhibit in a singular, and, as I think, an interesting point of view, the manners of that period. I am induced to believe that their publication will not be an unacceptable present to the British public; and willingly make over to you any profit that may accrue from such a transaction."

I stared a little at this annunciation, and observed, that the hand seemed too modern for the date he assigned to the manuscript.

"Do not mistake me, sir," said the Benedictine; "I did not mean to say the Memoirs were written in the sixteenth century, but only, that they were compiled from authentic materials of that period, but written in the taste and language of the present day. My uncle commenced this book; and I partly to improve my habit of English composition, partly to divert melancholy thoughts, amused my leisure hours with continuing and concluding it. You will see the period of the story where my uncle leaves off his narrative, and I commence mine. In fact, they relate in a great measure to different persons, as well as to a different period.

Retaining the papers in my hand, I proceeded to state to him my doubts, whether, as a good Protestant, I could undertake or superintend a publication written probably in the spirit of Popery.

"You will find," he said, "no matter of controversy in these sheets, nor any sentiments stated, with which, I trust, the good in all persuasions will not be willing to join. I remembered I was writing for a land unhappily divided from the Catholic faith; and I have taken care to say nothing which, justly interpreted, could give ground for accusing me of partiality. But if, upon collating my narrative with the proofs to which I refer you—for you will find copies of many of the original papers in that parcel—you are of opinion that I have been partial to my own faith, I freely give you leave to correct my errors in that respect. I own, however, I am not conscious of this defect, and have rather to fear that the Catholics may be of opinion, that I have mentioned circumstances respecting the decay of discipline which preceded, and partly occasioned, the great schism, called by you the Reformation, over which I ought to have drawn a veil. And indeed, this is one reason why I choose the papers should appear in a foreign land, and pass to the press through the hands of a stranger."

To this I had nothing to reply, unless to object my own incompetency to the task the good father was desirous to impose upon me. On this subject he was pleased to say more, I fear, than his knowledge of me fully warranted—more, at any rate, than my modesty will permit me to record. At length he ended, with advising me, if I continued to feel the diffidence which I stated, to apply to some veteran of literature, whose experience might supply my deficiencies. Upon these terms we parted, with mutual expressions of regard, and I have never since heard of him.

After several attempts to peruse the quires of paper thus singularly conferred on me, in which I was interrupted by the most inexplicable fits of

yawning, I at length, in a sort of despair, communicated them to our village club, from whom they found a more favourable reception than the unlucky conformation of my nerves had been able to afford them. They unanimously pronounced the work to be exceedingly good, and assured me I would be guilty of the greatest possible injury to our flourishing village, if I should suppress what threw such an interesting and radiant light upon the history of the ancient Monastery of Saint Mary.

At length, by dint of listening to their opinion, I became dubious of my own; and, indeed, when I heard passages read forth by the sonorous voice of our worthy pastor, I was scarce more tired than I have felt myself at some of his own sermons. Such, and so great is the difference betwixt reading a thing one's self, making toilsome way through all the difficulties of manuscript, and, as the man says in the play, "having the same read to you;" —it is positively like being wafted over a creek in a boat, or wading through it on your feet, with the mud up to your knees. Still, however, there remained the great difficulty of finding some one who could act as editor, correcter at once of the press and of the language, which, according to the schoolmaster, was absolutely necessary.

Since the trees walked forth to choose themselves a king, never was an honour so bandied about. The parson would not leave the quiet of his chimney-corner — the bailie pleaded the dignity of his situation, and the approach of the great annual fair, as reasons against going to Edinburgh to make arrangements for printing the Benedictine's manuscript. The schoolmaster alone seemed of malleable stuff; and, desirous perhaps of emulating the fame of Jedediah Cleishbotham, evinced a wish to undertake this momentous commission. But a remonstrance from three opulent farmers, whose sons he had at bed, board, and schooling, for twenty pounds per annum a-head, came like a frost over the blossoms of his literary ambition, and he was compelled to decline the service.

In these circumstances, sir, I apply to you, by the advice of our little council of war, nothing doubting you will not be disinclined to take the duty upon you, as it is much connected with that in which you have distinguished yourself. What I request is, that you will review, or rather revise and correct, the enclosed packet, and prepare it for the press, by such alterations, additions, and curtailments, as you think necessary. Forgive my hinting to you, that the deepest well may be exhausted, — the best corps of grenadiers, as our old general of brigade expressed himself, may be *used up*. A few hints can do you no harm; and, for the prize-money, let the battle be first won, and it shall be parted at the drum-head. I hope you will take nothing amiss that I have said. I am a plain soldier, and little accustomed to compliments. I may add, that I should be well contented to march in the front with you — that is, to put my name with yours on the title-page. I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your unknown humble Servant,

Cuthbert Clutterbuck.

Village of Kennaquhair,
— *of April*, 18—

For the Author of "Waverley," &c.
care of Mr John Ballantyne,
Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

ANSWER BY "THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY,"

TO THE FOREGOING

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN CLUTTERBUCK.

Dear Captain,

Do not admire, that, notwithstanding the distance and ceremony of your address, I return an answer in the terms of familiarity. The truth is, your origin and native country are better known to me than even to yourself. You derive your respectable parentage, if I am not greatly mistaken, from a land which has afforded much pleasure, as well as profit, to those who have traded to it successfully, —I mean that part of the *terra incognita* which is called the province of Utopia. Its productions, though censured by many (and some who use tea and tobacco without scruple) as idle and unsubstantial luxuries, have nevertheless, like many other luxuries, a general acceptation, and are secretly enjoyed even by those who express the greatest scorn and dislike of them in public. The dram-drinker is often the first to be shocked at the smell of spirits — it is not unusual to hear old maiden ladies declaim against scandal — the private book-

cases of some grave-seeming men would not brook decent eyes — and many, I say not of the wise and learned, but of those most anxious to seem such, when the spring-lock of their library is drawn, their velvet cap pulled over their ears, their feet insinuated into their turkey slippers, are to be found, were their retreats suddenly intruded upon, busily engaged with the last new novel.

I have said, the truly wise and learned disdain these shifts, and will open the said novel as avowedly as they would the lid of their snuff-box. I will only quote one instance, though I know a hundred. Did you know the celebrated Watt of Birmingham, Captain Clutterbuck? I believe not, though, from what I am about to state, he would not have failed to have sought an acquaintance with you. It was only once my fortune to meet him, whether in body or in spirit it matters not. There were assembled about half-a-score of our Northern Lights, who had amongst them, Heaven knows how, a well known character of your country, Jedediah Cleishbotham. This worthy person, having come to Edinburgh during the Christmas vacation, had become a sort of lion in the place, and was led in leash from house to house along with the guisards, the stone-eater, and other amusements of the season, which "exhibited their unparalleled feats to private family-parties, if required." Amidst this company stood Mr Watt, the man whose genius discovered the means of multiplying our national resources to a degree perhaps even beyond his own stupendous powers of calculation and combination; bringing the treasures of the abyss to the summit of the earth — giving the feeble arm of man the momentum of an Afrite — commanding manufactures to arise, as the rod of the prophet produced water in the desert — affording the means of dispensing with that time and tide which wait for no man, and of sailing without that wind which defied the commands and threats of Xerxes himself.[1] This potent commander of the elements — this abridger of time and space — this magician, whose cloudy machinery has produced a change on the world, the effects of which, extraordinary as they are, are perhaps only now beginning to be felt — was not only the most profound man of science, the most successful combiner of powers and calculator of numbers as adapted to practical purposes, — was not only one of the most generally well-informed, — but one of the best and kindest of human beings.

There he stood, surrounded by the little band I have mentioned of Northern literati, men not less tenacious, generally speaking, of their own fame and their own opinions, than the national regiments are supposed to be jealous of the high character which they have won upon service. Methinks I yet see and hear what I shall never see or hear again. In his eighty-fifth year, the alert, kind, benevolent old man, had his attention alive to every one's question, his information at every one's command.

His talents and fancy overflowed on every subject. One gentleman was a deep philologist, — he talked with him on the origin of the alphabet as if he had been coeval with Cadmus; another a celebrated critic, — you would have said the old man had studied political economy and belles-lettres all his life, — of science it is unnecessary to speak, it was his own distinguished walk. And yet, Captain Clutterbuck, when he spoke with your countryman Jedediah Cleishbotham, you would have sworn he had been coeval with Claver'se and Burley, with the persecutors and persecuted, and could number every shot the dragoons had fired at the fugitive Covenanters. In fact, we discovered that no novel of the least celebrity escaped his perusal, and that the gifted man of science was as much addicted to the productions of your native country, (the land of Utopia aforesaid,) in other words, as shameless and obstinate a peruser of novels, as if he had been a very milliner's apprentice of eighteen. I know little apology for troubling you with these things, excepting the desire to commemorate a delightful evening, and a wish to encourage you to shake off that modest diffidence which makes you afraid of being supposed connected with the fairy-land of delusive fiction. I will requite your tag of verse, from Horace himself, with a paraphrase for your own use, my dear Captain, and for that of your country club, excepting in reverence the clergyman and schoolmaster:—

Ne sit ancillæ tibi amor pudori, &c
Take thou no scorn,
Of fiction born,
Fair fiction's muse to woo:
Old Homer's theme
Was but a dream,
Himself a fiction too.

Having told you your country, I must next, my dear Captain Clutterbuck, make free to mention your own immediate descent. You are not to suppose your land of prodigies so little known to us as the careful concealment of your origin would seem to imply. But you have it in common with many of your country, studiously and anxiously to hide any connection with it. There is this difference, indeed, betwixt your countrymen and those of our more material world, that many of the most estimable of them, such as an old Highland gentleman called Ossian, a monk of Bristol called Rowley and others, are inclined to pass themselves off as denizens of the land of reality, whereas most of our fellow-citizens who deny their country are such as that country would be very willing to disclaim. The especial circumstances you mention relating to your life and services, impose not upon us. We know

[1] Probably the ingenious author alludes to the national adage:

The king said sail,
But the wind said no.

Our schoolmaster (who is also a land-surveyor) thinks this whole passage refers to Mr Watt's improvements on the steam-engine. — *Note by* Captain Clutterbuck.

the versatility of the unsubstantial species to which you belong permits them to assume all manner of disguises; we have seen them apparelled in the caftan of a Persian, and the silken robe of a Chinese,[1] and are prepared to suspect their real character under every disguise. But how can we be ignorant of your country and manners, or deceived by the evasion of its inhabitants, when the voyages of discovery which have been made to it rival in number those recorded by Purchas or by Hackluyt?[2] And to shew the skill and perseverance of your navigators and travellers, we have only to name Sindbad, Aboulfouaris, and Robinson Crusoe. These were the men for discoveries. Could we have sent Captain Greenland to look out for the north-west passage, or Peter Wilkins to examine Baffin's Bay, what discoveries might we not have expected? But there are feats, and these both numerous and extraordinary, performed by the inhabitants of your country, which we read without once attempting to emulate.

I wander from my purpose, which was to assure you, that I know you as well as the mother who did *not* bear you, for MacDuff's peculiarity sticks to your whole race. You are not born of woman, unless, indeed, in that figurative sense, in which the celebrated Maria Edgeworth may, in her state of single blessedness, be termed mother of the finest family in England. You belong, sir, to the Editors of the land of Utopia, a sort of persons for whom I have the highest esteem. How is it possible it should be otherwise, when you reckon among your corporation the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli, the short-faced president of the Spectator's Club, poor Ben Silton, and many others, who have acted as gentlemen-ushers to works which have cheered our heaviest, and added wings to our lightest hours?

What I have remarked as peculiar to Editors of the class in which I venture to enrol you, is the happy combination of fortuitous circumstances which usually put you in possession of the works which you have the goodness to bring into public notice. One walks on the sea-shore, and a wave casts on land a small cylindrical trunk or casket, containing a manuscript much damaged with sea-water, which is with difficulty deciphered, and so forth.[3] Another steps into a chandler's shop, to purchase a pound of butter, and, behold! the waste-paper on which it is laid is the manuscript of a cabalist.[4] A third is so fortunate as to obtain from a woman who lets lodgings, the curious contents of an antique bureau, the property of a deceased lodger.[5] All these are certainly possible occurrences; but I know not how, they seldom occur to any Editors save those of your country. At least I can answer for myself, that in my solitary walks by the sea, I never saw it cast ashore any thing but dulse and tangle, and now and then a deceased star-fish; my landlady never presented me with any manuscript save her cursed bill; and the most interesting of my discoveries in the way of waste-paper, was finding a favourite passage of one of my own novels wrapt round an ounce of snuff. No, Captain, the funds from which I have drawn my power of amusing the public, have been bought otherwise than by fortuitous adventure. I have buried myself in libraries, to extract from the nonsense of ancient days new nonsense of my own. I have turned over volumes, which, from the pot-hooks I was obliged to decipher, might have been the cabalistic manuscripts of Cornelius Agrippa, although I never saw "the door open and the devil come in."[6] But all the domestic inhabitants of the libraries were disturbed by the vehemence of my studies;—

> From my research the boldest spider fled,
> And moths, retreating, trembled as I read.

From this learned sepulchre I emerged like the Magician in the Persian Tales, from his twelve-month's residence in the mountain, not like him to soar over the heads of the multitude, but to mingle in the crowd, and to elbow amongst the throng, making my way from the highest society to the lowest, undergoing the scorn, or, what is harder to brook, the patronizing condescension of the one, and enduring the vulgar familiarity of the other,—and all, you will say, for what?—to collect materials for one of those manuscripts with which mere chance so often accommodates your countrymen; in other words, to write a successful novel.—"O Athenians, how hard we labour to deserve your praise!"

I might stop here, my dear Clutterbuck; it would have a touching effect, and the air of proper deference to our dear Public. But I will not be false with you,—(though falsehood is—excuse the observation—the current coin of your country,) the truth is, I have studied and lived for the purpose of gratifying my own curiosity, and passing my own time; and though the result has been, that, in one shape or other, I have been frequently before the Public, perhaps more frequently than prudence warranted, yet I cannot claim from them the favour due to those who have dedicated their ease and leisure to the improvement and entertainment of others.

Having communicated thus freely with you, my dear Captain, it follows, of course, that I will gratefully accept of your communication, which, as your Benedictine observed, divides itself both by subject, manner, and age, into two parts. But I am sorry I cannot gratify your literary ambition, by suffering your name to appear upon the title-page; and I will candidly tell you the reason.

The Editors of your country are of such a soft

[1] See The Persian Letters, and The Citizen of the World.
[2] See Les Voyages Imaginaires.
[3] See the History of Automathes.
[4] Adventures of a Guinea.
[5] Adventures of an Atom.

[6] See Southey's Ballad on the Young Man who read in a Conjurer's Books.

and passive disposition, that they have frequently done themselves great disgrace by giving up the coadjutors who first brought them into public notice and public favour, and suffering their names to be used by those quacks and impostors who live upon the ideas of others. Thus I shame to tell how the sage Cid Hamet Benengeli was induced by one Juan Avellaneda to play the Turk with the ingenious Miguel Cervantes, and to publish a Second Part of the adventures of his hero the renowned Don Quixote, without the knowledge or co-operation of his principal aforesaid. It is true, the Arabian sage returned to his allegiance, and thereafter composed a genuine continuation of the Knight of La Mancha, in which the said Avellaneda of Tordesillas is severely chastised. For in this you pseudo-editors resemble the juggler's disciplined ape, to which a sly old Scotsman likened James I., "if you have Jackoo in your hand, you can make him bite me; if I have Jackoo in my hand, I can make him bite you." Yet, notwithstanding the *amende honorable* thus made by Cid Hamet Benengeli, his temporary defection did not the less occasion the decease of the ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote, if he can be said to die, whose memory is immortal. Cervantes put him to death, lest he should again fall into bad hands. Awful, yet just consequence of Cid Hamet's defection!

To quote a more modern and much less important instance. I am sorry to observe my old acquaintance Jedediah Cleishbotham has misbehaved himself so far as to desert his original patron, and set up for himself. I am afraid the poor pedagogue will make little by his new allies, unless the pleasure of entertaining the public, and, for aught I know, the gentlemen of the long robe, with disputes about his identity.[1] Observe, therefore, Captain Clutterbuck, that, wise by these great examples, I receive you as a partner, but a sleeping partner only. As I give you no title to employ or use the firm of the copartnery we are about to form, I will announce my property in my title-page, and put my own mark on my own chattels, which the attorney tells me it will be a crime to counterfeit, as much as it would to imitate the autograph of any other empiric—a crime amounting, as advertisements upon little vials assure to us, to nothing short of felony. If, therefore, my dear friend, your name should hereafter appear in any title-page without mine, readers will know what to think of you. I scorn to use either arguments or threats; but you cannot but be sensible, that, as you owe your literary existence to me on the one hand, so, on the other, your very all is at my disposal. I can at pleasure cut off your annuity, strike your name from the half-pay establishment, nay, actually put you to death, without being answerable to any one. These are plain words to a gentleman who has served during the whole war; but, I am aware, you will take nothing amiss at my hands.

And now, my good sir, let us address ourselves to our task, and arrange as we best can the manuscript of your Benedictine, so as to suit the taste of this critical age. You will find I have made very liberal use of his permission, to alter whatever seemed too favourable to the Church of Rome, which I abominate, were it but for her fasts and penances.

Our reader is doubtless impatient, and we must own, with John Bunyan,

> We have too long detain'd him in the porch,
> And kept him from the sunshine with a torch.

Adieu, therefore, my dear Captain—remember me respectfully to the parson, the schoolmaster, and the bailie, and all friends of the happy club in the village of Kennaquhair. I have never seen, and never shall see, one of their faces; and notwithstanding, I believe that as yet I am better acquainted with them than any other man who lives.—I shall soon introduce you to my jocund friend, Mr John Ballantyne of Trinity Grove, whom you will find warm from his match at single-stick with a brother Publisher.[2] Peace to their differences! It is a wrathful trade, and the *irritabile genus* comprehends the bookselling as well as the book-writing species.—Once more adieu!

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

[1] I am since more correctly informed, that Mr Cleishbotham died some months since at Gandercleugh, and that the person assuming his name is an impostor. The real Jedediah made a most Christian and edifying end; and, as I am credibly informed, having sent for a Cameronian clergyman when he was *in extremis*, was so fortunate as to convince the good man, that, after all, he had no wish to bring down on the scattered remnant of Mountain folks, "the bonnets of Bonny Dundee." Hard that the speculators in print and paper will not allow a good man to rest quiet in his grave!

This note, and the passages in the text, were occasioned by a London bookseller having printed, as a speculation, an additional collection of Tales of My Landlord, which was not so fortunate as to succeed in passing on the world as genuine.

[2] In consequence of the pseudo Tales of My Landlord printed in London, as already mentioned, the late Mr John Ballantyne, the author's publisher, had a controversy with the interloping bibliopolist, each insisting that his Jedediah Cleishbotham was the real Simon Pure.

The Monastery.

CHAPTER I.

O ay! the Monks, the Monks they did the mischief!
Theirs all the grossness, all the superstition
Of a most gross and superstitious age —
May He be praised that sent the healthful tempest
And scatter'd all these pestilential vapours!
But that we owed them *all* to yonder Harlot
Throned on the seven hills with her cup of gold,
I will as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,
That old Moll White took wing with cat and broomstick,
And raised the last night's thunder.

Old Play.

The village described in the Benedictine's manuscript by the name of Kennaquhair, bears the same Celtic termination which occurs in Traquhair, Caquhair, and other compounds. The learned Chalmers derives this word Quhair, from the winding course of a stream; a definition which coincides, in a remarkable degree, with the serpentine turns of the river Tweed near the village of which we speak. It has been long famous for the splendid Monastery of Saint Mary, founded by David the First of Scotland, in whose reign were formed, in the same county, the no less splendid establishments of Melrose, Jedburgh, and Kelso. The donations of land with which the King endowed these wealthy fraternities procured him from the Monkish historians the epithet of Saint, and from one of his impoverished descendants the splenetic censure, "that he had been a sore saint for the Crown."

It seems probable, notwithstanding, that David, who was a wise as well as a pious monarch, was not moved solely by religious motives to those great acts of munificence to the church, but annexed political views to his pious generosity. His possessions in Northumberland and Cumberland became precarious after the loss of the Battle of the Standard; and since the comparatively fertile valley of Teviotdale was likely to become the frontier of his kingdom, it is probable he wished to secure at least a part of these valuable possessions by placing them in the hands of the monks, whose property was for a long time respected, even amidst the rage of a frontier war. In this manner alone had the King some chance of ensuring protection and security to the cultivators of the soil; and, in fact, for several ages the possessions of these Abbeys were each a sort of Goshen, enjoying the calm light of peace and immunity, while the rest of the country, occupied by wild clans and marauding barons, was one dark scene of confusion. blood, and unremitted outrage.

But these immunities did not continue down to the union of the crowns. Long before that period the wars betwixt England and Scotland had lost their original character of international hostilities, and had become on the part of the English a struggle for subjugation, on that of the Scots a desperate and infuriated defence of their liberties. This introduced on both sides a degree of fury and animosity unknown to the earlier period of their history; and as religious scruples soon gave way to national hatred spurred by a love of plunder, the patrimony of the Church was no longer sacred from incursions on either side. Still, however, the tenants and vassals of the great Abbeys had many advantages over those of the lay barons, who were harassed by constant military duty, until they became desperate, and lost all relish for the arts of peace. The vassals of the church, on the other hand, were only liable to be called to arms on general occasions, and at other times were permitted in comparative quiet to possess their farms and feus.[1] They of course exhibited superior skill in every thing that related to the cultivation of the soil, and were therefore both wealthier and better informed than the military retainers of the restless chiefs and nobles in their neighbourhood.

The residence of these church vassals was usually in a small village or hamlet, where, for the sake of mutual aid and protection, some thirty or forty families dwelt together. This was called the Town, and the land belonging to the various families by whom the Town was inhabited, was called the Township. They usually possessed the land in common, though in various proportions, according to their several grants. The part of the Township properly arable, and kept as such continually under the plough, was called *in-field*. Here the use of quantities of manure supplied in some degree the exhaustion of the soil, and the feuars raised tolerable oats and bear,[2] usually sowed on alternate ridges, on which the labour of the whole community was bestowed without distinction, the produce being divided after harvest, agreeably to their respective interests.

There was, besides, *out-field* land, from which it was thought possible to extract a crop now and then, after which it was abandoned to the "skiey influences," until the exhausted powers of vegetation were restored. These out-field spots were selected by any feuar at his own choice, amongst the sheep-walks and hills which were always annexed to the Township, to serve as pasturage to the community.

1 Small possessions conferred upon vassals and their heirs, held for a small quit-rent, or a moderate proportion of the produce. This was a favourite manner, by which the churchmen peopled the patrimony of their convents; and many descendants of such *feuars*, as they are called, are still to be found in possession of their family inheritances in the neighbourhood of the great Monasteries of Scotland.

2 Or bigg, a coarse kind of barley.

The trouble of cultivating these patches of out-field and the precarious chance that the crop would pay the labour, were considered as giving a right to any feuar, who chose to undertake the adventure, to the produce which might result from it.

There remained the pasturage of extensive moors, where the valleys often afforded good grass, and upon which the whole cattle belonging to the community fed indiscriminately during the summer, under the charge of the Town-herd, who regularly drove them out to pasture in the morning, and brought them back at night, without which precaution they would have fallen a speedy prey to some of the Snatchers in the neighbourhood. These are things to make modern agriculturists hold up their hands and stare; but the same mode of cultivation is not yet entirely in desuetude in some distant parts of North Britain, and may be witnessed in full force and exercise in the Zetland Archipelago.

The habitations of the church-feuars were not less primitive than their agriculture. In each village or Town were several small towers, having battlements projecting over the side-walls, and usually an advanced angle or two with shot-holes for flanking the door-way, which was always defended by a strong door of oak, studded with nails, and often by an exterior grated door of iron. These small peel-houses were ordinarily inhabited by the principal feuars and their families; but, upon the alarm of approaching danger, the whole inhabitants thronged from their own miserable cottages, which were situated around, to garrison these points of defence. It was then no easy matter for a hostile party to penetrate into the village, for the men were habituated to the use of bows and fire-arms, and the towers being generally so placed, that the discharge from one crossed that of another, it was impossible to assault any of them individually.

The interior of these houses was usually sufficiently wretched, for it would have been folly to have furnished them in a manner which could excite the avarice of their lawless neighbours. Yet the families themselves exhibited in their appearance a degree of comfort, information, and independence, which could hardly have been expected. Their in-field supplied them with bread and home-brewed ale, their herds and flocks with beef and mutton, (the extravagance of killing lambs or calves was never thought of.) Each family killed a mart, or fat bullock, in November, which was salted up for winter use, to which the goodwife could, upon great occasions, add a dish of pigeons or a fat capon, — the ill-cultivated garden afforded "lang-cale,"—and the river gave salmon to serve as a relish during the season of Lent.

Of fuel they had plenty, for the bogs afforded turf; and the remains of the abused woods continued to give them logs for burning, as well as timber for the usual domestic purposes. In addition to these comforts, the goodman would now and then sally forth to the greenwood, and mark down a buck of season with his gun or his cross-bow; and the Father Confessor seldom refused him absolution for the trespass, if duly invited to take his share of the smoking haunch. Some, still bolder, made, either with their own domestics, or by associating themselves with the moss-troopers, in the language of shepherds, "a start and ower-loup;" and the golden ornaments and silken head-gear worn by the females of one or two families of note, were invidiously traced by their neighbours to such successful excursions. This, however, was a more inexpiable crime in the eyes of the Abbot and Community of Saint Mary's, than the borrowing one of the "gude king's deer;" and they failed not to discountenance and punish, by every means in their power, offences which were sure to lead to severe retaliation upon the property of the church, and which tended to alter the character of their peaceful vassalage.

As for the information possessed by those dependents of the Abbacies, they might have been truly said to be better fed than taught, even though their fare had been worse than it was. Still, however, they enjoyed opportunities of knowledge from which others were excluded. The Monks were in general well acquainted with their vassals and tenants, and familiar in the families of the better class among them, where they were sure to be received with the respect due to their twofold character of spiritual father and secular landlord. Thus it often happened, when a boy displayed talents and inclination for study, one of the brethren, with a view to his being bred to the church, or out of good-nature, in order to pass away his own idle time, if he had no better motive, initiated him into the mysteries of reading and writing, and imparted to him such other knowledge as he himself possessed. And the heads of these allied families, having more time for reflection, and more skill, as well as stronger motives for improving their small properties, bore amongst their neighbours the character of shrewd, intelligent men, who claimed respect on account of their comparative wealth, even while they were despised for a less warlike and enterprising turn than the other Borderers. They lived as much as they well could amongst themselves, avoiding the company of others, and dreading nothing more than to be involved in the deadly feuds and ceaseless contentions of the secular landholders.

Such is a general picture of these communities. During the fatal wars in the commencement of Queen Mary's reign, they had suffered dreadfully by the hostile invasions. For the English, now a Protestant people, were so far from sparing the church-lands, that they forayed them with more unrelenting severity than even the possessions of the laity. But the peace of 1550 had restored some degree of tranquillity to these distracted and harassed regions, and matters began again gradually to settle upon the former footing. The monks repaired their ravaged shrines — the feuar again roofed his small fortalice which the enemy had ruined — the poor labourer rebuilt his cottage — an easy task, where a few sods, stones, and some pieces of wood from the next copse, furnished all the materials necessary. The cattle, lastly, were driven out of the wastes and thickets in which the remnant of them had been secreted; and the mighty bull moved at the head of his seraglio and their followers, to take possession of their wonted pastures. There ensued peace and quiet, the state of the age and nation considered, to the Monastery of Saint Mary, and its dependencies, for several tranquil years.

CHAPTER II.

In yon lone vale his early youth was bred,
Not solitary then — the bugle-horn
Of fell Alecto often waked its windings,
From where the brook joins the majestic river,
To the wild northern bog, the curlew's haunt,
Where oozes forth its first and feeble streamlet.
Old Play.

We have said, that most of the feuars dwelt in the village belonging to their townships. This was not, however, universally the case. A lonely tower, to which the reader must now be introduced, was at least one exception to the general rule.

It was of small dimensions, yet larger than those which occurred in the village, as intimating that, in case of assault, the proprietor would have to rely upon his own unassisted strength. Two or three miserable huts, at the foot of the fortalice, held the bondsmen and tenants of the feuar. The site was a beautiful green knoll, which started up suddenly in the very throat of a wild and narrow glen, and which, being surrounded, except on one side, by the winding of a small stream, afforded a position of considerable strength.

But the great security of Glendearg, for so the place was called, lay in its secluded, and almost hidden situation. To reach the tower, it was necessary to travel three miles up the glen, crossing about twenty times the little stream, which, winding through the narrow valley, encountered at every hundred yards the opposition of a rock or precipitous bank on the one side, which altered its course, and caused it to shoot off in an oblique direction to the other. The hills which ascend on each side of this glen are very steep, and rise boldly over the stream, which is thus imprisoned within their barriers. The sides of the glen are impracticable for horse, and are only to be traversed by means of the sheep-paths which lie along their sides. It would not be readily supposed that a road so hopeless and so difficult could lead to any habitation more important than the summer shealing of a shepherd.

Yet the glen, though lonely, nearly inaccessible, and steril, was not then absolutely void of beauty. The turf which covered the small portion of level ground on the sides of the stream, was as close and verdant as if it had occupied the scythes of a hundred gardeners once a-fortnight; and it was garnished with an embroidery of daisies and wild flowers, which the scythes would certainly have destroyed. The little brook, now confined betwixt closer limits, now left at large to choose its course through the narrow valley, danced carelessly on from stream to pool, light and unturbid, as that better class of spirits who pass their way through life, yielding to insurmountable obstacles, but as far from being subdued by them as the sailor who meets by chance with an unfavourable wind, and shapes his course so as to be driven back as little as possible.

The mountains, as they would have been called in England, *Scotticé* the steep *braes*, rose abruptly over the little glen, here presenting the gray face of a rock, from which the turf had been peeled by the torrents, and there displaying patches of wood and copse, which had escaped the waste of the cattle and the sheep of the feuars, and which, feathering naturally up the beds of empty torrents, or occupying the concave recesses of the bank, gave at once beauty and variety to the landscape. Above these scattered woods rose the hill, in barren, but purple majesty; the dark rich hue, particularly in autumn, contrasting beautifully with the thickets of oak and birch, the mountain ashes and thorns, the alders and quivering aspens, which checquered and varied the descent, and not less with the dark-green and velvet turf, which composed the level part of the narrow glen.

Yet, though thus embellished, the scene could neither be strictly termed sublime nor beautiful, and scarcely even picturesque or striking. But its extreme solitude pressed on the heart; the traveller felt that uncertainty whither he was going, or in what so wild a path was to terminate, which, at times, strikes more on the imagination than the grand features of a show-scene, when you know the exact distance of the inn where your dinner is bespoke, and at the moment preparing. These are ideas, however, of a far later age; for at the time we treat of, the picturesque, the beautiful, the sublime, and all their intermediate shades, were ideas absolutely unknown to the inhabitants and occasional visiters of Glendearg.

These had, however, attached to the scene feelings fitting the time. Its name, signifying the Red Valley, seems to have been derived, not only from the purple colour of the heath, with which the upper part of the rising banks was profusely clothed, but also from the dark red colour of the rocks, and of the precipitous earthen banks, which in that country are called *scaurs*. Another glen, about the head of Ettrick, has acquired the same name from similar circumstances; and there are probably more in Scotland to which it has been given.

As our Glendearg did not abound in mortal visitants, superstition, that it might not be absolutely destitute of inhabitants, had peopled its recesses with beings belonging to another world. The savage and capricious Brown Man of the Moors, a being which seems the genuine descendant of the northern dwarfs, was supposed to be seen there frequently, especially after the autumnal equinox, when the fogs were thick, and objects not easily distinguished. The Scottish fairies, too, a whimsical, irritable, and mischievous tribe, who, though at times capriciously benevolent, were more frequently adverse to mortals, were also supposed to have formed a residence in a particularly wild recess of the glen, of which the real name was, in allusion to that circumstance, *Corrie nan Shian*, which, in corrupted Celtic, signifies the Hollow of the Fairies. But the neighbours were more cautious in speaking about this place, and avoided giving it a name, from an idea common then throughout all the British and Celtic provinces of Scotland, and still retained in many places, that to speak either good or ill of this capricious race of imaginary beings, is to provoke their resentment, and that secrecy and silence is what they chiefly desire from those who may intrude upon their revels, or discover their haunts.

A mysterious terror was thus attached to the dale, which afforded access from the broad valley of the Tweed, up the little glen we have described, to the fortalice called the Tower of Glendearg. Beyond the knoll, where, as we have said, the tower was situated, the hills grew more steep, and narrowed on the slender brook, so as scarce to

leave a footpath; and there the glen terminated in a wild waterfall, where a slender thread of water dashed in a precipitous line of foam over two or three precipices. Yet farther in the same direction, and above these successive cataracts, lay a wild and extensive morass, frequented only by waterfowl, wide, waste, apparently almost interminable, and serving in a great measure to separate the inhabitants of the glen from those who lived to the northward.

To restless and indefatigable moss-troopers, indeed, these morasses were well known, and sometimes afforded a retreat. They often rode down the glen — called at this tower — asked and received hospitality — but still with a sort of reserve on the part of its more peaceful inhabitants, who entertained them as a party of North-American Indians might be received by a new European settler, as much out of fear as hospitality, while the uppermost wish of the landlord is the speedy departure of the savage guests.

This had not always been the current of feeling in the little valley and its tower. Simon Glendinning, its former inhabitant, boasted his connection by blood to that ancient family of Glendonwyne, on the western border. He used to narrate, at his fireside, in the autumn evenings, the feats of the family to which he belonged, one of whom fell by the side of the brave Earl of Douglas at Otterbourne. On these occasions Simon usually held upon his knee an ancient broadsword, which had belonged to his ancestors before any of the family had consented to accept a fief under the peaceful dominion of the monks of Saint Mary's. In modern days, Simon might have lived at ease on his own estate, and quietly murmured against the fate that had doomed him to dwell there, and cut off his access to martial renown. But so many opportunities, nay, so many calls there were for him, who in those days spoke big, to make good his words by his actions, that Simon Glendinning was soon under the necessity of marching with the men of the Halidome, as it was called, of Saint Mary's, in that disastrous campaign which was concluded by the battle of Pinkie.

The Catholic clergy were deeply interested in that national quarrel, the principal object of which was, to prevent the union of the infant Queen Mary with the son of the heretical Henry VIII. The Monks had called out their vassals, under an experienced leader. Many of themselves had taken arms, and marched to the field, under a banner representing a female, supposed to personify the Scottish Church, kneeling in the attitude of prayer, with the legend, *Afflictæ Sponsæ ne obliviscaris.*[1]

The Scots, however, in all their wars, had more occasion for good and cautious generals, than for excitation, whether political or enthusiastic. Their headlong and impatient courage uniformly induced them to rush into action without duly weighing either their own situation, or that of their enemies, and the inevitable consequence was frequent defeat. With the dolorous slaughter of Pinkie we have nothing to do, excepting that, among ten thousand men of low and high degree, Simon Glendinning, of the Tower of Glendearg, bit the dust, no way disparaging in his death that ancient race from which he claimed his descent.

[1] Forget not the afflicted spouse.

When the doleful news, which spread terror and mourning through the whole of Scotland, reached the Tower of Glendearg, the widow of Simon, Elspeth Brydone by her family name, was alone in that desolate habitation, excepting a hind or two, alike past martial and agricultural labour, and the helpless widows and families of those who had fallen with their master. The feeling of desolation was universal;—but what availed it? The monks, their patrons and protectors, were driven from their Abbey by the English forces, who now overran the country, and enforced at least an appearance of submission on the part of the inhabitants. The Protector, Somerset, formed a strong camp among the ruins of the ancient Castle of Roxburgh, and compelled the neighbouring country to come in, pay tribute, and take assurance from him, as the phrase then went. Indeed, there was no power of resistance remaining; and the few barons, whose high spirit disdained even the appearance of surrender, could only retreat into the wildest fastnesses of the country, leaving their houses and property to the wrath of the English, who detached parties every where to distress, by military exaction, those whose chiefs had not made their submission. The Abbot and his community having retreated beyond the Forth, their lands were severely forayed, as their sentiments were held peculiarly inimical to the alliance with England.

Amongst the troops detached on this service was a small party, commanded by Stawarth Bolton, a captain in the English army, and full of the blunt and unpretending gallantry and generosity which has so often distinguished that nation. Resistance was in vain. Elspeth Brydone, when she descried a dozen of horsemen threading their way up the glen, with a man at their head, whose scarlet cloak, bright armour, and dancing plume, proclaimed him a leader, saw no better protection for herself than to issue from the iron grate, covered with a long mourning veil, and holding one of her two sons in each hand, to meet the Englishman — state her deserted condition — place the little tower at his command — and beg for his mercy. She stated, in a few brief words, her intention, and added, "I submit, because I have nae means of resistance."

"And I do not ask your submission, mistress, for the same reason," replied the Englishman. "To be satisfied of your peaceful intentions is all I ask; and, from what you tell me, there is no reason to doubt them."

"At least, sir," said Elspeth Brydone, "take share of what our spence and our garners afford. Your horses are tired — your folk want refreshment."

"Not a whit — not a whit," answered the honest Englishman; "it shall never be said we disturbed by carousal the widow of a brave soldier, while she was mourning for her husband. — Comrades, face about. — Yet, stay," he added, checking his war-horse, "my parties are out in every direction; they must have some token that your family are under my assurance of safety. — Here, my little fellow," said he, speaking to the eldest boy, who might be about nine or ten years old, "lend me thy bonnet."

The child reddened, looked sulky, and hesitated, while the mother, with many a *fye* and *nay pshaw*, and such sarsenet chidings as tender mothers give

to spoiled children, at length succeeded in snatching the bonnet from him, and handing it to the English leader.

Stawarth Bolton took his embroidered red cross from his barret-cap, and putting it into the loop of the boy's bonnet, said to the mistress, (for the title of lady was not given to dames of her degree,) "By this token, which all my people will respect, you will be freed from any importunity on the part of our forayers."[1] He placed it on the boy's head; but it was no sooner there, than the little fellow, his veins swelling, and his eyes shooting fire through tears, snatched the bonnet from his head, and, ere his mother could interfere, skimmed it into the brook. The other boy ran instantly to fish it out again, threw it back to his brother, first taking out the cross, which, with great veneration, he kissed and put into his bosom. The Englishman was half diverted, half surprised, with the scene.

"What mean ye by throwing away Saint George's red cross?" said he to the elder boy, in a tone betwixt jest and earnest.

"Because Saint George is a southern saint," said the child, sulkily.

"Good"—said Stawarth Bolton.—"And what did you mean by taking it out of the brook again my little fellow?" he demanded of the younger.

"Because the priest says it is the common sign of salvation to all good Christians."

"Why, good again!" said the honest soldier. "I protest unto you, mistress, I envy you these boys. Are they both yours?"

Stawarth Bolton had reason to put the question, for Halbert Glendinning, the elder of the two, had hair as dark as the raven's plumage, black eyes, large, bold, and sparkling, that glittered under eyebrows of the same complexion; a skin deep embrowned, though it could not be termed swarthy, and an air of activity, frankness, and determination, far beyond his age. On the other hand, Edward, the younger brother, was light-haired, blue-eyed, and of fairer complexion, in countenance rather pale, and not exhibiting that rosy hue which colours the sanguine cheek of robust health. Yet the boy had nothing sickly or ill-conditioned in his look, but was, on the contrary, a fair and handsome child, with a smiling face, and mild, yet cheerful eye.

The mother glanced a proud motherly glance, first at the one, and then at the other, ere she answered the Englishman, "Surely, sir, they are both my children."

"And by the same father, mistress?" said Stawarth; but, seeing a blush of displeasure arise on her brow, he instantly added, "Nay, I mean no offence; I would have asked the same question at any of my gossips in merry Lincoln.—Well, dame, you have two fair boys; I would I could borrow one, for Dame Bolton and I live childless in our old hall.—Come, little fellows, which of you will go with me?"

The trembling mother, half-fearing as he spoke, drew the children towards her, one with either hand, while they both answered the stranger. "I will not go with you," said Halbert, boldly, "for you are a false-hearted Southern; and the Southerns killed my father; and I will war on you to the death, when I can draw my father's sword."

"God-a-mercy, my little levin-bolt," said Stawarth, "the goodly custom of deadly feud will never go down in thy day, I presume.—And you, my fine white-head, will you not go with me, to ride a cock-horse?"

"No," said Edward, demurely, "for you are a heretic."

"Why, God-a-mercy still!" said Stawarth Bolton. "Well, dame, I see I shall find no recruits for my troop from you; and yet I do envy you these two little chubby knaves." He sighed a moment, as was visible, in spite of gorget and corslet, and then added, "And yet, my dame and I would but quarrel which of the knaves we should like best; for I should wish for the black-eyed rogue—and she, I warrant me, for that blue-eyed, fair-haired darling. Natheless, we must brook our solitary wedlock, and wish joy to those that are more fortunate.—Sergeant Brittson, do thou remain here till recalled—protect this family, as under assurance—do them no wrong, and suffer no wrong to be done to them, as thou wilt answer it.—Dame, Brittson is a married man, old and steady; feed him on what you will, but give him not over much liquor."

Dame Glendinning again offered refreshments, but with a faltering voice, and an obvious desire her invitation should not be accepted. The fact was, that, supposing her boys as precious in the eyes of the Englishman as in her own, (the most ordinary of parental errors,) she was half afraid, that the admiration he expressed of them in his blunt manner might end in his actually carrying off one or other of the little darlings whom he appeared to covet so much. She kept hold of their hands, therefore, as if her feeble strength could have been of service, had any violence been intended, and saw with joy she could not disguise, the little party of horse countermarch, in order to descend the glen. Her feelings did not escape Stawarth Bolton, "I forgive you, dame," he said, "for being suspicious that an English falcon was hovering over your Scottish moor-brood. But fear not—those who have fewest children have fewest cares; nor does a wise man covet those of another household. Adieu, dame; when the black-eyed rogue is able to drive a foray from England, teach him to spare women and children, for the sake of Stawarth Bolton."

"God be with you, gallant Southern!" said Elspeth Glendinning, but not till he was out of hearing, spurring on his good horse to regain the head of his party, whose plumage and armour were now glancing and gradually disappearing in the distance, as they winded down the glen.

"Mother," said the elder boy, "I will not say amen to a prayer for a Southern."

"Mother," said the younger, more reverentially, "is it right to pray for a heretic?"

"The God to whom I pray only knows," answered poor Elspeth; "but these two words, Southern and heretic, have already cost Scotland ten thousand of her best and bravest, and me a husband, and you a father; and, whether blessing or banning, I never wish to hear them more.—Follow me to the Place, sir," she said to Brittson, "and such as we have to offer you shall be at your disposal."

[1] See Note A. *Stawarth Bolton*

CHAPTER III.

They lighted down on Tweed water,
And blew their coals sae het,
And fired the March and Teviotdale,
All in an evening late.
Auld Maitland.

The report soon spread through the patrimony of Saint Mary's and its vicinity, that the Mistress of Glendearg had received assurance from the English Captain, and that her cattle were not to be driven off, or her corn burned. Among others who heard this report, it reached the ears of a lady, who, once much higher in rank than Elspeth Glendinning, was now by the same calamity reduced to even greater misfortune.

She was the widow of a brave soldier, Walter Avenel, descended of a very ancient Border family, who once possessed immense estates in Eskdale. These had long since passed from them into other hands, but they still enjoyed an ancient Barony of considerable extent, not very far from the patrimony of Saint Mary's, and lying upon the same side of the river with the narrow vale of Glendearg, at the head of which was the little tower of the Glendinnings. Here they had lived, bearing a respectable rank amongst the gentry of their province, though neither wealthy nor powerful. This general regard had been much augmented by the skill, courage, and enterprise which had been displayed by Walter Avenel, the last Baron.

When Scotland began to recover from the dreadful shock she had sustained after the battle of Pinkie-Cleuch, Avenel was one of the first who, assembling a small force, set an example in those bloody and unsparing skirmishes, which shewed that a nation, though conquered and overrun by invaders, may yet wage against them such a war of detail as shall in the end become fatal to the foreigners. In one of these, however, Walter Avenel fell, and the news which came to the house of his fathers was followed by the distracting intelligence, that a party of Englishmen were coming to plunder the mansion and lands of his widow, in order, by this act of terror, to prevent others from following the example of the deceased.

The unfortunate lady had no better refuge than the miserable cottage of a shepherd among the hills, to which she was hastily removed, scarce conscious where or for what purpose her terrified attendants were removing her and her infant daughter from her own house. Here she was tended with all the duteous service of ancient times by the shepherd's wife, Tibb Tacket, who in better days had been her own bowerwoman. For a time the lady was unconscious of her misery; but when the first stunning effect of grief was so far passed away that she could form an estimate of her own situation, the widow of Avenel had cause to envy the lot of her husband in his dark and silent abode. The domestics who had guided her to her place of refuge, were presently obliged to disperse for their own safety, or to seek for necessary subsistence; and the shepherd and his wife, whose poor cottage she shared, were soon after deprived of the means of affording their late mistress even that coarse sustenance which they had gladly shared with her. Some of the English forayers had discovered and driven off the few sheep which had escaped the first researches of their avarice. Two cows shared the fate of the remnant of their stock; they had afforded the family almost their sole support, and now famine appeared to stare them in the face.

"We are broken and beggared now, out and out," said old Martin the shepherd—and he wrung his hands in the bitterness of agony, "the thieves, the harrying thieves! not a cloot left of the haill hirsel!"

"And to see poor Grizzy and Crumbie," said his wife, "turning back their necks to the byre, and routing while the stony-hearted villains were brogging them on wi' their lances!"

"There were but four of them," said Martin, "and I have seen the day forty wad not have ventured this length. But our strength and manhood is gane with our puir maister."

"For the sake of the holy rood, whisht, man," said the goodwife, "our leddy is half gane already, as ye may see by that fleightering of the ee-lid—a word mair and she 's dead outright."

"I could almost wish," said Martin, "we were a' gane, for what to do passes my puir wit. I care little for mysell, or you, Tibb,—we can make a fend—work or want—we can do baith, but she can do neither."

They canvassed their situation thus openly before the lady, convinced by the paleness of her look, her quivering lip, and dead-set eye, that she neither heard nor understood what they were saying.

"There is a way," said the shepherd, "but I kenna if she could bring her heart to it,—there 's Simon Glendinning's widow of the glen yonder, has had assurance from the Southern loons, and nae soldier to steer them for one cause or other. Now, if the leddy could bow her mind to take quarters with Elspeth Glendinning till better days cast up, nae doubt it wad be doing an honour to the like of her, but——"

"An honour," answered Tibb, "ay, by my word, sic an honour as wad be pride to her kin mony a lang year after her banes were in the mould. Oh! gudeman, to hear ye even the Lady of Avenel to seeking quarters wi' a Kirk-vassal's widow!"

"Loath should I be to wish her to it," said Martin; "but what may we do?—to stay here is mere starvation; and where to go, I 'm sure I ken nae mair than ony tup I ever herded."

"Speak no more of it," said the widow of Avenel, suddenly joining in the conversation, "I will go to the tower.—Dame Elspeth is of good folk, a widow, and the mother of orphans,—she will give us house-room until something be thought upon. These evil showers make the low bush better than no bield."

"See there, see there," said Martin, "you see the leddy has twice our sense."

"And natural it is," said Tibb, "seeing that she is convent-bred, and can lay silk broidery, forby white-seam and shell-work."

"Do you not think," said the lady to Martin, still clasping her child to her bosom, and making it clear from what motives she desired the refuge, "that Dame Glendinning will make us welcome?"

"Blithely welcome, blithely welcome, my leddy," answered Martin cheerily, "and we shall deserve a welcome at her hand. Men are scarce now, my leddy, with these wars; and gie me a thought of

time to it, I can do as gude a day's darg as ever I did in my life, and Tibb can sort cows with ony living woman."

"And muckle mair could I do," said Tibb, "were it in ony feasible house; but there will be neither pearlins to mend, nor pinners to busk up, in Elspeth Glendinning's."

"Whisht wi' your pride, woman," said the shepherd; "eneugh ye can do, baith outside and inside, an ye set your mind to it; and hard it is if we twa canna work for three folk's meat, forby my dainty wee leddy there. Come awa, come awa, nae use in staying here langer; we have five Scots miles over moss and muir, and that is nae easy walk for a leddy born and bred."

Household stuff there was little or none to remove or care for; an old pony which had escaped the plunderers, owing partly to its pitiful appearance, partly from the reluctance which it shewed to be caught by strangers, was employed to carry the few blankets, and other trifles which they possessed. When Shagram came to his master's well known whistle, he was surprised to find the poor thing had been wounded, though slightly, by an arrow, which one of the forayers had shot off in anger after he had long chased it in vain.

"Ay, Shagram," said the old man, as he applied something to the wound, "must you rue the langbow as weel as all of us?"

"What corner in Scotland rues it not!" said the Lady of Avenel.

"Ay, ay, madam," said Martin, "God keep the kindly Scot from the cloth-yard shaft, and he will keep himself from the handy stroke. But let us go our way; the trash that is left I can come back for. There is nae ane to stir it but the good neighbours, and they ——"

"For the love of God, goodman," said his wife, in a remonstrating tone, "haud your peace! Think what ye're saying, and we hae sae muckle wild land to go over before we win to the girth gate."

The husband nodded acquiescence; for it was deemed highly imprudent to speak of the fairies either by their title of *good neighbours* or by any other, especially when about to pass the places which they were supposed to haunt.[1]

They set forward on their pilgrimage on the last day of October. "This is thy birth-day, my sweet Mary," said the mother, as a sting of bitter recollection crossed her mind. "Oh, who could have believed that the head, which, a few years since, was cradled amongst so many rejoicing friends, may perhaps this night seek a cover in vain!"

The exiled family then set forward,—Mary Avenel, a lovely girl between five and six years old, riding gipsy fashion upon Shagram, betwixt two bundles of bedding; the Lady of Avenel walking by the animal's side; Tibb leading the bridle, and old Martin walking a little before, looking anxiously around him to explore the way.

Martin's task as guide, after two or three miles' walking, became more difficult than he himself had expected, or than he was willing to avow. It happened that the extensive range of pasturage, with which he was conversant, lay to the west, and to get into the little valley of Glendearg he had to proceed easterly. In the wilder districts of Scotland, the passage from one vale to another, otherwise than by descending that which you leave, and reascending the other, is often very difficult.—Heights and hollows, mosses and rocks intervene, and all those local impediments which throw a traveller out of his course. So that Martin, however sure of his general direction, became conscious, and at length was forced reluctantly to admit, that he had missed the direct road to Glendearg, though he insisted they must be very near it. "If we can but win across this wide bog," he said, "I shall warrant ye are on the top of the tower."

But to get across the bog was a point of no small difficulty. The farther they ventured into it, though proceeding with all the caution which Martin's experience recommended, the more unsound the ground became, until, after they had passed some places of great peril, their best argument for going forward came to be, that they had to encounter equal danger in returning.

The Lady of Avenel had been tenderly nurtured, but what will not a woman endure when her child is in danger? Complaining less of the dangers of the road than her attendants, who had been inured to such from their infancy, she kept herself close by the side of the pony, watching its every footstep, and ready, if it should flounder in the morass, to snatch her little Mary from its back. At length they came to a place where the guide greatly hesitated, for all around him was broken lumps of heath, divided from each other by deep sloughs of black tenacious mire. After great consideration, Martin, selecting what he thought the safest path, began himself to lead forward Shagram, in order to afford greater security to the child. But Shagram snorted, laid his ears back, stretched his two feet forward, and drew his hind feet under him, so as to adopt the best possible posture for obstinate resistance and refused to move one yard in the direction indicated. Old Martin, much puzzled, now hesitated whether to exert his absolute authority, or to defer to the contumacious obstinacy of Shagram, and was not greatly comforted by his wife's observation, who, seeing Shagram stare with his eyes, distend his nostrils, and tremble with terror, hinted that "he surely saw more than they could see."

In this dilemma, the child suddenly exclaimed—"Bonny leddy signs to us to come yon gate." They all looked in the direction where the child pointed, but saw nothing, save a wreath of rising mist, which fancy might form into a human figure; but which afforded to Martin only the sorrowful conviction, that the danger of their situation was about to be increased by a heavy fog. He once more essayed to lead forward Shagram; but the animal was inflexible in its determination not to move in the direction Martin recommended. "Take your awn way for it then," said Martin, "and let us see what you can do for us."

Shagram, abandoned to the discretion of his own free-will, set off boldly in the direction the child had pointed. There was nothing wonderful in this, nor in its bringing them safe to the other side of the dangerous morass; for the instinct of these animals in traversing bogs is one of the most curious parts of their nature, and is a fact generally established. But it was remarkable, that the child more than once mentioned the beautiful lady and her signals, and that Shagram seemed to be in the secret, always moving in the same direction

[1] See Note B. *The Fairies.*

which she indicated. The Lady of Avenel took little notice at the time, her mind being probably occupied by the instant danger; but her attendants changed expressive looks with each other more than once.

"All-Hallow Eve!" said Tibb, in a whisper to Martin.

"For the mercy of Our Lady, not a word of that now!" said Martin in reply. "Tell your beads, woman, if you cannot be silent."

When they got once more on firm ground, Martin recognized certain land-marks, or cairns, on the tops of the neighbouring hills, by which he was enabled to guide his course, and ere long they arrived at the Tower of Glendearg.

It was at the sight of this little fortalice that the misery of her lot pressed hard on the poor Lady of Avenel. When by any accident they had met at church, market, or other place of public resort, she remembered the distant and respectful air with which the wife of the warlike baron was addressed by the spouse of the humble feuar. And now, so much was her pride humbled, that she was to ask to share the precarious safety of the same feuar's widow, and her pittance of food, which might perhaps be yet more precarious. Martin probably guessed what was passing in her mind, for he looked at her with a wistful glance, as if to deprecate any change of resolution; and answering to his looks, rather than his words, she said, while the sparkle of subdued pride once more glanced from her eye, "If it were for myself alone, I could but die—but for this infant—the last pledge of Avenel——"

"True, my lady," said Martin hastily; and, as if to prevent the possibility of her retracting, he added, "I will step on and see Dame Elspeth—I kend her husband weel, and have bought and sold with him, for as great a man as he was."

Martin's tale was soon told, and met all acceptance from her companion in misfortune. The Lady of Avenel had been meek and courteous in her prosperity; in adversity, therefore, she met with the greater sympathy. Besides, there was a point of pride in sheltering and supporting a woman of such superior birth and rank; and, not to do Elspeth Glendinning injustice, she felt sympathy for one whose fate resembled her own in so many points, yet was so much more severe. Every species of hospitality was gladly and respectfully extended to the distressed travellers, and they were kindly requested to stay as long at Glendearg as their circumstances rendered necessary, or their inclination prompted.

CHAPTER IV.

Ne'er be I found by thee unawed,
On that thrice hallow'd eve abroad,
When goblins haunt from flood and fen,
The steps of men,
COLLINS'S *Ode to Fear*.

As the country became more settled, the Lady of Avenel would have willingly returned to her husband's mansion. But that was no longer in her power. It was a reign of minority, when the strongest had the best right, and when acts of usurpation were frequent amongst those who had much power and little conscience.

Julian Avenel, the younger brother of the deceased Walter, was a person of this description. He hesitated not to seize upon his brother's house and lands, so soon as the retreat of the English permitted him. At first, he occupied the property in the name of his niece, but when the lady proposed to return with her child to the mansion of its fathers, he gave her to understand, that Avenel, being a male fief, descended to the brother, instead of the daughter, of the last possessor. The ancient philosopher declined a dispute with the emperor who commanded twenty legions, and the widow of Walter Avenel was in no condition to maintain a contest with the leader of twenty moss-troopers. Julian was also a man of service, who could back a friend in case of need, and was sure, therefore, to find protectors among the ruling powers. In short, however clear the little Mary's right to the possessions of her father, her mother saw the necessity of giving way, at least for the time, to the usurpation of her uncle.

Her patience and forbearance were so far attended with advantage, that Julian, for very shame's sake, could no longer suffer her to be absolutely dependant on the charity of Elspeth Glendinning. A drove of cattle and a bull (which were probably missed by some English farmer) were driven to the pastures of Glendearg; presents of raiment and household stuff were sent liberally, and some little money, though with a more sparing hand: for those in the situation of Julian Avenel could come more easily by the goods, than the representing medium of value, and made their payments chiefly in kind.

In the meantime, the widows of Walter Avenel and Simon Glendinning had become habituated to each other's society, and were unwilling to part. The lady could hope no more secret and secure residence than in the Tower of Glendearg, and she was now in a condition to support her share of the mutual housekeeping. Elspeth, on the other hand, felt pride, as well as pleasure, in the society of a guest of such distinction, and was at all times willing to pay much greater deference than the Lady of Walter Avenel could be prevailed on to accept.

Martin and his wife diligently served the united family in their several vocations, and yielded obedience to both mistresses, though always considering themselves as the especial servants of the Lady of Avenel. This distinction sometimes occasioned a slight degree of difference between Dame Elspeth and Tibb; the former being jealous of her own consequence, and the latter apt to lay too much stress upon the rank and family of her mistress. But both were alike desirous to conceal such petty squabbles from the lady, her hostess scarce yielding to her old domestic in respect for her person. Neither did the difference exist in such a degree as to interrupt the general harmony of the family, for the one wisely gave way as she saw the other become warm; and Tibb, though she often gave the first provocation, had generally the sense to be the first in relinquishing the argument.

The world which lay beyond was gradually forgotten by the inhabitants of this sequestered glen, and unless when she attended mass at the Monastery Church upon some high holiday, Alice of Avenel almost forgot that she once held an equal rank with the proud wives of the neighbouring

barons and nobles who on such occasions crowded to the solemnity. The recollection gave her little pain. She loved her husband for himself, and in his inestimable loss all lesser subjects of regret had ceased to interest her. At times, indeed, she thought of claiming the protection of the Queen Regent (Mary of Guise) for her little orphan, but the fear of Julian Avenel always came between. She was sensible that he would have neither scruple nor difficulty in spiriting away the child, (if he did not proceed farther,) should he once consider its existence as formidable to his interest. Besides, he led a wild and unsettled life, mingling in all feuds and forays, wherever there was a spear to be broken; he evinced no purpose of marrying, and the fate which he continually was braving might at length remove him from his usurped inheritance. Alice of Avenel, therefore, judged it wise to check all ambitious thoughts for the present, and remain quiet in the rude, but peaceable retreat, to which Providence had conducted her.

It was upon an All-Hallow's eve, when the family had resided together for the space of three years, that the domestic circle was assembled round the blazing turf-fire, in the old narrow hall of the Tower of Glendearg. The idea of the master or mistress of the mansion feeding or living apart from their domestics, was at this period never entertained. The highest end of the board, the most commodious settle by the fire, — these were the only marks of distinction; and the servants mingled, with deference indeed, but unreproved and with freedom, in whatever conversation was going forward. But the two or three domestics, kept merely for agricultural purposes, had retired to their own cottages without, and with them a couple of wenches, usually employed within doors, the daughters of one of the hinds.

After their departure, Martin locked, first, the iron grate; and, secondly, the inner door of the tower, when the domestic circle was thus arranged. Dame Elspeth sate pulling the thread from her distaff; Tibb watched the progress of scalding the whey, which hung in a large pot upon the *crook*, a chain terminated by a hook, which was suspended in the chimney to serve the purpose of the modern crane. Martin, while busied in repairing some of the household articles, (for every man in those days was his own carpenter and smith, as well as his own tailor and shoemaker,) kept from time to time a watchful eye upon the three children.

They were allowed, however, to exercise their juvenile restlessness by running up and down the hall, behind the seats of the elder members of the family, with the privilege of occasionally making excursions into one or two small apartments which opened from it, and gave excellent opportunity to play at hide-and-seek. This night, however, the children seemed not disposed to avail themselves of their privilege of visiting these dark regions, but preferred carrying on their gambols in the vicinity of the light.

In the meanwhile, Alice of Avenel, sitting close to an iron candlestick, which supported a misshapen torch of domestic manufacture, read small detached passages from a thick clasped volume, which she preserved with the greatest care. The art of reading, the lady had acquired by her residence in a nunnery during her youth, but she seldom, of late years, put it to any other use than perusing this little volume, which formed her whole library. The family listened to the portions which she selected, as to some good thing which there was a merit in hearing with respect, whether it was fully understood or no. To her daughter, Alice of Avenel had determined to impart their mystery more fully, but the knowledge was at that period attended with personal danger, and was not rashly to be trusted to a child.

The noise of the romping children interrupted, from time to time, the voice of the lady, and drew on the noisy culprits the rebuke of Elspeth.

"Could they not go farther a-field, if they behoved to make such a din, and disturb the lady's good words?" And this command was backed with the threat of sending the whole party to bed if it was not attended to punctually. Acting under the injunction, the children first played at a greater distance from the party, and more quietly, and then began to stray into the adjacent apartments, as they became impatient of the restraint to which they were subjected. But, all at once, the two boys came open-mouthed into the hall, to tell that there was an armed man in the spence.

"It must be Christie of Clint-hill," said Martin, rising; "what can have brought him here at this time?"

"Or how came he in?" said Elspeth.

"Alas! what can he seek?" said the Lady of Avenel, to whom this man, a retainer of her husband's brother, and who sometimes executed his commissions at Glendearg, was an object of secret apprehension and suspicion. "Gracious heavens!" she added, rising up, "where is my child?" All rushed to the spence, Halbert Glendinning first arming himself with a rusty sword, and the younger seizing upon the lady's book. They hastened to the spence, and were relieved of a part of their anxiety by meeting Mary at the door of the apartment. She did not seem in the slightest degree alarmed, or disturbed. They rushed into the spence, (a sort of interior apartment in which the family ate their victuals in the summer season,) but there was no one there.

"Where is Christie of Clint-hill?" said Martin.

"I do not know," said little Mary; "I never saw him."

"And what made you, ye misleard loons," said Dame Elspeth to her two boys, "come yon gate into the ha', roaring like bullsegs, to frighten the leddy, and her far frae strong?" The boys looked at each other in silence and confusion, and their mother proceeded with her lecture. "Could ye find nae night for daffin but Hallowe'en, and nae time but when the leddy was reading to us about the holy Saints? May ne'er be in my fingers, if I dinna sort ye baith for it!" The eldest boy bent his eyes on the ground, the younger began to weep, but neither spoke; and the mother would have proceeded to extremities, but for the interposition of the little maiden.

"Dame Elspeth, it was *my* fault — I did say to them, that I saw a man in the spence."

"And what made you do so, child," said her mother, "to startle us all thus?"

"Because," said Mary, lowering her voice, "I could not help it."

"Not help it, Mary! — you occasioned all this idle noise, and you could not help it? How mean you by that, minion?"

"There really was an armed man in this spence," said Mary; "and because I was surprised to see him, I cried out to Halbert and Edward ——"

"She has told it herself," said Halbert Glendinning, "or it had never been told by me."

"Nor by me neither," said Edward, emulously.

"Mistress Mary," said Elspeth, "you never told us any thing before that was not true; tell us if this was a Hallowe'en cantrip, and make an end of it." The Lady of Avenel looked as if she would have interfered, but knew not how; and Elspeth, who was too eagerly curious to regard any distant hint, persevered in her inquiries. "Was it Christie of the Clint-hill?—I would not for a mark that he were about the house, and a body no ken whare."

"It was not Christie," said Mary; "it was—it was a gentleman—a gentleman with a bright breastplate, like what I hae seen langsyne, when we dwelt at Avenel——"

"What like was he?" continued Tibb, who now took share in the investigation.

"Black-haired, black-eyed, with a peaked black beard," said the child, "and many a fold of pearling round his neck, and hanging down his breast ower his breastplate; and he had a beautiful hawk, with silver bells, standing on his left hand, with a crimson silk hood upon its head——"

"Ask her no more questions, for the love of God," said the anxious menial to Elspeth, "but look to my leddy!" But the Lady of Avenel, taking Mary in her hand, turned hastily away, and, walking into the hall, gave them no opportunity of remarking in what manner she received the child's communication, which she thus cut short. What Tibb thought of it appeared from her crossing herself repeatedly, and whispering into Elspeth's ear, "Saint Mary preserve us!—the lassie has seen her father!"

When they reached the hall, they found the lady holding her daughter on her knee, and kissing her repeatedly. When they entered, she again arose, as if to shun observation, and retired to the little apartment where her child and she occupied the same bed.

The boys were also sent to their cabin, and no one remained by the hall fire save the faithful Tibb and Dame Elspeth, excellent persons both, and as thorough gossips as ever wagged a tongue.

It was but natural that they should instantly resume the subject of the supernatural appearance, for such they deemed it, which had this night alarmed the family.

"I could hae wished it had been the deil himself—be good to and preserve us!—rather than Christie o' the Clint-hill," said the matron of the mansion, "for the word runs rife in the country, that he is ane of the maist masterfu' thieves ever lap on horse."

"Hout-tout, Dame Elspeth," said Tibb, "fear ye naething frae Christie; tods keep their ain holes clean. You kirk-folk make sic a fasherie about men shifting a wee bit for their living! Our Border-lairds would ride with few men at their back, if a' the light-handed lads were out o' gate."

"Better they rade wi' nane than distress the country-side the gate they do," said Dame Elspeth.

"But wha is to haud back the Southron, then," said Tibb, "if ye take away the lances and broadswords? I trow we auld wives couldna do that wi' rock and wheel, and as little the monks wi' bell and book."

"And sae weel as the lances and broadswords hae kept them back, I trow!—I was mair beholden to ae Southron, and that was Stawarth Bolton, than to a' the Border-riders ever wore Saint Andrew's cross—I reckon their skelping back and forward, and lifting honest men's gear, has been a main cause of a the breach between us and England, and I am sure that cost me a kind goodman. They spoke about the wedding of the Prince and our Queen, but it's as like to oe the driving of the Cumberland folk's stocking that brought them down on us like dragons." Tibb would not have failed in other circumstances to answer what she thought reflections disparaging to her country folk; but she recollected that Dame Elspeth was mistress of the family, curbed her own zealous patriotism, and hastened to change the subject.

"And is it not strange," she said, "that the heiress of Avenel should have seen her father this blessed night?"

"And ye think it was her father, then?" said Elspeth Glendinning.

"What else can I think?" said Tibb.

"It may hae been something waur, in his likeness," said Dame Glendinning.

"I ken naething about that," said Tibb,—"but his likeness it was, that I will be sworn to, just as he used to ride out a-hawking; for having enemies in the country, he seldom laid off the breast-plate; and for my part," added Tibb, "I dinna think a man looks like a man unless he has steel on his breast, and by his side too."

"I have no skill of your harness on breast or side either," said Dame Glendinning; "but I ken there is little luck in Hallowe'en sights, for I have had ane mysell."

"Indeed, Dame Elspeth?" said old Tibb, edging her stool closer to the huge elbow-chair occupied by her friend, "I should like to hear about that."

"Ye maun ken then, Tibb," said Dame Glendinning, "that when I was a hempie of nineteen or twenty, it wasna my fault if I wasna at a' the merry-makings time about."

"That was very natural," said Tibb; "but ye hae sobered since that, or ye wadna haud our braw gallants sae lightly."

"I have had that wad sober me or ony ane," said the matron. "Aweel, Tibb, a lass like me wasna to lack wooers, for I wasna sae ill-favoured that the tikes wad bark after me."

"How should that be," said Tibb, "and you sic a weel-favoured woman to this day?"

"Fie, fie, cummer," said the matron of Glendearg, hitching her seat of honour, in her turn, a little nearer to the cuttie-stool on which Tibb was seated; "weel-favoured is past my time of day; but I might pass then, for I wasna sae tocherless but what I had a bit land at my breast-lace. My father was portioner of Little-dearg."

"Ye hae tell'd me that before," said Tibb; "but anent the Hallowe'en?"

"Aweel, aweel, I had mair joes than ane, but I favoured nane o' them; and sae, at Hallowe'en, Father Nicolas the cellarer—he was cellarer before this father, Father Clement, that now is—was cracking his nuts and drinking his brown beer with us, and as blithe as might be, and they would have me try a cantrip to ken wha suld wed me:

and the monk said there was nae ill in it, and if there was, he would assoil me for it. And wha but I into the barn to winnow my three weights o' naething—sair, sair my mind misgave me for fear of wrang-doing and wrang-suffering baith; but I had aye a bauld spirit. I had not winnowed the last weight clean out, and the moon was shining bright upon the floor, when in stalked the presence of my dear Simon Glendinning, that is now happy. I never saw him plainer in my life than I did that moment; he held up an arrow as he passed me, and I swarf'd awa wi' fright. Muckle wark there was to bring me to mysell again, and sair they tried to make me believe it was a trick of Father Nicolas and Simon between them, and that the arrow was to signify Cupid's shaft, as the Father called it; and mony a time Simon wad threep it to me after I was married — gude man, he liked not it should be said that he was seen out o' the body! — But mark the end o' it, Tibb; we were married, and the gray-goose wing was the death o' him after a!"

"As it has been of ower mony brave men," said Tibb; "I wish there wasna sic a bird as a goose in the wide warld, forby the clecking that we hae at the burn-side."

"But tell me, Tibb," said Dame Glendinning, "what does your leddy aye do reading out o' that thick black book wi' the silver clasps? — there are ower mony gude words in it to come frae ony body but a priest — An it were about Robin Hood, or some o' David Lindsay's ballants, ane wad ken better what to say to it. I am no misdoubting your mistress nae way, but I wad like ill to hae a decent house haunted wi' ghaists and gyre-carlines."

"Ye hae nae reason to doubt my leddy, or ony thing she says or does, Dame Glendinning," said the faithful Tibb, something offended; "and touching the bairn, it's weel kend she was born on Hallowe'en was nine years gane, and they that are born on Hallowe'en whiles see mair than ither folk."

"And that wad be the cause, then, that the bairn didna mak muckle din about what it saw? — if it had been my Halbert himself, forby Edward, who is of softer nature, he wad hae yammered the haill night of a constancy. But it's like Mistress Mary has sic sights mair natural to her."

"That may weel be," said Tibb; "for on Hallowe'en she was born, as I tell ye, and our auld parish priest wad fain hae had the night ower, and All-Hallow day begun. But for a' that, the sweet bairn is just like ither bairns, as ye may see yoursell; and except this blessed night, and ance before when we were in that weary bog on the road here, I kenna that it saw mair than ither folk."

"But what saw she in the bog, then," said Dame Glendinning, "forby moor-cocks and heather-blutters?"

"The wean saw something like a white leddy that weised us the gate," said Tibb, "when we were like to hae perished in the moss-hags — certain it was that Shagram reisted, and I ken Martin thinks he saw something."

"And what might the white leddy be?" said Elspeth; "have ye ony guess o' that?"

"It's weel kend that, Dame Elspeth," said Tibb; "if ye had lived under grit folk, as I hae dune, ye wadna be to seek in that matter."

"I hae aye keepit my ain ha' house abune my head," said Elspeth, not without emphasis, "and if I havena lived wi' grit folk, grit folk have lived wi' me."

"Weel, weel, dame," said Tibb, "your pardon's prayed, there was nae offence meant. But ye maun ken the great ancient families canna be just served wi' the ordinary saunts, (praise to them!) like Saunt Anthony, Saunt Cuthbert, and the like, that come and gang at every sinner's bidding, but they hae a sort of saunts or angels, or what not, to themsells; and as for the White Maiden of Avenel, she is kend ower the haill country. And she is aye seen to yammer and wail before ony o' that family dies, as was weel kend by twenty folk before the death of Walter Avenel, haly be his cast!"

"If she can do nae mair than that," said Elspeth, somewhat scornfully, "they needna make mony vows to her, I trow. Can she make nae better fend for them than that, and has naething better to do than wait on them?"

"Mony braw services can the White Maiden do for them to the boot of that, and has dune in the auld histories," said Tibb, "but I mind o' naething in my day, except it was her that the bairn saw in the bog."

"Aweel, aweel, Tibb," said Dame Glendinning, rising and lighting the iron lamp, "these are great privileges of your grand folk. But our Lady and Saunt Paul are good eneugh saunts for me, and I'se warrant them never leave me in a bog that they can help me out o', seeing I send four waxen candles to their chapels every Candlemas; and if they are not seen to weep at my death, I'se warrant them smile at my joyful rising again, whilk Heaven send to all of us, Amen."

"Amen," answered Tibb, devoutly; "and now it's time I should hap up the wee bit gathering turf, as the fire is ower low."

Busily she set herself to perform this duty. The relict of Simon Glendinning did but pause a moment to cast a heedful and cautious glance all around the hall, to see that nothing was out of its proper place; then, wishing Tibb good-night, she retired to repose.

"The deil's in the carline," said Tibb to herself, "because she was the wife of a cock-laird, she thinks herself grander, I trow, than the bowerwoman of a lady of that ilk!" Having given vent to her suppressed spleen in this little ejaculation, Tibb also betook herself to slumber.

CHAPTER V.

> A priest, ye cry, a priest!—lame shepherds they,
> How shall they gather in the straggling flock?
> Dumb dogs which bark not—how shall they compel
> The loitering vagrants to the Master's fold?
> Fitter to bask before the blazing fire,
> And snuff the mess neat-handed Phillis dresses,
> Than on the snow-wreath battle with the wolf.
> *Reformation.*

The health of the Lady of Avenel had been gradually decaying ever since her disaster. It seemed as if the few years which followed her husband's death had done on her the work of half a century. She lost the fresh elasticity of form, the colour and the mien of health, and became wasted, wan, and feeble. She appeared to have no formed complaint; yet it was evident to those

who looked on her, that her strength waned daily. Her lips at length became blenched and her eye dim; yet she spoke not of any desire to see a priest, until Elspeth Glendinning in her zeal could not refrain from touching upon a point which she deemed essential to salvation. Alice of Avenel received her hint kindly, and thanked her for it.

"If any good priest would take the trouble of such a journey," she said, "he should be welcome; for the prayers and lessons of the good must be at all times advantageous."

This quiet acquiescence was not quite what Elspeth Glendinning wished or expected. She made up, however, by her own enthusiasm, for the lady's want of eagerness to avail herself of ghostly counsel, and Martin was despatched with such haste as Shagram would make, to pray one of the religious men of Saint Mary's to come up to administer the last consolations to the widow of Walter de Avenel.

When the Sacristan had announced to the Lord Abbot, that the Lady of the umquhile Walter de Avenel was in very weak health in the Tower of Glendearg, and desired the assistance of a father confessor, the lordly monk paused on the request.

"We do remember Walter de Avenel," he said; "a good knight and a valiant; he was dispossessed of his lands, and slain by the Southron — May not the lady come hither to the sacrament of confession? the road is distant and painful to travel."

"The lady is unwell, holy father," answered the Sacristan, "and unable to bear the journey."

"True — ay, — yes — then must one of our brethren go to her — Knowest thou if she hath aught of a jointure from this Walter de Avenel?"

"Very little, holy father," said the Sacristan; "she hath resided at Glendearg since her husband's death, well-nigh on the charity of a poor widow, called Elspeth Glendinning."

"Why, thou knowest all the widows in the country-side!" said the Abbot. "Ho! ho! ho!" and he shook his portly sides at his own jest.

"Ho! ho! ho!" echoed the Sacristan, in the tone and tune in which an inferior applauds the jest of his superior. — Then added, with a hypocritical snuffle, and a sly twinkle of his eye, "It is our duty, most holy father, to comfort the widow — He! he! he!"

This last laugh was more moderate, until the Abbot should put his sanction on the jest.

"Ho! ho!" said the Abbot; "then, to leave jesting, Father Philip, take thou thy riding gear, and go to confess this Dame Avenel."

"But," said the Sacristan ——

"Give me no *Buts;* neither But nor If pass between monk and Abbot, Father Philip; the bands of discipline must not be relaxed — heresy gathers force like a snow-ball — the multitude expect confessions and preachings from the Benedictine, as they would from so many beggarly friars — and we may not desert the vineyard, though the toil be grievous unto us."

"And with so little advantage to the holy monastery," said the Sacristan.

"True, Father Philip; but wot you not that what preventeth harm doth good? This Julian de Avenel lives a light and evil life, and should we neglect the widow of his brother, he might foray our lands, and we never able to shew who hurt us — moreover it is our duty to an ancient family, who, in their day, have been benefactors to the Abbey. Away with thee instantly, brother; ride night and day, an it be necessary, and let men see how diligent Abbot Boniface and his faithful children are in the execution of their spiritual duty — toil not deterring them, for the glen is five miles in length — fear not withholding them, for it is said to be haunted of spectres — nothing moving them from pursuit of their spiritual calling; to the confusion of calumnious heretics, and the comfort and edification of all true and faithful sons of the Catholic Church. I wonder what our brother Eustace will say to this?"

Breathless with his own picture of the dangers and toil which he was to encounter, and the fame which he was to acquire, (both by proxy,) the Abbot moved slowly to finish his luncheon in the refectory, and the Sacristan, with no very good will, accompanied old Martin in his return to Glendearg; the greatest impediment in the journey being the trouble of restraining his pampered mule, that she might tread in something like an equal pace with poor jaded Shagram.

After remaining an hour in private with his penitent, the monk returned moody and full of thought. Dame Elspeth, who had placed for the honoured guest some refreshment in the hall, was struck with the embarrassment which appeared in his countenance. Elspeth watched him with great anxiety. She observed there was that on his brow which rather resembled a person come from hearing the confession of some enormous crime, than the look of a confessor who resigns a reconciled penitent, not to earth, but to heaven. After long hesitating, she could not at length refrain from hazarding a question. She was sure, she said, the leddy had made an easy shrift. Five years had they resided together, and she could safely say, no woman lived better.

"Woman," said the Sacristan, sternly, "thou speakest thou knowest not what — What avails clearing the outside of the platter, if the inside be foul with heresy?"

"Our dishes and trenchers are not so clean as they could be wished, holy father," said Elspeth, but half understanding what he said, and beginning with her apron to wipe the dust from the plates, of which she supposed him to complain.

"Forbear, Dame Elspeth," said the monk; "your plates are as clean as wooden trenchers and pewter flagons can well be; the foulness of which I speak is of that pestilential heresy which is daily becoming ingrained in this our Holy Church of Scotland, and as a canker-worm in the rose-garland of the Spouse."

"Holy Mother of Heaven!" said Dame Elspeth, crossing herself, "have I kept house with a heretic?"

"No, Elspeth, no," replied the monk; "it were too strong a speech for me to make of this unhappy lady, but I would I could say she is free from heretical opinions. Alas! they fly about like the pestilence by noon-day, and infect even the first and fairest of the flock! For it is easy to see of this dame, that she hath been high in judgment as in rank."

"And she can write and read, I had almost said, as weel as your reverence," said Elspeth.

"Whom doth she write to, and what doth she read?" said the monk, eagerly.

"Nay," replied Elspeth, "I cannot say I ever saw her write at all, but her maiden that was — she now serves the family — says she can write — And for reading, she has often read to us good things out of a thick black volume with silver clasps."

"Let me see it," said the monk, hastily, "on your allegiance as a true vassal — on your faith as a Catholic Christian — instantly — instantly let me see it."

The good woman hesitated, alarmed at the tone in which the confessor took up her information; and being moreover of opinion, that what so good a woman as the Lady of Avenel studied so devoutly, could not be of a tendency actually evil. But borne down by the clamour, exclamations, and something like threats used by Father Philip, she at length brought him the fatal volume. It was easy to do this without suspicion on the part of the owner, as she lay on her bed exhausted with the fatigue of a long conference with her confessor, and as the small *round*, or turret closet, in which was the book and her other trifling property, was accessible by another door. Of all her effects the book was the last she would have thought of securing, for of what use or interest could it be in a family who neither read themselves, nor were in the habit of seeing any who did? so that Dame Elspeth had no difficulty in possessing herself of the volume, although her heart all the while accused her of an ungenerous and an inhospitable part towards her friend and inmate. The double power of a landlord and a feudal superior was before her eyes; and to say truth, the boldness, with which she might otherwise have resisted this double authority, was, I grieve to say it, much qualified by the curiosity she entertained, as a daughter of Eve, to have some explanation respecting the mysterious volume which the lady cherished with so much care, yet whose contents she imparted with such caution. For never had Alice of Avenel read them any passage from the book in question until the iron door of the tower was locked, and all possibility of intrusion prevented. Even then she had shewn, by the selection of particular passages, that she was more anxious to impress on their minds the principles which the volume contained, than to introduce them to it as a new rule of faith.

When Elspeth, half curious, half remorseful, had placed the book in the monk's hands, he exclaimed, after turning over the leaves, "Now, by mine order, it is as I suspected!—My mule, my mule!—I will abide no longer here—well hast thou done, dame, in placing in my hands this perilous volume."

"Is it then witchcraft or devil's work?" said Dame Elspeth, in great agitation.

"Nay, God forbid!" said the monk, signing himself with the cross, "it is the Holy Scripture. But it is rendered into the vulgar tongue, and therefore, by the order of the Holy Catholic Church, unfit to be in the hands of any lay person."

"And yet is the Holy Scripture communicated for our common salvation," said Elspeth. "Good father, you must instruct mine ignorance better; but lack of wit cannot be a deadly sin, and truly, to my poor thinking, I should be glad to read the Holy Scripture."

"I daresay thou wouldst," said the monk; "and even thus did our mother Eve seek to have knowledge of good and evil, and thus Sin came into the world, and Death by Sin."

"I am sure, and it is true," said Elspeth. "Oh, if she had dealt by the counsel of Saint Peter and Saint Paul!"

"If she had reverenced the command of Heaven," said the monk, "which, as it gave her birth, life, and happiness, fixed upon the grant such conditions as best corresponded with its holy pleasure. I tell thee, Elspeth, *the Word slayeth* — that is, the text alone, read with unskilled eye and unhallowed lips, is like those strong medicines which sick men take by the advice of the learned. Such patients recover and thrive; while those dealing in them at their own hand, shall perish by their own deed."

"Nae doubt, nae doubt," said the poor woman, "your reverence knows best."

"Not I," said Father Philip, in a tone as deferential as he thought could possibly become the Sacristan of Saint Mary's, — "Not I, but the Holy Father of Christendom, and our own holy father the Lord Abbot, know best. I, the poor Sacristan of Saint Mary's, can but repeat what I hear from others my superiors. Yet of this, good woman, be assured, — the Word — the mere Word, slayeth. But the church hath her ministers to gloze and to expound the same unto her faithful congregation; and this I say, not so much, my beloved brethren — I mean, my beloved sister," (for the Sacristan, had got unto the end of one of his old sermons,) — "This I speak not so much of the rectors, curates, and secular clergy, so called because they live after the fashion of the *seculum* or age, unbound by those ties which sequestrate us from the world; neither do I speak this of the mendicant friars, whether black or gray, whether crossed or uncrossed; but of the Monks, and especially of the Monks Benedictine, reformed on the rule of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, thence called Cistercian, of which Monks, Christian brethren — sister, I would say — great is the happiness and glory of the country in possessing the holy ministers of Saint Mary's, whereof I, though an unworthy brother, may say it hath produced more saints, more bishops, more popes — may our patrons make us thankful! — than any holy foundation in Scotland. Wherefore —— But I see Martin hath my mule in readiness, and I will but salute you with the kiss of sisterhood, which maketh not ashamed, and so betake me to my toilsome return, for the glen is of bad reputation for the evil spirits which haunt it. Moreover. I may arrive too late at the bridge, whereby I may be obliged to take the river, which I observed to be somewhat waxen."

Accordingly, he took his leave of Dame Elspeth, who was confounded by the rapidity of his utterance, and the doctrine he gave forth, and by no means easy on the subject of the book, which her conscience told her she should not have communicated to any one, without the knowledge of its owner.

Notwithstanding the haste which the monk as well as his mule made to return to better quarters than they had left at the head of Glendearg; notwithstanding the eager desire Father Philip had to be the very first who should acquaint the Abbot that a copy of the book they most dreaded had been found within the Halidome, or patrimony of the Abbey; notwithstanding, moreover, certain feelings which induced him to hurry as fast as possible through the gloomy and evil-reputed glen, still the difficulties of the road, and the rider's

want of habitude of quick motion, were such, that twilight came upon him ere he had nearly cleared the narrow valley.

It was indeed a gloomy ride. The two sides of the vale were so near, that at every double of the river the shadows from the western sky fell upon, and totally obscured, the eastern bank; the thickets of copsewood seemed to wave with a portentous agitation of boughs and leaves, and the very crags and scaurs seemed higher and grimmer than they had appeared to the monk while he was travelling in daylight, and in company. Father Philip was heartily rejoiced, when, emerging from the narrow glen, he gained the open valley of the Tweed, which held on its majestic course from current to pool, and from pool stretched away to other currents, with a dignity peculiar to itself amongst the Scottish rivers; for whatever may have been the drought of the season, the Tweed usually fills up the space between its banks, seldom leaving those extensive sheets of shingle which deform the margins of many of the celebrated Scottish streams.

The monk, insensible to beauties which the age had not regarded as deserving of notice, was nevertheless, like a prudent general, pleased to find himself out of the narrow glen in which the enemy might have stolen upon him unperceived. He drew up his bridle, reduced his mule to her natural and luxurious amble, instead of the agitating and broken trot at which, to his no small inconvenience, she had hitherto proceeded, and, wiping his brow, gazed forth at leisure on the broad moon, which, now mingling with the lights of evening, was rising over field and forest, village and fortalice, and, above all, over the stately Monastery, seen far and dim amid the yellow light.

The worst part of the magnificent view, in the monk's apprehension, was, that the Monastery stood on the opposite side of the river, and that of the many fine bridges which have since been built across that classical stream, not one then existed. There was, however, in recompense, a bridge then standing which has since disappeared, although its ruins may still be traced by the curious.

It was of a very peculiar form. Two strong abutments were built on either side of the river, at a part where the stream was peculiarly contracted. Upon a rock in the centre of the current was built a solid piece of masonry, constructed like the pier of a bridge, and presenting, like a pier, an angle to the current of the stream. The masonry continued solid until the pier rose to a level with the two abutments upon either side, and from thence the building rose in the form of a tower. The lower story of this tower consisted only of an archway or passage through the building, over either entrance to which hung a drawbridge with counterpoises, either of which, when dropped, connected the archway with the opposite abutment, where the farther end of the drawbridge rested. When both bridges were thus lowered, the passage over the river was complete.

The bridge-keeper, who was the dependant of a neighbouring baron, resided with his family in the second and third stories of the tower, which, when both drawbridges were raised, formed an insulated fortalice in the midst of the river. He was entitled to a small toll or custom for the passage, concerning the amount of which disputes sometimes arose between him and the passengers. It is needless to say, that the bridge-ward had usually the better in these questions, since he could at pleasure detain the traveller on the opposite side; or, suffering him to pass half way, might keep him prisoner in his tower till they were agreed on the rate of pontage.[1]

But it was most frequently with the Monks of Saint Mary's that the warder had to dispute his perquisites. These holy men insisted for, and at length obtained, a right of gratuitous passage to themselves, greatly to the discontent of the bridge-keeper. But when they demanded the same immunity for the numerous pilgrims who visited the shrine, the bridge-keeper waxed restive, and was supported by his lord in his resistance. The controversy grew animated on both sides; the Abbot menaced excommunication, and the keeper of the bridge, though unable to retaliate in kind, yet made each individual monk who had to cross and recross the river, endure a sort of purgatory, ere he would accommodate them with a passage. This was a great inconvenience, and would have proved a more serious one, but that the river was fordable for man and horse in ordinary weather.

It was a fine moonlight night, as we have already said, when Father Philip approached this bridge, the singular construction of which gives a curious idea of the insecurity of the times. The river was not in flood, but it was above its ordinary level — *a heavy water*, as it is called in that country, through which the monk had no particular inclination to ride, if he could manage the matter better.

"Peter, my good friend," cried the Sacristan, raising his voice; "my very excellent friend, Peter, be so kind as to lower the drawbridge. Peter, I say, dost thou not hear? — it is thy gossip, Father Philip, who calls thee."

Peter heard him perfectly well, and saw him into the bargain; but, as he had considered the Sacristan as peculiarly his enemy in his dispute with the convent, he went quietly to bed, after reconnoitring the monk through his loop-hole, observing to his wife, that "riding the water in a moonlight night would do the Sacristan no harm, and would teach him the value of a brig the neist time, on whilk a man might pass high and dry, winter and summer, flood and ebb."

After exhausting his voice in entreaties and threats, which were equally unattended to by Peter of the Brig, as he was called, Father Philip at length moved down the river to take the ordinary ford at the head of the next stream. Cursing the rustic obstinacy of Peter, he began, nevertheless, to persuade himself that the passage of the river by the ford was not only safe, but pleasant. The banks and scattered trees were so beautifully reflected from the bosom of the dark stream, the whole cool and delicious picture formed so pleasing a contrast to his late agitation, to the warmth occasioned by his vain endeavours to move the relentless porter of the bridge, that the result was rather agreeable than otherwise.

As Father Philip came close to the water's edge, at the spot where he was to enter it, there sat a female under a large broken scathed oak-tree, or rather under the remains of such a tree, weeping,

[1] See Note C. *Drawbridge at Bridge-end.*

wringing her hands, and looking earnestly on the current of the river. The monk was struck with astonishment to see a female there at that time of night. But he was, in all honest service, — and if a step farther, I put it upon his own conscience, — a devoted squire of dames. After observing the maiden for a moment, although she seemed to take no notice of his presence, he was moved by her distress, and willing to offer his assistance. "Damsel," said he, "thou seemest in no ordinary distress; peradventure, like myself, thou hast been refused passage at the bridge by the churlish keeper, and thy crossing may concern thee either for performance of a vow, or some other weighty charge."

The maiden uttered some inarticulate sounds, looked at the river, and then in the face of the Sacristan. It struck Father Philip at that instant, that a Highland Chief of distinction had been for some time expected to pay his vows at the shrine of Saint Mary's; and that possibly this fair maiden might be one of his family, travelling alone for accomplishment of a vow, or left behind by some accident, to whom, therefore, it would be but right and prudent to use every civility in his power, especially as she seemed unacquainted with the Lowland tongue. Such at least was the only motive the Sacristan was ever known to assign for his courtesy; if there was any other, I once more refer it to his own conscience.

To express himself by signs, the common language of all nations, the cautious Sacristan first pointed to the river, then to his mule's crupper, and then made, as gracefully as he could, a sign to induce the fair solitary to mount behind him. She seemed to understand his meaning, for she rose up as if to accept his offer; and while the good monk, who, as we have hinted, was no great cavalier, laboured, with the pressure of the right leg and the use of the left rein, to place his mule with her side to the bank in such a position that the lady might mount with ease, she rose from the ground with rather portentous activity, and at one bound sate behind the monk upon the animal, much the firmer rider of the two. The mule by no means seemed to approve of this double burden; she bounded, bolted, and would soon have thrown Father Philip over her head, had not the maiden with a firm hand detained him in the saddle.

At length the restive brute changed her humour; and, from refusing to budge off the spot, suddenly stretched her nose homeward, and dashed into the ford as fast as she could scamper. A new terror now invaded the monk's mind — the ford seemed unusually deep, the water eddied off in strong ripple from the counter of the mule, and began to rise upon her side. Philip lost his presence of mind, which was at no time his most ready attribute; the mule yielded to the weight of the current; and as the rider was not attentive to keep her head turned up the river, she drifted downward, lost the ford and her footing at once, and began to swim with her head down the stream. And what was sufficiently strange, at the same moment, notwithstanding the extreme peril, the damsel began to sing, thereby increasing, if any thing could increase, the bodily fear of the worthy Sacristan.

I.

Merrily swim we. the moon shines bright.
Both current and ripple are dancing in light.
We have roused the night raven, I heard him croak,
As we plashed along beneath the oak
That flings its broad branches so far and so wide,
Their shadows are dancing in midst of the tide.
"Who wakens my nestlings," the raven he said,
"My beak shall ere morn in his blood be red,
For a blue swoln corpse is a dainty meal,
And I'll have my share with the pike and the eel."

II.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
There 's a golden gleam on the distant height;
There 's a silver shower on the alders dank,
And the drooping willows that wave on the bank.
I see the Abbey, both turret and tower,
It is all astir for the vesper hour;
The monks for the chapel are leaving each cell.
But where 's Father Philip, should toll the bell?

III.

Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright,
Downward we drift through shadow and light,
Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
Calm and silent, dark and deep,
The Kelpy has risen from the fathomless pool,
He has lighted his candle of death and of dool
Look, Father, look, and you 'll laugh to see
How he gapes and glares with his eyes on thee.

IV.

Good luck to your fishing, whom watch ye to-night?
A man of mean or a man of might?
Is it layman or priest that must float in your cove,
Or lover who crosses to visit his love?
Hark! heard ye the Kelpy reply, as we pass'd,—
"God's blessing on the warder, he lock'd the bridge fast
All that come to my cove are sunk,
Priest or layman, lover or monk."

How long the damsel might have continued to sing, or where the terrified monk's journey might have ended, is uncertain. As she sung the last stanza, they arrived at, or rather in, a broad tranquil sheet of water, caused by a strong wear or damhead, running across the river, which dashed in a broad cataract over the barrier. The mule, whether from choice, or influenced by the suction of the current, made towards the cut intended to supply the convent mills, and entered it half-swimming, half-wading, and pitching the unlucky monk to and fro in the saddle at a fearful rate.

As his person flew hither and thither, his garment became loose, and in an effort to retain it, his hand lighted on the volume of the Lady of Avenel, which was in his bosom. No sooner had he grasped it, than his companion pitched him out of the saddle into the stream, where, still keeping her hand on his collar, she gave him two or three good souses in the watery fluid, so as to ensure that every other part of him had its share of wetting, and then quitted her hold when he was so near the side, that by a slight effort (of a great one he was incapable) he might scramble on shore. This accordingly he accomplished, and turning his eyes to see what had become of his extraordinary companion, she was nowhere to be seen; but still he heard, as if from the surface of the river, and mixing with the noise of the water breaking over the damhead, a fragment of her wild song, which seemed to run thus:—

Landed—landed! the black book hath won,
Else had you seen Berwick with morning sun!
Sain ye, and save ye, and blithe mot ye be,
For seldom they land that go swimming with me.

The ecstasy of the monk's terror could be endured no longer; his head grew dizzy, and, after

staggering a few steps onward and running himself against a wall, he sunk down in a state of insensibility.

CHAPTER VI.

> Now let us sit in conclave. That these weeds
> Be rooted from the vineyard of the church,
> That these foul tares be sever'd from the wheat,
> We are, I trust, agreed.—Yet how to do this,
> Nor hurt the wholesome crop and tender vine-plants,
> Craves good advisement.
>
> *The Reformation.*

The vesper service in the Monastery Church of Saint Mary's was now over. The Abbot had disrobed himself of his magnificent vestures of ceremony, and resumed his ordinary habit, which was a black gown, worn over a white cassock, with a narrow scapulary; a decent and venerable dress, which was well calculated to set off to advantage the portly mien of Abbot Boniface.

In quiet times no one could have filled the state of a mitred Abbot, for such was his dignity, more respectably than this worthy prelate. He had, no doubt, many of those habits of self-indulgence which men are apt to acquire who live for themselves alone. He was vain, moreover; and when boldly confronted, had sometimes shewn symptoms of timidity, not very consistent with the high claims which he preferred as an eminent member of the church, or with the punctual deference which he exacted from his religious brethren, and all who were placed under his command. But he was hospitable, charitable, and by no means of himself disposed to proceed with severity against any one. In short, he would in other times have slumbered out his term of preferment with as much credit as any other "purple Abbot," who lived easily, but at the same time decorously—slept soundly, and did not disquiet himself with dreams.

But the wide alarm spread through the whole Church of Rome by the progress of the reformed doctrines, sorely disturbed the repose of Abbot Boniface, and opened to him a wide field of duties and cares which he had never so much as dreamed of. There were opinions to be combated and refuted—practices to be inquired into—heretics to be detected and punished—the fallen off to be reclaimed—the wavering to be confirmed—scandal to be removed from the clergy, and the vigour of discipline to be reestablished. Post upon post arrived at the Monastery of St Mary's—horses reeking, and riders exhausted—this from the Privy Council, that from the Primate of Scotland, and this other again from the Queen Mother, exhorting, approving, condemning, requesting advice upon this subject, and requiring information upon that.

These missives Abbot Boniface received with an important air of helplessness, or a helpless air of importance, whichever the reader may please to term it, evincing at once gratified vanity, and profound trouble of mind.

The sharp-witted Primate of Saint Andrews had foreseen the deficiencies of the Abbot of St Mary's, and endeavoured to provide for them by getting admitted into his Monastery as Sub-Prior a brother Cistercian, a man of parts and knowledge, devoted to the service of the Catholic church, and very capable not only to advise the Abbot on occasions of difficulty, but to make him sensible of his duty in case he should, from good-nature or timidity, be disposed to shrink from it.

Father Eustace played the same part in the Monastery as the old general who, in foreign armies, is placed at the elbow of the Prince of the Blood, who nominally commands in chief, on condition of attempting nothing without the advice of his dry-nurse; and he shared the fate of all such dry-nurses, being heartily disliked as well as feared by his principal. Still, however, the Primate's intention was fully answered. Father Eustace became the constant theme and often the bugbear of the worthy Abbot, who hardly dared to turn himself in his bed without considering what Father Eustace would think of it. In every case of difficulty, Father Eustace was summoned, and his opinion asked; and no sooner was the embarrassment removed, than the Abbot's next thought was how to get rid of his adviser. In every letter which he wrote to those in power, he recommended Father Eustace to some high church preferment, a bishopric or an abbey; and as they dropped one after another, and were otherwise conferred, he began to think, as he confessed to the Sacristan in the bitterness of his spirit, that the Monastery of St Mary's had got a liferent lease of their Sub-Prior.

Yet more indignant he would have been, had he suspected that Father Eustace's ambition was fixed upon his own mitre, which, from some attacks of an apoplectic nature, deemed by the Abbot's friends to be more serious than by himself, it was supposed might be shortly vacant. But the confidence which, like other dignitaries, he reposed in his own health, prevented Abbot Boniface from imagining that it held any concatenation with the motions of Father Eustace.

The necessity under which he found himself of consulting with his grand adviser, in cases of real difficulty, rendered the worthy Abbot particularly desirous of doing without him in all ordinary cases of administration, though not without considering what Father Eustace would have said of the matter. He scorned, therefore, to give a hint to the Sub-Prior of the bold stroke by which he had despatched Brother Philip to Glendearg; but when the vespers came without his re-appearance he became a little uneasy, the more as other matters weighed upon his mind. The feud with the warder or keeper of the bridge threatened to be attended with bad consequences, as the man's quarrel was taken up by the martial baron under whom he served; and pressing letters of an unpleasant tendency had just arrived from the Primate. Like a gouty man, who catches hold of his crutch while he curses the infirmity that reduces him to use it, the Abbot, however reluctant, found himself obliged to require Eustace's presence, after the service was over, in his house, or rather palace, which was attached to, and made part of, the Monastery.

Abbot Boniface was seated in his high-backed chair, the grotesque carved back of which terminated in a mitre, before a fire where two or three large logs were reduced to one red glowing mass of charcoal. At his elbow, on an oaken stand, stood the remains of a roasted capon, on which his reverence had made his evening meal, flanked by a goodly stoup of Bourdeaux of excellent flavour.

He was gazing indolently on the fire, partly engaged in meditation on his past and present fortunes, partly occupied by endeavouring to trace towers and steeples in the red embers.

"Yes," thought the Abbot to himself, "in that red perspective I could fancy to myself the peaceful towers of Dundrennan, where I passed my life ere I was called to pomp and to trouble. A quiet brotherhood we were, regular in our domestic duties; and when the frailties of humanity prevailed over us, we confessed, and were absolved by each other, and the most formidable part of the penance was the jest of the convent on the culprit. I can almost fancy that I see the cloister garden, and the pear-trees which I grafted with my own hands. And for what have I changed all this, but to be overwhelmed with business which concerns me not, to be called My Lord Abbot, and to be tutored by Father Eustace? I would these towers were the Abbey of Aberbrothwick, and Father Eustace the Abbot,—or I would he were in the fire on any terms, so I were rid of him! The Primate says our Holy Father the Pope hath an adviser—I am sure he could not live a week with such a one as mine. Then there is no learning what Father Eustace thinks till you confess your own difficulties—No hint will bring forth his opinion—he is like a miser, who will not unbuckle his purse to bestow a farthing, until the wretch who needs it has owned his excess of poverty, and wrung out the boon by importunity. And thus I am dishonoured in the eyes of my religious brethren, who behold me treated like a child which hath no sense of its own—I will bear it no longer!—Brother Bennet,"—(a lay brother answered to his call)—"tell Father Eustace that I need not his presence."

"I came to say to your reverence, that the holy father is entering even now from the cloisters."

"Be it so," said the Abbot, "he is welcome,—remove these things—or rather, place a trencher, the holy father may be a little hungry—yet, no—remove them, for there is no good fellowship in him—Let the stoup of wine remain, however, and place another cup."

The lay brother obeyed these contradictory commands in the way he judged most seemly—he removed the carcass of the half-sacked capon, and placed two goblets beside the stoup of Bourdeaux. At the same instant entered Father Eustace.

He was a thin, sharp-faced, slight-made little man, whose keen gray eyes seemed almost to look through the person to whom he addressed himself. His body was emaciated not only with the fasts which he observed with rigid punctuality, but also by the active and unwearied exercise of his sharp and piercing intellect;—

> A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
> Fretted the puny body to decay,
> And o'er-inform'd the tenement of clay.

He turned with conventual reverence to the Lord Abbot; and as they stood together, it was scarce possible to see a more complete difference of form and expression. The good-natured rosy face and laughing eye of the Abbot, which even his present anxiety could not greatly ruffle, was a wonderful contrast to the thin pallid cheek and quick penetrating glance of the monk, in which an eager and keen spirit glanced through eyes to which it seemed to give supernatural lustre.

The Abbot opened the conversation by motioning to his monk to take a stool, and inviting to a cup of wine. The courtesy was declined with respect, yet not without a remark, that the vesper-service was past.

"For the stomach's sake, brother," said the Abbot, colouring a little—"you know the text."

"It is a dangerous one," answered the monk, "to handle alone, or at late hours. Cut off from human society, the juice of the grape becomes a perilous companion of solitude, and therefore I ever shun it."

Abbot Boniface had poured himself out a goblet which might hold about half an English pint; but, either struck with the truth of the observation, or ashamed to act in direct opposition to it, he suffered it to remain untasted before him, and immediately changed the subject.

"The Primate hath written to us," said he, "to make strict search within our bounds after the heretical persons denounced in this list, who have withdrawn themselves from the justice which their opinions deserve. It is deemed probable that they will attempt to retire to England by our Borders, and the Primate requireth me to watch with vigilance, and what not."

"Assuredly," said the monk, "the magistrate should not bear the sword in vain—those be they that turn the world upside down—and doubtless your reverend wisdom will with due diligence second the exertions of the Right Reverend Father in God, being in the peremptory defence of the Holy Church."

"Ay, but how is this to be done?" answered the Abbot; "Saint Mary aid us! The Primate writes to me as if I were a temporal baron—a man under command, having soldiers under him! He says, send forth—scour the country—guard the passes—Truly these men do not travel as those who would give their lives for nothing—the last who went south passed the dry-march at the Ridingburn with an escort of thirty spears, as our reverend brother the Abbot of Kelso did write unto us. How are cowls and scapularies to stop the way?"

"Your bailiff is accounted a good man-at-arms, holy father," said Eustace; "your vassals are obliged to rise for the defence of the Holy Kirk—it is the tenure on which they hold their lands—if they will not come forth for the Church which gives them bread, let their possessions be given to others."

"We shall not be wanting," said the Abbot, collecting himself with importance, "to do whatever may advantage Holy Kirk—thyself shall hear the charge to our Bailiff and our officials—but here again is our controversy with the warden of the bridge and the Baron of Meigallot—Saint Mary! vexations do so multiply upon the House, and upon the generation, that a man wots not where to turn to! Thou didst say, Father Eustace, thou wouldst look into our evidents touching this free passage for the pilgrims?"

"I have looked into the Chartulary of the House, holy father," said Eustace, "and therein I find a written and formal grant of all duties and customs payable at the drawbridge of Brigton, not only by ecclesiastics of this foundation, but by every pilgrim truly designed to accomplish his vows at this House, to the Abbot Ailford, and the Monks of the

House of Saint Mary in Kennaquhair, from that time and for ever. The deed is dated on Saint Bridget's Even, in the year of Redemption, 1137, and bears the sign and seal of the granter, Charles of Meigallot, great-great-grandfather of this baron, and purports to be granted for the safety of his own soul, and for the weal of the souls of his father and mother, and of all his predecessors and successors, being Barons of Meigallot."

"But he alleges," said the Abbot, "that the bridge-wards have been in possession of these dues, and have rendered them available for more than fifty years—and the baron threatens violence—meanwhile, the journey of the pilgrims is interrupted, to the prejudice of their own souls and the diminution of the revenues of Saint Mary. The Sacristan advised us to put on a boat; but the warden, whom thou knowest to be a godless man, has sworn the devil tear him, but that if they put on a boat on the laird's stream, he will rive her board from board—and then some say we should compound the claim for a small sum in silver." Here the Abbot paused a moment for a reply, but receiving none, he added, "But what thinkest thou, Father Eustace? why art thou silent?"

"Because I am surprised at the question which the Lord Abbot of Saint Mary's asks at the youngest of his brethren."

"Youngest in time of your abode with us, Brother Eustace," said the Abbot, "not youngest in years, or I think in experience—Sub-Prior also of this convent."

"I am astonished," continued Eustace, "that the Abbot of this venerable house should ask of any one whether he can alienate the patrimony of our holy and divine patroness, or give up to an unconscientious, and perhaps a heretic baron, the rights conferred on this church by his devout progenitor. Popes and councils alike prohibit it—the honour of the living, and the weal of departed souls, alike forbid it—it may not be. To force, if he dare use it, we must surrender; but never by our consent should we see the goods of the church plundered, with as little scruple as he would drive off a herd of English beeves. Rouse yourself, reverend father, and doubt nothing but that the good cause shall prevail. Whet the spiritual sword, and direct it against the wicked who would usurp our holy rights. Whet the temporal sword if it be necessary, and stir up the courage and zeal of your loyal vassals."

The Abbot sighed deeply. "All this," he said, "is soon spoken by him who hath to act it not; but——" He was interrupted by the entrance of Bennet rather hastily. "The mule on which the Sacristan had set out in the morning had returned," he said, "to the convent stable all over wet, and with the saddle turned round beneath her belly."

"Sancta Maria!" said the Abbot, "our dear brother hath perished by the way!"

"It may not be," said Eustace hastily—"let the bell be tolled—cause the brethren to get torches—alarm the village—hurry down to the river—I myself will be the foremost."

The real Abbot stood astonished and agape, when at once he beheld his office filled, and saw all which he ought to have ordered, going forward at the dictates of the youngest monk in the convent. But ere the orders of Eustace, which nobody dreamed of disputing, were carried into execution, the necessity was prevented by the sudden apparition of the Sacristan, whose supposed danger excited all the alarm.

CHAPTER VII.

> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> Cleanse the foul bosom of the perilous stuff
> That weighs upon the heart.
>
> *Macbeth.*

What betwixt cold and fright the afflicted Sacristan stood before his Superior, propped on the friendly arm of the convent miller, drenched with water, and scarce able to utter a syllable.

After various attempts to speak, the first words he uttered were,

"Swim we merrily—the moon shines bright."

"Swim we merrily!" retorted the Abbot indignantly; "a merry night have ye chosen for swimming, and a becoming salutation to your Superior!"

"Our brother is bewildered," said Eustace;—"speak, Father Philip, how is it with you?"

"Good luck to your fishing,"

continued the Sacristan, making a most dolorous attempt at the tune of his strange companion.

"Good luck to your fishing!" repeated the Abbot, still more surprised and displeased; "by my halidome he is drunken with wine, and comes to our presence with his jolly catches in his throat! If bread and water can cure this folly——"

"With your pardon, venerable father," said the Sub-Prior, "of water our brother has had enough; and methinks, the confusion of his eye is rather that of terror, than of aught unbecoming his profession. Where did you find him, Hob Miller?"

"An it please your reverence, I did but go to shut the sluice of the mill—and as I was going to shut the sluice, I heard something groan near to me; but judging it was one of Giles Fletcher's hogs—for so please you, he never shuts his gate—I caught up my lever, and was about—Saint Mary forgive me!—to strike where I heard the sound, when, as the saints would have it, I heard the second groan just like that of a living man. So I called up my knaves, and found the Father Sacristan lying wet and senseless under the wall of our kiln. So soon as we brought him to himself a bit, he prayed to be brought to your reverence, but I doubt me his wits have gone a bell-wavering by the road. It was but now that he spoke in somewhat better form."

"Well!" said Brother Eustace, "thou hast done well, Hob Miller; only begone now, and remember a second time to pause, ere you strike in the dark."

"Please your reverence, it shall be a lesson to me," said the miller, "not to mistake a holy man for a hog again, so long as I live." And, making a bow, with profound humility, the miller withdrew.

"And now that this churl is gone, Father Philip," said Eustace, "wilt thou tell our venerable Superior what ails thee? art thou *vino gravatus*, man? if so, we will have thee to thy cell."

"Water! water! not wine," muttered the exhausted Sacristan.

"Nay," said the monk, "if that be thy complaint, wine may perhaps cure thee;" and he reached him a cup, which the patient drank off to his great benefit.

"And now," said the Abbot, "let his garments be changed, or rather let him be carried to the infirmary; for it will prejudice our health, should we hear his narrative while he stands there, steaming like a rising hoar-frost."

"I will hear his adventure," said Eustace, "and report it to your reverence." And, accordingly, he attended the Sacristan to his cell. In about half an hour he returned to the Abbot.

"How is it with Father Philip?" said the Abbot; "and through what came he into such a state?"

"He comes from Glendearg, reverend sir," said Eustace; "and for the rest, he telleth such a legend, as has not been heard in this Monastery for many a long day." He then gave the Abbot the outlines of the Sacristan's adventures in the homeward journey, and added, that for some time he was inclined to think his brain was infirm, seeing he had sung, laughed, and wept, all in the same breath.

"A wonderful thing it is to us," said the Abbot, "that Satan has been permitted to put forth his hand thus far on one of our sacred brethren!"

"True," said Father Eustace; "but for every text there is a paraphrase; and I have my suspicions, that if the drenching of Father Philip cometh of the Evil one, yet it may not have been altogether without his own personal fault."

"How!" said the Father Abbot; "I will not believe that thou makest doubt that Satan, in former days, hath been permitted to afflict saints and holy men, even as he afflicted the pious Job?"

"God forbid I should make question of it," said the monk, crossing himself; "yet, where there is an exposition of the Sacristan's tale, which is less than miraculous, I hold it safe to consider it at least, if not to abide by it. Now, this Hob the Miller hath a buxom daughter. Suppose — I say only suppose — that our Sacristan met her at the ford on her return from her uncle's on the other side, for there she hath this evening been — suppose, that, in courtesy, and to save her stripping hose and shoon, the Sacristan brought her across behind him — suppose he carried his familiarities farther than the maiden was willing to admit; and we may easily suppose, farther, that this wetting was the result of it."

"And this legend invented to deceive us!" said the Superior, reddening with wrath; "but most strictly shall it be sifted and inquired into; it is not upon us that Father Philip must hope to pass the result of his own evil practices for doings of Satan. To-morrow cite the wench to appear before us — we will examine, and we will punish."

"Under your reverence's favour," said Eustace, "that were but poor policy. As things now stand with us, the heretics catch hold of each flying report which tends to the scandal of our clergy. We must abate the evil, not only by strengthening discipline, but also by suppressing and stifling the voice of scandal. If my conjectures are true, the miller's daughter will be silent for her own sake; and your reverence's authority may also impose silence on her father, and on the Sacristan. If he is again found to afford room for throwing dishonour on his order he can be punished with severity, but at the same time with secrecy. For what say the Decretals? *Facinora ostendi dum punientur, flagitia autem abscondi debent.*"

A sentence of Latin, as Eustace had before observed, had often much influence on the Abbot, because he understood it not fluently, and was ashamed to acknowledge his ignorance. On these terms they parted for the night.

The next day, Abbot Boniface strictly interrogated Philip on the real cause of his disaster of the previous night. But the Sacristan stood firm to his story; nor was he found to vary from any point of it, although the answers he returned were in some degree incoherent, owing to his intermingling with them ever and anon snatches of the strange damsel's song, which had made such deep impression on his imagination, that he could not prevent himself from imitating it repeatedly in the course of his examination. The Abbot had compassion with the Sacristan's involuntary frailty, to which something supernatural seemed annexed, and finally became of opinion, that Father Eustace's more natural explanation was rather plausible than just. And indeed, although we have recorded the adventure as we find it written down, we cannot forbear to add that there was a schism on the subject in the convent, and that several of the brethren pretended to have good reason for thinking that the miller's black-eyed daughter was at the bottom of the affair after all. Whichever way it might be interpreted, all agreed that it had too ludicrous a sound to be permitted to get abroad, and therefore the Sacristan was charged, on his vow of obedience, to say no more of his ducking; an injunction which, having once eased his mind by telling his story, it may be well conjectured that he joyfully obeyed.

The attention of Father Eustace was much less forcibly arrested by the marvellous tale of the Sacristan's danger, and his escape, than by the mention of the volume which he had brought with him from the Tower of Glendearg. A copy of the Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, had found its way even into the proper territory of the church, and had been discovered in one of the most hidden and sequestered recesses of the Halidome of Saint Mary's.

He anxiously requested to see the volume. In this the Sacristan was unable to gratify him, for he had lost it, as far as he recollected, when the supernatural being, as he conceived her to be, took her departure from him. Father Eustace went down to the spot in person, and searched all around it, in hopes of recovering the volume in question; but his labour was in vain. He returned to the Abbot, and reported that it must have fallen into the river or the mill-stream; "for I will hardly believe," he said, "that Father Philip's musical friend would fly off with a copy of the Holy Scriptures."

"Being," said the Abbot, "as it is, an heretical translation, it may be thought that Satan may have power over it."

"Ay!" said Father Eustace, "it is indeed his chiefest magazine of artillery, when he inspireth presumptuous and daring men to set forth their own opinions and expositions of Holy Writ. But though thus abused, the Scriptures are the source of our salvation, and are no more to be reckoned unholy, because of these rash men's proceedings,

than a powerful medicine is to be contemned, or held poisonous, because bold and evil leeches have employed it to the prejudice of their patients. With the permission of your reverence, I would that this matter were looked into more closely. I will myself visit the Tower of Glendearg ere I am many hours older, and we shall see if any spectre or white woman of the wild will venture to interrupt my journey or return. Have I your reverend permission and your blessing?" he added, but in a tone that appeared to set no great store by either.

"Thou hast both, my brother," said the Abbot; but no sooner had Eustace left the apartment, than Boniface could not help breaking on the willing ear of the Sacristan his sincere wish, that any spirit, black, white, or gray, would read the adviser such a lesson, as to cure him of his presumption in esteeming himself wiser than the whole community.

"I wish him no worse lesson," said the Sacristan, "than to go swimming merrily down the river with a ghost behind, and Kelpies, night-crows, and mud-eels, all waiting to have a snatch at him.

> Merrily swim we, the moon shines bright!
> Good luck to your fishing, whom watch you to-night?"

"Brother Philip," said the Abbot, "we exhort thee to say thy prayers, compose thyself, and banish that foolish chant from thy mind;—it is but a deception of the devil's."

"I will essay, reverend Father," said the Sacristan, "but the tune hangs by my memory like a bur in a beggar's rags; it mingles with the psalter — the very bells of the convent seem to repeat the words, and jingle to the tune; and were you to put me to death at this very moment, it is my belief I should die singing it — 'Now swim we merrily'—it is as it were a spell upon me."

He then again began to warble

> "Good luck to your fishing."

And checking himself in the strain with difficulty, he exclaimed, "It is too certain — I am but a lost priest! Swim we merrily — I shall sing it at the very mass — Wo is me! I shall sing all the remainder of my life, and yet never be able to change the tune!"

The honest Abbot replied, "he knew many a good fellow in the same condition;" and concluded the remark with "ho! ho! ho!" for his reverence, as the reader may partly have observed, was one of those dull folks who love a quiet joke.

The Sacristan, well acquainted with his Superior's humour, endeavoured to join in the laugh, but his unfortunate canticle came again across his imagination, and interrupted the hilarity of his customary echo.

"By the rood, Brother Philip," said the Abbot, much moved, "you become altogether intolerable! and I am convinced that such a spell could not subsist over a person of religion, and in a religious house, unless he were under mortal sin. Wherefore, say the seven penitentiary psalms — make diligent use of thy scourge and hair-cloth — refrain for three days from all food, save bread and water — I myself will shrive thee, and we will see if this singing devil may be driven out of thee; at least I think Father Eustace himself could devise no better exorcism."

The Sacristan sighed deeply, but knew remonstrance was vain. He retired therefore to his cell, to try how far psalmody might be able to drive off the sounds of the syren tune which haunted his memory.

Meanwhile, Father Eustace proceeded to the drawbridge, in his way to the lonely valley of Glendearg. In a brief conversation with the churlish warder, he had the address to render him more tractable in the controversy betwixt him and the convent. He reminded him that his father had been a vassal under the community; that his brother was childless; and that their possession would revert to the church on his death, and might be either granted to himself the warder, or to some greater favourite of the Abbot, as matters chanced to stand betwixt them at the time. The Sub-Prior suggested to him also, the necessary connection of interests betwixt the Monastery and the office which this man enjoyed. He listened with temper to his rude and churlish answers; and by keeping his own interest firm pitched in his view, he had the satisfaction to find that Peter gradually softened his tone, and consented to let every pilgrim who travelled upon foot pass free of exaction until Pentecost next; they who travelled on horseback or otherwise, consenting to pay the ordinary custom. Having thus accommodated a matter in which the weal of the convent was so deeply interested, Father Eustace proceeded on his journey.

CHAPTER VIII.

> Nay, dally not with time, the wise man's treasure,
> Though fools are lavish on't — the fatal Fisher
> Hooks souls, while we waste moments.
>
> *Old Play.*

A November mist overspread the little valley, up which slowly but steadily rode the Monk Eustace. He was not insensible to the feeling of melancholy inspired by the scene and by the season. The stream seemed to murmur with a deep and oppressed note, as if bewailing the departure of autumn. Among the scattered copses which here and there fringed its banks, the oak-trees only retained that pallid green that precedes their russet hue. The leaves of the willows were most of them stripped from the branches, lay rustling at each breath, and disturbed by every step of the mule; while the foliage of other trees, totally withered, kept still precarious possession of the boughs, waiting the first wind to scatter them.

The monk dropped into the natural train of pensive thought which these autumnal emblems of mortal hopes are peculiarly calculated to inspire. "There," he said, looking at the leaves which lay strewed around, "lie the hopes of early youth, first formed that they may soonest wither, and loveliest in spring to become most contemptible in winter; but you, ye lingerers," he added, looking to a knot of beeches which still bore their withered leaves, "you are the proud plans of adventurous manhood, formed later, and still clinging to the mind of age, although it acknowledges their inanity! None lasts — none endures, save the foliage of the hardy oak, which only begins to shew itself when that of the rest of the forest has enjoyed half its existence. A pale and decayed hue is all it pos-

sesses, but still it retains that symptom of vitality to the last. — So be it with Father Eustace! The fairy hopes of my youth I have trodden under foot like those neglected rustlers — to the prouder dreams of my manhood I look back as to lofty chimeras, of which the pith and essence have long since faded; but my religious vows, the faithful profession which I have made in my maturer age, shall retain life while aught of Eustace lives. Dangerous it may be — feeble it must be — yet live it shall, the proud determination to serve the church of which I am a member, and to combat the heresies by which she is assailed." Thus spoke, at least thus thought, a man zealous according to his imperfect knowledge, confounding the vital interests of Christianity with the extravagant and usurped claims of the Church of Rome, and defending his cause with an ardour worthy of a better.

While moving onward in this contemplative mood, he could not help thinking more than once, that he saw in his path the form of a female dressed in white, who appeared in the attitude of lamentation. But the impression was only momentary, and whenever he looked steadily to the point where he conceived the figure appeared, it always proved that he had mistaken some natural object, a white crag, or the trunk of a decayed birch-tree with its silverb ark, for the appearance in question.

Father Eustace had dwelt too long in Rome to partake the superstitious feelings of the more ignorant Scottish clergy; yet he certainly thought it extraordinary, that so strong an impression should have been made on his mind by the legend of the Sacristan. "It is strange," he said to himself, "that this story, which doubtless was the invention of Brother Philip to cover his own impropriety of conduct, should run so much in my head, and disturb my more serious thoughts — I am wont, I think, to have more command over my senses. I will repeat my prayers, and banish such folly from my recollection."

The monk accordingly began with devotion to tell his beads, in pursuance of the prescribed rule of his order, and was not again disturbed by any wanderings of the imagination, until he found himself beneath the little fortalice of Glendearg.

Dame Glendinning, who stood at the gate, set up a shout of surprise and joy at seeing the good father. "Martin," she said, "Jasper, where be a' the folk? — help the right reverend Sub-Prior to dismount, and take his mule from him. — O father! God has sent you in our need — I was just going to send man and horse to the convent, though I ought to be ashamed to give so much trouble to your reverences."

"Our trouble matters not, good dame," said Father Eustace; "in what can I pleasure you? I came hither to visit the Lady of Avenel."

"Well-a-day!" said Dame Alice, "and it was on her part that I had the boldness to think of summoning you, for the good lady will never be able to wear over the day! — Would it please you to go to her chamber?"

"Hath she not been shriven by Father Philip?" said the monk.

"Shriven she was," said the Dame of Glendearg, "and by Father Philip, as your reverence truly says — but — I wish it may have been a clean shrift — Methought Father Philip looked but moody upon it — and there was a book which he took away with him, that ——" She paused as if unwilling to proceed.

"Speak out, Dame Glendinning," said the Father; "with us it is your duty to have no secrets."

"Nay, if it please your reverence, it is not that I would keep any thing from your reverence's knowledge, but I fear I should prejudice the lady in your opinion; for she is an excellent lady — months and years has she dwelt in this tower, and none more exemplary than she; but this matter, doubtless, she will explain it herself to your reverence."

"I desire first to know it from you, Dame Glendinning," said the monk; "and I again repeat, it is your duty to tell it to me."

"This book, if it please your reverence, which Father Philip removed from Glendearg, was this morning returned to us in a strange manner," said the good widow.

"Returned!" said the monk; "How mean you?"

"I mean," answered Dame Glendinning, "that it was brought back to the tower of Glendearg, the saints best know how — that same book which Father Philip carried with him but yesterday. Old Martin, that is my tasker and the lady's servant, was driving out the cows to the pasture — for we have three good milk-cows, reverend father, blessed be Saint Waldave, and thanks to the holy Monastery ——"

The monk groaned with impatience; but he remembered that a woman of the good dame's condition was like a top, which, if you let it spin on untouched, must at last come to a pause; but, if you interrupt it by flogging, there is no end to its gyrations. "But to speak no more of the cows, your reverence, though they are likely cattle as ever were tied to a stake, the tasker was driving them out, and the lads, that is my Halbert and my Edward, that your reverence has seen at church on holidays, and especially Halbert, — for you patted him on the head and gave him a brooch of Saint Cuthbert, which he wears in his bonnet, — and little Mary Avenel, that is the lady's daughter, they ran all after the cattle, and began to play up and down the pasture as young folk will, your reverence. And at length they lost sight of Martin and the cows; and they began to run up a little cleugh which we call *Corri-nan-Shian*, where there is a wee bit stripe of a burn, and they saw there — Good guide us! — a White Woman sitting on the burn-side wringing her hands — so the bairns were frighted to see a strange woman sitting there, all but Halbert, who will be sixteen come Whitsuntide; and, besides, he never feared ony thing — and when they went up to her — behold she was passed away!"

"For shame, good woman!" said Father Eustace; "a woman of your sense to listen to a tale so idle! — the young folk told you a lie, and that was all."

"Nay, sir, it was more than that," said the old dame; "for, besides that they never told me a lie in their lives, I must warn you that on the very ground where the White Woman was sitting, they found the Lady of Avenel's book, and brought it with them to the tower."

"That is worthy of mark at least," said the monk. "Know you no other copy of this volume within these bounds?"

"None, your reverence," returned Elspeth; "why

should there?—no one could read it were there twenty."

"Then you are sure it is the very same volume which you gave to Father Philip?" said the monk.

"As sure as that I now speak with your reverence."

"It is most singular!" said the monk; and he walked across the room in a musing posture.

"I have been upon nettles to hear what your reverence would say," continued Dame Glendinning, "respecting this matter—There is nothing I would not do for the Lady of Avenel and her family, and that has been proved, and for her servants to boot, both Martin and Tibb, although Tibb is not so civil sometimes as altogether I have a right to expect; but I cannot think it beseeming to have angels, or ghosts, or fairies, or the like, waiting upon a leddy when she is in another woman's house, in respect it is no ways creditable. Ony thing she had to do was always done to her hand, without costing her either pains or pence, as a country body says; and besides the discredit, I cannot but think that there is no safety in having such unchancy creatures about ane. But I have tied red thread round the bairns's throats," (so her fondness still called them,) "and given ilk ane of them a riding-wand of rowan-tree, forby sewing up a slip of witch-elm into their doublets; and I wish to know of your reverence if there be ony thing mair that a lone woman can do in the matter of ghosts and fairies?—Be here! that I should have named their unlucky names twice ower!"

"Dame Glendinning," answered the monk, somewhat abruptly, when the good woman had finished her narrative, "I pray you, do you know the miller's daughter?"

"Did I know Kate Happer?" replied the widow; "as well as the beggar knows his dish—a canty quean was Kate, and a special cummer of my ain may be twenty years syne."

"She cannot be the wench I mean," said Father Eustace; "she after whom I inquire is scarce fifteen, a black-eyed girl—you may have seen her at the kirk."

"Your reverence must be in the right; and she is my cummer's niece, doubtless, that you are pleased to speak of: But I thank God I have always been too duteous in attention to the mass, to know whether young wenches have black eyes or green ones."

The good Father had so much of the world about him, that he was unable to avoid smiling, when the dame boasted her absolute resistance to a temptation, which was not quite so liable to beset her as those of the other sex.

"Perhaps, then," he said, "you know her usual dress, Dame Glendinning?"

"Ay, ay, Father," answered the dame readily enough, "a white kirtle the wench wears, to hide the dust of the mill, no doubt—and a blue hood, that might weel be spared, for pridefulness."

"Then, may it not be she," said the Father, "who has brought back this book, and stepped out of the way when the children came near her?"

The dame paused—was unwilling to combat the solution suggested by the monk—but was at a loss to conceive why the lass of the mill should come so far from home into so wild a corner merely to leave an old book with three children, from whose observation she wished to conceal herself. Above all, she could not understand why, since she had acquaintances in the family, and since the Dame Glendinning had always paid her multure and knaveship duly, the said lass of the mill had not come in to rest herself and eat a morsel, and tell her the current news of the water.

These very objections satisfied the monk that his conjectures were right. "Dame," he said, "you must be cautious in what you say. This is an instance—I would it were the sole one—of the power of the Enemy in these days. The matter must be sifted with a curious and careful hand."

"Indeed," said Elspeth, trying to catch and chime in with the ideas of the Sub-Prior, "I have often thought the miller's folk at the Monastery-mill were far over careless in sifting our melder, and in bolting it too—some folk say they will not stick at whiles to put in a handful of ashes amongst Christian folk's corn-meal."

"That shall be looked after also, dame," said the Sub-Prior, not displeased to see that the good old woman went off on a false scent; "and now, by your leave, I will see this lady—do you go before, and prepare her to see me."

Dame Glendinning left the lower apartment accordingly, which the monk paced in anxious reflection, considering how he might best discharge, with humanity as well as with effect, the important duty imposed on him. He resolved to approach the bedside of the sick person with reprimands, mitigated only by a feeling for her weak condition—he determined, in case of her reply, to which late examples of hardened heretics might encourage her, to be prepared with answers to their customary scruples. High fraught, also, with zeal against her unauthorized intrusion into the priestly function, by study of the Sacred Scriptures, he imagined to himself the answers which one of the modern school of heresy might return to him—the victorious refutation which should lay the disputant prostrate at the Confessor's mercy—and the healing, yet awful exhortation, which, under pain of refusing the last consolations of religion, he designed to make to the penitent, conjuring her, as she loved her own soul's welfare, to disclose to him what she knew of the dark mystery of iniquity, by which heresies were introduced into the most secluded spots of the very patrimony of the church herself—what agents they had who could thus glide, as it were unseen, from place to place, bring back the volume which the church had interdicted to the spots from which it had been removed under her express auspices; and who, by encouraging the daring and profane thirst after knowledge forbidden and useless to the laity, had encouraged the fisher of souls to use with effect his old bait of ambition and vain-glory.

Much of this premeditated disputation escaped the good father, when Elspeth returned, her tears flowing faster than her apron could dry them, and made him a signal to follow her. "How," said the monk, "is she then so near her end?—nay, the church must not break or bruise, when comfort is yet possible;" and forgetting his polemics, the good Sub-Prior hastened to the little apartment, where, on the wretched bed which she had occupied since her misfortunes had driven her to the Tower of Glendearg, the widow of Walter Avenel had rendered up her spirit to her Creator. "My God!" said the Sub-Prior, "and has my unfortunate dallying suffered her to depart without the Church's

consolation! Look to her, dame," he exclaimed with eager impatience; "is there not yet a sparkle of the life left?—may she not be recalled—recalled but for a moment?—Oh! would that she could express, but by the most imperfect word—but by the most feeble motion, her acquiescence in the needful task of penitential prayer!—Does she not breathe?—Art thou sure she doth not."

"She will never breathe more," said the matron. "Oh! the poor fatherless girl—now motherless also—Oh, the kind companion I have had these many years, whom I shall never see again! But she is in heaven for certain, if ever woman went there; for a woman of better life——"

"Wo to me," said the good monk, "if indeed she went not hence in good assurance—wo to the reckless shepherd, who suffered the wolf to carry a choice one from the flock, while he busied himself with trimming his sling and his staff to give the monster battle! Oh! if in the long Hereafter, aught but weal should that poor spirit share, what has my delay cost!—the value of an immortal soul!"

He then approached the body, full of the deep remorse natural to a good man of his persuasion, who devoutly believed the doctrines of the Catholic Church. "Ay," said he, gazing on the pallid corpse, from which the spirit had parted so placidly as to leave a smile upon the thin blue lips, which had been so long wasted by decay that they had parted with the last breath of animation without the slightest convulsive tremor—"Ay," said Father Eustace, "there lies the faded tree, and, as it fell, so it lies—awful thought for me, should my neglect have left it to descend in an evil direction!" He then again and again conjured Dame Glendinning to tell him what she knew of the demeanour and ordinary walk of the deceased.

All tended to the high honour of the deceased lady; for her companion, who admired her sufficiently while alive, notwithstanding some trifling points of jealousy, now idolized her after her death, and could think of no attribute of praise with which she did not adorn her memory.

Indeed, the Lady of Avenel, however she might privately doubt some of the doctrines announced by the Church of Rome, and although she had probably tacitly appealed from that corrupted system of Christianity to the volume on which Christianity itself is founded, had nevertheless been regular in her attendance on the worship of the church, not, perhaps, extending her scruples so far as to break off communion. Such indeed was the first sentiment of the earlier reformers, who seem to have studied, for a time at least, to avoid a schism, until the violence of the Pope rendered it inevitable.

Father Eustace, on the present occasion, listened with eagerness to every thing which could lead to assure him of the lady's orthodoxy in the main points of belief; for his conscience reproached him sorely, that, instead of protracting conversation with the Dame of Glendearg, he had not instantly hastened where his presence was so necessary. "If," he said, addressing the dead body, "thou art yet free from the utmost penalty due to the followers of false doctrine—if thou dost but suffer for a time, to expiate faults done in the body, but partaking of mortal frailty more than of deadly sin, fear not that thy abode shall be long in the penal regions to which thou mayest be doomed—if vigils—if masses—if penance—if macerat.on of my body, till it resembles that extenuated form which the soul hath abandoned, may assure thy deliverance. The Holy Church—the godly foundation—our blessed Patroness herself, shall intercede for one whose errors were counterbalanced by so many virtues.—Leave me, dame—here, and by her bedside, will I perform those duties which this piteous case demands!"

Elspeth left the monk, who employed himself in fervent and sincere, though erroneous prayers, for the weal of the departed spirit. For an hour he remained in the apartment of death, and then returned to the hall, where he found the still weeping friend of the deceased.

But it would be injustice to Mrs Elspeth Glendinning's hospitality, if we suppose her to have been weeping during this long interval, or rather if we suppose her so entirely absorbed by the tribute of sorrow which she paid frankly and plentifully to her deceased friend, as to be incapable of attending to the rights of hospitality due to the holy visiter—who was confessor at once, and Sub-Prior—mighty in all religious and secular considerations, so far as the vassals of the Monastery were interested.

Her barley-bread had been toasted—her choicest cask of home-brewed ale had been broached—her best butter had been placed on the hall-table, along with her most savoury ham and her choicest cheese, ere she abandoned herself to the extremity of sorrow; and it was not till she had arranged her little repast neatly on the board, that she sat down in the chimney corner, threw her checked apron over her head, and gave way to the current of tears and sobs. In this there was no grimace or affectation. The good dame held the honours of her house to be as essential a duty, especially when a monk was her visitant, as any other pressing call upon her conscience; nor until these were suitably attended to did she find herself at liberty to indulge her sorrow for her departed friend.

When she was conscious of the Sub-Prior's presence, she rose with the same attention to his reception; but he declined all the offers of hospitality with which she endeavoured to tempt him. Not her butter, as yellow as gold, and the best, she assured him, that was made in the patrimony of Saint Mary—not the barley scones, which "the departed saint, God sain her! used to say were so good"—not the ale, nor any other cates which poor Elspeth's stores afforded, could prevail on the Sub-Prior to break his fast.

"This day," he said, "I must not taste food until the sun go down, happy if, in so doing, I can expiate my own negligence—happier still, if my sufferings of this trifling nature, undertaken in pure faith and singleness of heart, may benefit the soul of the deceased. Yet, dame," he added, "I may not so far forget the living in my cares for the dead, as to leave behind me that book, which is to the ignorant what, to our first parents, the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil unhappily proved—excellent indeed in itself, but fatal because used by those to whom it is prohibited."

"Oh, blithely, reverend father," said the widow of Simon Glendinning, "will I give you the book, if so be I can wile it from the bairns; and indeed, poor things, as the case stands with them even

now, you might take the heart out of their bodies, and they never find it out, they are sae begrutten."[1]

"Give them this missal instead, good dame," said the Father, drawing from his pocket one which was curiously illuminated with paintings, "and I will come myself, or send one at a fitting time, and teach them the meaning of these pictures."

"The bonny images!" said Dame Glendinning, forgetting for an instant her grief in her admiration, "and weel I wot," added she, "it is another sort of a book than the poor Lady of Avenel's; and blessed might we have been this day, if your reverence had found the way up the glen, instead of Father Philip, though the Sacristan is a powerful man too, and speaks as if he would ger the house fly abroad, save that the walls are gey thick. Simon's forebears (may he and they be blessed!) took care of that."

The monk ordered his mule, and was about to take his leave; and the good dame was still delaying him with questions about the funeral, when a horseman, armed and accoutred, rode into the little court-yard which surrounded the Keep.

CHAPTER IX.

For since they rode among our doors
With splent on spauld and rusty spurs,
There grows no fruit into our furs;
Thus said John Up-on-land.
Bannatyne MS.

The Scottish laws, which were as wisely and judiciously made as they were carelessly and ineffectually executed, had in vain endeavoured to restrain the damage done to agriculture, by the chiefs and landed proprietors retaining in their service what were called jack-men, from the *jack*, or doublet quilted with iron which they wore as defensive armour. These military retainers conducted themselves with great insolence towards the industrious part of the community — lived in a great measure by plunder, and were ready to execute any commands of their master, however unlawful. In adopting this mode of life, men resigned the quiet hopes and regular labours of industry, for an unsettled, precarious, and dangerous trade, which yet had such charms for those once accustomed to it, that they became incapable of following any other. Hence the complaint of John Upland, a fictitious character, representing a countryman, into whose mouth the poets of the day put their general satires upon men and manners:

They ride about in such a rage,
By forest, frith, and field,
With buckler, bow, and brand.
Lo! where they ride out through the rye!
The Devil mot save the company,
Quoth John Up-on-land.

Christie of the Clinthill, the horseman who now arrived at the little Tower of Glendearg, was one of the hopeful company of whom the poet complains, as was indicated by his "splent on spauld," (iron-plates on his shoulder,) his rusted spurs, and his long lance. An iron skull-cap, none of the brightest, bore for distinction a sprig of the holly, which was Avenel's badge. A long two-edged straight sword, having a handle made of polished oak, hung down by his side. The meagre condition of his horse, and the wild and emaciated look of the rider, shewed their occupation could not be accounted an easy or a thriving one. He saluted Dame Glendinning with little courtesy, and the monk with less; for the growing disrespect to the religious orders had not failed to extend itself among a class of men of such disorderly habits, although it may be supposed they were tolerably indifferent alike to the new or the ancient doctrines.

"So, our lady is dead, Dame Glendinning?" said the jack-man; "my master has sent you even now a fat bullock for her mart — it may serve for her funeral. I have left him in the upper cleugh, as he is somewhat kenspeckle,[2] and is marked both with cut and birn — the sooner the skin is off, and he is in saultfat, the less like you are to have trouble — you understand me? Let me have a peck of corn for my horse, and beef and beer for myself, for I must go on to the Monastery — though I think this monk here might do mine errand."

"Thine errand, rude man!" said the Sub-Prior, knitting his brows ——

"For God's sake!" cried poor Dame Glendinning, terrified at the idea of a quarrel between them, — "O Christie! — it is the Sub-Prior — O reverend sir, it is Christie of the Clinthill, the laird's chief jack-man; ye know that little havings can be expected from the like o' them."

"Are you a retainer of the Laird of Avenel?" said the monk, addressing himself to the horseman, "and do you speak thus rudely to a brother of Saint Mary's, to whom thy master is so much beholden?"

"He means to be yet more beholden to your house, Sir Monk," answered the fellow; "for hearing his sister-in-law, the widow of Walter of Avenel, was on her death-bed, he sent me to say to the Father Abbot and the brethren, that he will hold the funeral-feast at their convent, and invites himself thereto, with a score of horse and some friends, and to abide there for three days and three nights, — having horse-meat and men's-meat at the charge of the community; of which his intention he sends due notice, that fitting preparation may be timeously made."

"Friend," said the Sub-Prior, "believe not that I will do to the Father Abbot the indignity of delivering such an errand. — Think'st thou the goods of the church were bestowed upon her by holy princes and pious nobles, now dead and gone, to be consumed in revelry by every profligate layman who numbers in his train more followers than he can support by honest means, or by his own incomings? Tell thy master, from the Sub-Prior of Saint Mary's, that the Primate hath issued his commands to us that we submit no longer to this compulsory exaction of hospitality on slight or false pretences. Our lands and goods were given to relieve pilgrims and pious persons, not to feast bands of rude soldiers."

"This to me!" said the angry spearman, "this to me and to my master — Look to yourself then, Sir Priest, and try if *Ave* and *Credo* will keep bullocks from wandering, and hay-stacks from burning."

"Dost thou menace the Holy Church's patrimony with waste and fire-raising," said the Sub-Prior,

[1] *Begrutten* — over-weeped.

[2] *Kenspeckle* — that which is easily recognized by the eye.

"and that in the face of the sun? I call on all who hear me to bear witness to the words this ruffian has spoken. Remember how the Lord James drowned such as you by scores in the black pool at Jeddart. — To him and to the Primate will I complain." The soldier shifted the position of his lance, and brought it down to a level with the monk's body.

Dame Glendinning began to shriek for assistance. "Tibb Tacket! Martin! where be ye all? — Christie, for the love of God, consider he is a man of Holy Kirk!"

"I care not for his spear," said the Sub-Prior; "if I am slain in defending the rights and privileges of my community, the Primate will know how to take vengeance."

"Let him look to himself," said Christie, but at the same time depositing his lance against the wall of the tower; "if the Fife men spoke true who came hither with the Governor in the last raid, Norman Leslie has him at feud, and is like to set him hard. We know Norman a true blood-hound, who will never quit the slot. But I had no design to offend the holy father," he added, thinking perhaps he had gone a little too far; "I am a rude man, bred to lance and stirrup, and not used to deal with book-learned men and priests; and I am willing to ask his forgiveness and his blessing, if I have said aught amiss."

"For God's sake, your reverence," said the widow of Glendearg apart to the Sub-Prior, "bestow on him your forgiveness — how shall we poor folk sleep in security in the dark nights, if the Convent is at feud with such men as he is?"

"You are right, dame," said the Sub-Prior, "your safety should, and must, be in the first instance consulted. — Soldier, I forgive thee, and may God bless thee and send thee honesty."

Christie of the Clinthill made an unwilling inclination with his head, and muttered apart, "that is as much as to say, God send thee starvation. — But now to my master's demand, Sir Priest? What answer am I to return?"

"That the body of the widow of Walter of Avenel," answered the Father, "shall be interred as becomes her rank, and in the tomb of her valiant husband. For your master's proffered visit of three days, with such a company and retinue, I have no authority to reply to it; you must intimate your Chief's purpose to the Reverend Lord Abbot."

"That will cost me a farther ride," said the man, "but it is all in the day's work. — How now, my lad," said he to Halbert, who was handling the long lance which he had laid aside; "how do you like such a plaything? — will you go with me and be a moss-trooper?"

"The Saints in their mercy forbid!" said the poor mother; and then, afraid of having displeased Christie by the vivacity of her exclamation, she followed it up by explaining, that since Simon's death she could not look on a spear or a bow, or any implement of destruction without trembling.

"Pshaw!" answered Christie, "thou shouldst take another husband, dame, and drive such follies out of thy thoughts — what sayst thou to such a strapping lad as I? Why, this old tower of thine is fencible enough, and there is no want of cleuchs, and crags, and bogs, and thickets, if one was set hard; a man might bide here and keep his half-score of lads, and as many geldings, and live on what he could lay his hand on, and be kind to thee, old wench."

"Alas! Master Christie," said the matron, "that you should talk to a lone woman in such a fashion, and death in the house besides!"

"Lone woman! — why, that is the very reason thou shouldst take a mate. Thy old friend is dead, why, good — choose thou another of somewhat tougher frame, and that will not die of the pip like a young chicken. — Better still — Come, dame, let me have something to eat, and we will talk more of this."

Dame Elspeth, though she well knew the character of the man, whom in fact she both disliked and feared, could not help simpering at the personal address which he thought proper to make to her. She whispered to the Sub-Prior, "ony thing just to keep him quiet," and went into the tower to set before the soldier the food he desired, trusting, betwixt good cheer and the power of her own charms, to keep Christie of the Clinthill so well amused, that the altercation betwixt him and the holy father should not be renewed.

The Sub-Prior was equally unwilling to hazard any unnecessary rupture between the community and such a person as Julian of Avenel. He was sensible that moderation, as well as firmness, was necessary to support the tottering cause of the Church of Rome; and that, contrary to former times, the quarrels betwixt the clergy and laity had, in the present, usually terminated to the advantage of the latter. He resolved, therefore, to avoid farther strife by withdrawing, but failed not, in the first place, to possess himself of the volume which the Sacristan carried off the evening before, and which had been returned to the glen in such a marvellous manner.

Edward, the younger of Dame Elspeth's boys, made great objections to the book's being removed, in which Mary would probably have joined, but that she was now in her little sleeping-chamber with Tibb, who was exerting her simple skill to console the young lady for her mother's death. But the younger Glendinning stood up in defence of her property, and, with a positiveness which had hitherto made no part of his character, declared, that now the kind lady was dead, the book was Mary's, and no one but Mary should have it.

"But if it is not a fit book for Mary to read, my dear boy," said the Father, gently, "you would not wish it to remain with her?"

"The lady read it," answered the young champion of property; "and so it could not be wrong — it shall not be taken away. — I wonder where Halbert is? — listening to the bravading tales of gay Christie, I reckon — he is always wishing for fighting, and now he is out of the way."

"Why, Edward, you would not fight with me, who am both a priest and an old man?"

"If you were as good a priest as the Pope," said the boy, "and as old as the hills to boot, you shall not carry away Mary's book without her leave. I will do battle for it."

"But see you, my love," said the monk, amused with the resolute friendship manifested by the boy, "I do not take it; I only borrow it; and I leave in its place my own gay missal, as a pledge I will bring it again."

Edward opened the missal with eager curiosity, and glanced at the pictures with which it was illus-

trated. "Saint George and the dragon — Halbert will like that; and Saint Michael brandishing his sword over the head of the Wicked One—and that will do for Halbert too. And see the Saint John leading his lamb in the wilderness, with his little cross made of reeds, and his scrip and staff — that shall be my favourite; and where shall we find one for poor Mary? — here is a beautiful woman weeping and lamenting herself."

"This is Saint Mary Magdalen repenting of her sins, my dear boy," said the Father.

"That will not suit *our* Mary; for she commits no faults, and is never angry with us, but when we do something wrong."

"Then," said the Father, "I will shew you a Mary, who will protect her and you, and all good children. See how fairly she is represented, with her gown covered with golden stars."

The boy was lost in wonder at the portrait of the Virgin, which the Sub-Prior turned up to him.

"This," he said, "is really like our sweet Mary; and I think I will let you take away the black book, that has no such goodly shows in it, and leave this for Mary instead. But you must promise to bring back the book, good Father—for now I think upon it, Mary may like that best which was her mother's."

"I will certainly return," said the monk, evading his answer, "and perhaps I may teach you to write and read such beautiful letters as you see there written, and to paint them blue, green, and yellow, and to blazon them with gold."

"Ay, and to make such figures as these blessed Saints, and especially these two Marys?" said the boy.

"With their blessing," said the Sub-Prior, "I can teach you that art too, so far as I am myself capable of shewing, and you of learning it."

"Then," said Edward, "will I paint Mary's picture—and remember you are to bring back the black book; that you must promise me."

The Sub-Prior, anxious to get rid of the boy's pertinacity, and to set forward on his return to the convent, without having any farther interview with Christie the galloper, answered by giving the promise Edward required, mounted his mule, and set forth on his return homeward.

The November day was well spent ere the Sub-Prior resumed his journey; for the difficulty of the road, and the various delays which he had met with at the tower, had detained him longer than he proposed. A chill easterly wind was sighing among the withered leaves, and stripping them from the hold they had yet retained on the parent trees.

"Even so," said the monk, "our prospects in this vale of time grow more disconsolate as the stream of years passes on. Little have I gained by my journey, saving the certainty that heresy is busy among us with more than his usual activity, and that the spirit of insulting religious orders, and plundering the Church's property, so general in the eastern districts of Scotland, has now come nearer home."

The tread of a horse which came up behind him, interrupted his reverie, and he soon saw he was mounted by the same wild rider whom he had left at the tower.

"Good even, my son, and benedicite," said the Sub-Prior as he passed; but the rude soldier scarce acknowledged the greeting, by bending his head; and dashing the spurs into his horse, went on at a pace which soon left the monk and his mule far behind. And there, thought the Sub-Prior, goes another plague of the times—a fellow whose birth designed him to cultivate the earth, but who is perverted by the unhallowed and unchristian divisions of the country, into a daring and dissolute robber. The barons of Scotland are now turned masterful thieves and ruffians, oppressing the poor by violence, and wasting the Church, by extorting free-quarters from abbeys and priories, without either shame or reason. I fear me I shall be too late to counsel the Abbot to make a stand against these daring *sorners*[1]—I must make haste." He struck his mule with his riding-wand accordingly; but, instead of mending her pace, the animal suddenly started from the path, and the rider's utmost efforts could not force her forward.

"Art thou, too, infected with the spirit of the times!" said the Sub-Prior; "thou wert wont to be ready and serviceable, and art now as restive as any wild jack-man or stubborn heretic of them all."

While he was contending with the startled animal, a voice, like that of a female, chanted in his ear, or at least very close to it,

> "Good evening, Sir Priest, and so late as you ride,
> With your mule so fair, and your mantle so wide;
> But ride you through valley, or ride you o'er hill,
> There is one that has warrant to wait on you still.
> Back, back,
> The volume black!
> I have a warrant to carry it back."

The Sub-Prior looked around, but neither bush nor brake was near which could conceal an ambushed songstress. "May Our Lady have mercy on me!" he said; "I trust my senses have not forsaken me — yet how my thoughts should arrange themselves into rhymes which I despise, and music which I care not for, or why there should be the sound of a female voice in ears, in which its melody has been so long indifferent, baffles my comprehension, and almost realizes the vision of Philip the Sacristan. Come, good mule, betake thee to the path, and let us hence while our judgment serves us."

But the mule stood as if it had been rooted to the spot, backed from the point to which it was pressed by its rider, and by her ears laid close into her neck, and her eyes almost starting from their sockets, testified that she was under great terror.

While the Sub-Prior, by alternate threats and soothing, endeavoured to reclaim the wayward animal to her duty, the wild musical voice was again heard close beside him.

> "What, ho! Sub-Prior, and came you but here
> To conjure a book from a dead woman's bier?
> Sain you, and save you, be wary and wise,
> Ride back with the book, or you'll pay for your *prize*.
> Back, back,
> There 's death in the track!
> In the name of my master, I bid thee bear back."

"In the name of MY Master," said the astonished monk, "that name before which all things created tremble, I conjure thee to say what thou art that hauntest me thus?"

The same voice replied,

> "That which is neither ill nor well,
> That which belongs not to Heaven nor to hell,

[1] See Note D. *Sorners.*

A wreath of the mist, a bubble of the stream,
'Twixt a waking thought and a sleeping dream;
A form that men spy
With the half-shut eye,
In the beams of the setting sun, am I."

"This is more than simple fantasy," said the Sub-Prior, rousing himself; though, notwithstanding the natural hardihood of his temper, the sensible presence of a supernatural being so near him, failed not to make his blood run cold, and his hair bristle. "I charge thee," he said aloud, "be thine errand what it will, to depart and trouble me no more! False spirit, thou canst not appal any save those who do the work negligently."

The voice immediately answered:

"Vainly, Sir Prior, wouldst thou bar me my right!
Like the star when it shoots, I can dart through the night;
I can dance on the torrent and ride on the air,
And travel the world with the bonny night-mare.
Again, again,
At the crook of the glen,
Where bickers the burnie, I 'll meet thee again."

The road was now apparently left open; for the mule collected herself, and changed from her posture of terror to one which promised advance, although a profuse perspiration, and general trembling of the joints, indicated the bodily terror she had undergone.

"I used to doubt the existence of Cabalists and Rosicrucians," thought the Sub-Prior, "but, by my Holy Order, I know no longer what to say! — My pulse beats temperately — my hand is cool — I am fasting from every thing but sin, and possessed of my ordinary faculties — Either some fiend is permitted to bewilder me, or the tales of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and others who treat of occult philosophy, are not without foundation. — At the crook of the glen? I could have desired to avoid a second meeting, but I am on the service of the church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against me."

He moved around accordingly, but with precaution, and not without fear; for he neither knew the manner in which, or the place where, his journey might be next interrupted by his invisible attendant. He descended the glen without interruption for about a mile farther, when, just at the spot where the brook approached the steep hill, with a winding so abrupt as to leave scarcely room for a horse to pass, the mule was again visited with the same symptoms of terror which had before interrupted her course. Better acquainted than before with the cause of her restiveness, the Priest employed no effort to make her proceed, but addressed himself to the object, which he doubted not was the same that had formerly interrupted him, in the words of solemn exorcism prescribed by the Church of Rome on such occasions.

In reply to his demand, the voice again sung;—

"Men of good are bold as sackless,[1]
Men of rude are wild and reckless,
Lie thou still
In the nook of the hill,
For those be before thee that wish thee ill."

While the Sub-Prior listened, with his head turned in the direction from which the sounds seemed to come, he felt as if something rushed against him; and ere he could discover the cause, he was pushed from his saddle with gentle but irresistible force. Before he reached the ground his senses were gone, and he lay long in a state of insensibility; for the sunset had not ceased to gild the top of the distant hill when he fell,—and when he again became conscious of existence, the pale moon was gleaming on the landscape. He awakened in a state of terror, from which, for a few minutes, he found it difficult to shake himself free. At length he sate up on the grass, and became sensible, by repeated exertion, that the only personal injury which he had sustained was the numbness arising from extreme cold. The motion of something near him made the blood again run to his heart, and by a sudden effort he started up, and, looking around, saw to his relief that the noise was occasioned by the footsteps of his own mule. The peaceable animal had remained quietly beside her master during his trance, browsing on the grass which grew plentifully in that sequestered nook.

With some exertion he collected himself, remounted the animal, and meditating upon his wild adventure, descended the glen till its junction with the broader valley through which the Tweed winds. The drawbridge was readily dropped at his first summons; and so much had he won upon the heart of the churlish warden, that Peter appeared himself with a lantern to shew the Sub-Prior his way over the perilous pass.

"By my sooth, sir," he said, holding the light up to Father Eustace's face, "you look sorely travelled and deadly pale — but a little matter serves to weary out you men of the cell. I now who speak to you — I have ridden — before I was perched up here on this pillar betwixt wind and water — it may be thirty Scots miles before I broke my fast, and have had the red of a bramble rose in my cheek all the while — But will you taste some food, or a cup of distilled waters?"

"I may not," said Father Eustace, "being under a vow; but I thank you for your kindness, and pray you to give what I may not accept to the next poor pilgrim who comes hither pale and fainting, for so it shall be the better both with him here, and with you hereafter."

"By my faith, and I will do so," said Peter Bridge-Ward, "even for thy sake — It is strange now, how this Sub-Prior gets round one's heart more than the rest of these cowled gentry, that think of nothing but quaffing and stuffing! — Wife, I say — wife, we will give a cup of distilled waters and a crust of bread unto the next pilgrim that comes over; and ye may keep for the purpose the grunds of the last greybeard,[2] and the ill-baked bannock which the bairns couldna eat."

While Peter issued these charitable, and, at the same time, prudent injunctions, the Sub-Prior, whose mild interference had awakened the Bridge-Ward to such an act of unwonted generosity, was pacing onward to the Monastery. In the way, he had to commune with and subdue his own rebellious heart, an enemy, he was sensible, more formidable than any which the external powers of Satan could place in his way.

Father Eustace had indeed strong temptation to suppress the extraordinary incident which had befallen him, which he was the more reluctant to confess, because he had passed so severe a judgment upon Father Philip, who, as he was not

[1] *Sackless* — Innocent.

[2] An old fashioned name for an earthen jar for holding spirits.

unwilling to allow, had, on his return from Glendearg, encountered obstacles somewhat similar to his own. Of this the Sub-Prior was the more convinced, when, feeling in his bosom for the Book which he had brought off from the Tower of Glendearg, he found it was amissing, which he could only account for by supposing it had been stolen from him during his trance.

"If I confess this strange visitation," thought the Sub-Prior, "I become the ridicule of all my brethren — I whom the Primate sent hither to be a watch, as it were, and a check upon their follies. I give the Abbot an advantage over me which I shall never again recover, and Heaven only knows how he may abuse it, in his foolish simplicity, to the dishonour and loss of Holy Kirk. — But then, if I make not true confession of my shame, with what face can I again presume to admonish or restrain others? — Avow, proud heart," continued he, addressing himself, "that the weal of Holy Church interests thee less in this matter than thine own humiliation — Yes, Heaven has punished thee even in that point in which thou didst deem thyself most strong, in thy spiritual pride and thy carnal wisdom. Thou hast laughed at and derided the inexperience of thy brethren — stoop thyself in turn to their derision — tell what they may not believe — affirm that which they will ascribe to idle fear, or perhaps to idle falsehood — sustain the disgrace of a silly visionary, or a wilful deceiver. — Be it so; I will do my duty, and make ample confession to my Superior. If the discharge of this duty destroys my usefulness in this house, God and Our Lady will send me where I can better serve them."

There was no little merit in the resolution thus piously and generously formed by Father Eustace. To men of any rank the esteem of their order is naturally most dear; but in the monastic establishment, cut off, as the brethren are, from other objects of ambition, as well as from all exterior friendship and relationship, the place which they hold in the opinion of each other is all in all.

But the consciousness how much he should rejoice the Abbot and most of the other monks of Saint Mary's, who were impatient of the unauthorized, yet irresistible control, which he was wont to exercise in the affairs of the convent, by a confession which would put him in a ludicrous, or perhaps even in a criminal point of view, could not weigh with Father Eustace in comparison with the task which his belief enjoined.

As, strong in his feelings of duty, he approached the exterior gate of the Monastery, he was surprised to see torches gleaming, and men assembled around it, some on horseback, some on foot, while several of the monks, distinguished through the night by their white scapularies, were making themselves busy among the crowd. The Sub-Prior was received with a unanimous shout of joy, which at once made him sensible that he had himself been the object of their anxiety.

"There he is! there he is! God be thanked — there he is, hale and fear!" exclaimed the vassals; while the monks exclaimed, "*Te Deum laudamus* — the blood of thy servants is precious in thy sight!"

"What is the matter, children? what is the matter, my brethren?" said Father Eustace, dismounting at the gate.

"Nay, brother, if thou know'st not, we will not tell thee till thou art in the refectory," answered the monks; "Suffice it that the Lord Abbot had ordered these, our zealous and faithful vassals, instantly to set forth to guard thee from imminent peril — Ye may ungirth your horses, children, and dismiss; and to-morrow, each who was at this rendezvous may send to the convent kitchen for a quarter of a yard of roast beef, and a black-jack full of double ale." [1]

The vassals dispersed with joyful acclamation, and the monks, with equal jubilee, conducted the Sub-Prior into the refectory.

CHAPTER X.

> Here we stand ——
> Woundless and well, may Heaven's high name be bless'd for't!
> As erst, ere treason couch'd a lance against us.
>
> DECKER.

No sooner was the Sub-Prior hurried into the refectory by his rejoicing companions, than the first person on whom he fixed his eye proved to be Christie of the Clinthill. He was seated in the chimney-corner, fettered and guarded, his features drawn into that air of sulky and turbid resolution with which those hardened in guilt are accustomed to view the approach of punishment. But as the Sub-Prior drew near to him, his face assumed a more wild and startled expression, while he exclaimed — "The devil! the devil himself, brings the dead back upon the living!"

"Nay," said a monk to him, "say rather that Our Lady foils the attempts of the wicked on her faithful servants — our dear brother lives and moves."

"Lives and moves!" said the ruffian, rising and shuffling towards the Sub-Prior as well as his chains would permit; "nay, then I will never trust ashen shaft and steel point more — It is even so," he added, as he gazed on the Sub-Prior with astonishment; "neither wem nor wound — not as much as a rent in his frock!"

"And whence should my wound have come?" said Father Eustace.

"From the good lance that never failed me before," replied Christie of the Clinthill.

"Heaven absolve thee for thy purpose!" said the Sub-Prior; "wouldst thou have slain a servant of the altar?"

"To choose!" answered Christie, "the Fifemen say, an the whole pack of ye were slain, there were more lost at Flodden."

"Villain! art thou heretic as well as murderer?"

"Not I, by Saint Giles," replied the rider; "I listened blithely enough to the Laird of Monance, when he told me ye were all cheats and knaves; but when he would have had me go hear one Wiseheart, a gospeller, as they call him, he might as well have persuaded the wild colt that had flung one rider to kneel down and help another into the saddle."

"There is some goodness about him yet," said

[1] It was one of the few reminiscences of Old Parr, or Henry Jenkins, I forget which, that, at some convent in the veteran's neighbourhood, the community, before the dissolution, used to dole out roast-beef by the measure of feet and yards.

the Sacristan to the Abbot, who at that moment entered — "He refused to hear a heretic preacher."

"The better for him in the next world," answered the Abbot. "Prepare for death, my son, — we deliver thee over to the secular arm of our bailie, for execution on the Gallow-hill by peep of light."

"Amen!" said the ruffian; "'tis the end I must have come by sooner or later — and what care I whether I feed the crows at Saint Mary's or at Carlisle?"

"Let me implore your reverend patience for an instant," said the Sub-Prior; "until I shall inquire ——"

"What!" exclaimed the Abbot, observing him for the first time — "Our dear brother restored to us when his life was unhoped for! — nay, kneel not to a sinner like me — stand up — thou hast my blessing. When this villain came to the gate, accused by his own evil conscience, and crying out he had murdered thee, I thought that the pillar of our main aisle had fallen — no more shall a life so precious be exposed to such risks as occur in this border country; no longer shall one beloved and rescued of Heaven hold so low a station in the church as that of a poor Sub-Prior — I will write by express to the Primate for thy speedy removal and advancement."

"Nay, but let me understand," said the Sub-Prior; "did this soldier say he had slain me?"

"That he had transfixed you," answered the Abbot, "in full career with his lance — but it seems he had taken an indifferent aim. But no sooner didst thou fall to the ground mortally gored, as he deemed, with his weapon, than our blessed Patroness appeared to him, as he averred ——"

"I averred no such thing," said the prisoner; "I said a woman in white interrupted me, as I was about to examine the priest's cassock, for they are usually well lined — she had a bulrush in her hand, with one touch of which she struck me from my horse, as I might strike down a child of four years old with an iron mace — and then, like a singing fiend as she was, she sung to me,

'Thank the holly-bush
That nods on thy brow;
Or with this slender rush
I had strangled thee now.'

I gathered myself up with fear and difficulty, threw myself on my horse, and came hither like a fool to get myself hanged for a rogue."

"Thou seest, honoured brother," said the Abbot to the Sub-Prior, "in what favour thou art with our blessed Patroness, that she herself becomes the guardian of thy paths — Not since the days of our blessed founder hath she shewn such grace to any one. All unworthy were we to hold spiritual superiority over thee, and we pray thee to prepare for thy speedy removal to Aberbrothwick."

"Alas! my lord and father," said the Sub-Prior, "your words pierce my very soul. Under the seal of confession will I presently tell thee why I conceive myself rather the baffled sport of a spirit of another sort, than the protected favourite of the heavenly powers. But first let me ask this unhappy man a question or two."

"Do as ye list," replied the Abbot — "but you shall not convince me that it is fitting you remain in this inferior office in the convent of Saint Mary."

"I would ask of this poor man," said Father Eustace, "for what purpose he nourished the thought of putting to death one who never did him evil?"

"Ay! but thou didst menace me with evil," said the ruffian, "and no one but a fool is menaced twice. Dost thou not remember what you said touching the Primate and Lord James, and the black pool of Jedwood? Didst thou think me fool enough to wait till thou hadst betrayed me to the sack and the fork! There were small wisdom in that, methinks — as little as in coming hither to tell my own misdeeds — I think the devil was in me when I took this road — I might have remembered the proverb, 'Never Friar forgot feud.'"

"And it was solely for that — for that only hasty word of mine, uttered in a moment of impatience, and forgotten ere it was well spoken?" said Father Eustace.

"Ay! for that, and — for the love of thy gold crucifix," said Christie of the Clinthill.

"Gracious Heaven! and could the yellow metal — the glittering earth — so far overcome every sense of what is thereby represented? — Father Abbot, I pray, as a dear boon, you will deliver this guilty person to my mercy."

"Nay, brother," interposed the Sacristan, "to your doom, if you will, not to your mercy — Remember, we are not all equally favoured by our blessed Lady, nor is it likely that every frock in the Convent will serve as a coat of proof when a lance is couched against it."

"For that very reason," said the Sub-Prior, "I would not that for my worthless self the community were to fall at feud with Julian of Avenel, this man's master."

"Our Lady forbid!" said the Sacristan, "he is a second Julian the Apostate."

"With our reverend father the Abbot's permission, then," said Father Eustace, "I desire this man be free from his chains, and suffered to depart uninjured; — and here, friend," he added, giving him the golden crucifix, "is the image for which thou wert willing to stain thy hands with murder. View it well, and may it inspire thee with other and better thoughts than those which referred to it as a piece of bullion. Part with it, nevertheless, if thy necessities require, and get thee one of such coarse substance that Mammon shall have no share in any of the reflections to which it gives rise. It was the bequest of a dear friend to me; but dearer service can it never do than that of winning a soul to Heaven."

The Borderer, now freed from his chains, stood gazing alternately on the Sub-Prior, and on the golden crucifix. "By Saint Giles," said he, "I understand ye not! — An ye give me gold for couching my lance at thee, what would you give me to level it at a heretic?"

"The Church," said the Sub-Prior, "will try the effect of her spiritual censures to bring these stray sheep into the fold, ere she employ the edge of the sword of Saint Peter."

"Ay, but," said the ruffian, "they say the Primate recommends a little strangling and burning in aid both of censure and of sword. But fare ye weel, I owe you a life, and it may be I will not forget my debt."

The bailie now came bustling in dressed in his blue coat and bandaliers, and attended by two or three halberdiers. "I have been a thought too

late in waiting upon your reverend lordship. I am grown somewhat fatter since the field of Pinkie, and my leathern coat slips not on so soon as it was wont; but the dungeon is ready, and though, as I said, I have been somewhat late——"

Here his intended prisoner walked gravely up to the officer's nose, to his great amazement.

"You have been indeed somewhat late, bailie," said he, "and I am greatly obligated to your buff-coat, and to the time you took to put it on. If the secular arm had arrived some quarter of an hour sooner, I had been out of the reach of spiritual grace; but as it is, I wish you good even, and a safe riddance out of your garment of durance, in which you have much the air of a hog in armour."

Wroth was the bailie with this comparison, and exclaimed in ire—"An it were not for the presence of the venerable Lord Abbot, thou knave——"

"Nay, an thou wouldst try conclusions," said Christie of the Clinthill, "I will meet thee at daybreak by Saint Mary's well."

"Hardened wretch!" said Father Eustace, "art thou but this instant delivered from death, and dost thou so soon morse thoughts of slaughter?"

"I will meet with thee ere it be long, thou knave," said the bailie, "and teach thee thine Oremus."

"I will meet thy cattle in a moonlight night before that day," said he of the Clinthill.

"I will have thee by the neck one misty morning, thou strong thief," answered the secular officer of the church.

"Thou art thyself as strong a thief as ever rode," retorted Christie; "and if the worms were once feasting on that fat carcass of thine, I might well hope to have thine office, by favour of these reverend men."

"A cast of their office, and a cast of mine," answered the bailie; "a cord and a confessor, that is all thou wilt have from us."

"Sirs," said the Sub-Prior, observing that his brethren began to take more interest than was exactly decorous in this wrangling betwixt justice and iniquity, "I pray you both to depart—Master Bailie, retire with your halberdiers, and trouble not the man whom we have dismissed.—And thou, Christie, or whatever be thy name, take thy departure, and remember thou owest thy life to the Lord Abbot's clemency."

"Nay, as to that," answered Christie, "I judge that I owe it to your own; but impute it to whom ye list, I owe a life among ye, and there is an end." And whistling as he went, he left the apartment, seeming as if he held the life which he had forfeited not worthy farther thanks.

"Obstinate even to brutality!" said Father Eustace; "and yet who knows but some better ore may lie under so rude an exterior?"

"Save a thief from the gallows," said the Sacristan—"you know the rest of the proverb; and admitting, as may Heaven grant, that our lives and limbs are safe from this outrageous knave, who shall insure our meal and our malt, our herds and our flocks?"

"Marry, that will I, my brethren," said an aged monk. "Ah, brethren, you little know what may be made of a repentant robber. In Abbot Ingilram's days—ay, and I remember them as it were yesterday—the freebooters were the best welcome men that came to Saint Mary's. Ay, they paid tithe of every drove that they brought over from the South, and because they were something lightly come by, I have known them make the tithe a seventh—that is, if their confessor knew his business—ay, when we saw from the tower a score of fat bullocks, or a drove of sheep coming down the valley, with two or three stout men-at-arms behind them with their glittering steel caps, and their black-jacks, and their long lances, the good Lord Abbot Ingilram was wont to say—he was a merry man—there come the tithes of the spoilers of the Egyptians! Ay, and I have seen the famous John the Armstrang—a fair man he was and a goodly, the more pity that hemp was ever heckled for him—I have seen him come into the Abbey-Church with nine tassels of gold in his bonnet, and every tassel made of nine English nobles, and he would go from chapel to chapel, and from image to image, and from altar to altar, on his knees—and leave here a tassel, and there a noble, till there was as little gold on his bonnet as on my hood—you will find no such Border thieves now!"

"No truly, Brother Nicolas," answered the Abbot; "they are more apt to take any gold the Church has left, than to bequeath or bestow any—and for cattle, beshrew me if I think they care whether beeves have fed on the meadows of Lanercost Abbey or of Saint Mary's!"

"There is no good thing left in them," said Father Nicolas; "they are clean naught—Ah, the thieves that I have seen!—such proper men! and as pitiful as proper, and as pious as pitiful!"

"It skills not talking of it, Brother Nicolas," said the Abbot; "and I will now dismiss you, my brethren, holding your meeting upon this our inquisition concerning the danger of our reverend Sub-Prior, instead of the attendance on the lauds this evening—Yet let the bells be duly rung for the edification of the laymen without, and also that the novices may give due reverence.—And now, benedicite, brethren! The cellarer will bestow on each a grace-cup and a morsel as ye pass the buttery, for ye have been turmoiled and anxious, and dangerous it is to fall asleep in such case with empty stomach."

"*Gratias agimus quam maximas, Domine reverendissime,*" replied the brethren, departing in their due order.

But the Sub-Prior remained behind, and falling on his knees before the Abbot, as he was about to withdraw, craved him to hear under the seal of confession the adventures of the day. The reverend Lord Abbot yawned, and would have alleged fatigue; but to Father Eustace, of all men, he was ashamed to shew indifference in his religious duties. The confession, therefore, proceeded, in which Father Eustace told all the extraordinary circumstances which had befallen him during the journey. And being questioned by the Abbot, whether he was not conscious of any secret sin, through which he might have been subjected for a time to the delusions of evil spirits, the Sub-Prior admitted with frank avowal, that he thought he might have deserved such penance for having judged with unfraternal rigour of the report of Father Philip the Sacristan.

"Heaven," said the penitent, "may have been willing to convince me, not only that he can at

pleasure open a communication betwixt us and beings of a different, and, as we word it, supernatural class, but also to punish our pride of superior wisdom, or superior courage, or superior learning."

It is well said that virtue is its own reward; and I question if duty was ever more completely recompensed, than by the audience which the reverend Abbot so unwillingly yielded to the confession of the Sub-Prior. To find the object of his fear shall we say, or of his envy, or of both, accusing himself of the very error with which he had so tacitly charged him, was at once a corroboration of the Abbot's judgment, a soothing of his pride, and an allaying of his fears. The sense of triumph, however, rather increased than diminished his natural good humour; and so far was Abbot Boniface from being disposed to tyrannize over his Sub-Prior, in consequence of this discovery, that in his exhortation he hovered somewhat ludicrously betwixt the natural expression of his own gratified vanity, and his timid reluctance to hurt the feelings of Father Eustace.

"My brother," said he, *ex cathedra*, "it cannot have escaped your judicious observation, that we have often declined our own judgment in favour of your opinion, even about those matters which most nearly concerned the community. Nevertheless, grieved would we be, could you think that we did this either because we deemed our own opinion less pregnant, or our wit more shallow, than that of our other brethren. For it was done exclusively to give our younger brethren, such as your much esteemed self, my dearest brother, that courage which is necessary to a free deliverance of your opinion,—we ofttimes setting apart our proper judgment, that our inferiors, and especially our dear brother the Sub-Prior, may be comforted and encouraged in proposing valiantly his own thoughts. Which our deference and humility may, in some sort, have produced in your mind, most reverend brother, that self-opinion of parts and knowledge, which hath led unfortunately to your over-estimating your own faculties, and thereby subjecting yourself, as is but too visible, to the japes and mockeries of evil spirits. For it is assured that Heaven always holdeth us in the least esteem when we deem of ourselves most highly; and also, on the other hand, it may be that we have somewhat departed from what became our high seat in this Abbey, in suffering ourselves to be too much guided, and even as it were controlled, by the voice of our inferior. Wherefore," continued the Lord Abbot, "in both of us such faults shall and must be amended—you hereafter presuming less upon your gifts and carnal wisdom, and I taking heed not so easily to relinquish mine own opinion for that of one lower in place and in office. Nevertheless, we would not that we should thereby lose the high advantage which we have derived, and may yet derive, from your wise counsels, which hath been so often recommended to us by our most reverend Primate. Wherefore, on affairs of high moment, we will call you to our presence in private, and listen to your opinion, which, if it shall agree with our own, we will deliver to the Chapter, as emanating directly from ourselves; thus sparing you, dearest brother, that seeming victory which is so apt to engender spiritual pride, and avoiding ourselves the temptation of falling into that modest facility of opinion, whereby our office is lessened and our person (were that of consequence) rendered less important in the eyes of the community over which we preside."

Notwithstanding the high notions which, as a rigid Catholic, Father Eustace entertained of the sacrament of confession, as his church calls it, there was some danger that a sense of the ridiculous might have stolen on him, when he heard his Superior, with such simple cunning, lay out a little plan for availing himself of the Sub-Prior's wisdom and experience, while he should take the whole credit to himself. Yet his conscience immediately told him that he was right.

"I should have thought more," he reflected, "of the spiritual Superior, and less of the individual. I should have spread my mantle over the frailties of my spiritual father, and done what I might to support his character, and, of course, to extend his utility among the brethren, as well as with others. The Abbot cannot be humbled, but what the community must be humbled in his person. Her boast is, that over all her children, especially over those called to places of distinction, she can diffuse those gifts which are necessary to render them illustrious."

Actuated by these sentiments, Father Eustace frankly assented to the charge which his Superior, even in that moment of authority, had rather intimated than made, and signified his humble acquiescence in any mode of communicating his counsel which might be most agreeable to the Lord Abbot, and might best remove from himself all temptation to glory in his own wisdom. He then prayed the reverend Father to assign him such penance as might best suit his offence, intimating at the same time, that he had already fasted the whole day.

"And it is that I complain of," answered the Abbot, instead of giving him credit for his abstinence; "it is these very penances, fasts, and vigils, of which we complain; as tending only to generate airs and fumes of vanity, which, ascending from the stomach into the head, do but puff us up with vainglory and self-opinion. It is meet and beseeming that novices should undergo fasts and vigils; for some part of every community must fast, and young stomachs may best endure it. Besides, in them it abates wicked thoughts, and the desire of worldly delights. But, reverend brother, for those to fast who are dead and mortified to the world, as I and thou, is work of supererogation, and is but the matter of spiritual pride. Wherefore, I enjoin thee, most reverend brother, go to the buttery, and drink two cups at least of good wine, eating withal a comfortable morsel, such as may best suit thy taste and stomach. And in respect that thine opinion of thy own wisdom hath at times made thee less conformable to, and companionable with, the weaker and less learned brethren, I enjoin thee, during the said repast, to choose for thy companion our reverend brother Nicolas, and without interruption or impatience, to listen for a stricken hour to his narration, concerning those things which befell in the times of our venerable predecessor, Abbot Ingilram, on whose soul may Heaven have mercy! And for such holy exercises as may farther advantage your soul, and expiate the faults whereof you have contritely and humbly avowed yourself guilty, we will ponder

upon that matter, and announce our will unto you the next morning."

It was remarkable, that after this memorable evening, the feelings of the worthy Abbot towards his adviser were much more kindly and friendly than when he deemed the Sub-Prior the impeccable and infallible person, in whose garment of virtue and wisdom no flaw was to be discerned. It seemed as if this avowal of his own imperfections had recommended Father Eustace to the friendship of the Superior, although at the same time this increase of benevolence was attended with some circumstances, which, to a man of the Sub-Prior's natural elevation of mind and temper, were more grievous than even undergoing the legends of the dull and verbose Father Nicolas. For instance, the Abbot seldom mentioned him to the other monks, without designing him our beloved Brother Eustace, poor man!—and now and then he used to warn the younger brethren against the snares of vain-glory and spiritual pride, which Satan sets for the more rigidly righteous, with such looks and demonstrations as did all but expressly designate the Sub-Prior as one who had fallen at one time under such delusions. Upon these occasions, it required all the votive obedience of a monk, all the philosophical discipline of the schools, and all the patience of a Christian, to enable Father Eustace to endure the pompous and patronizing parade of his honest, but somewhat thick-headed Superior. He began himself to be desirous of leaving the Monastery, or at least he manifestly declined to interfere with its affairs, in that marked and authoritative manner, which he had at first practised.

CHAPTER XI.

You call this education, do you not?
Why 'tis the forced march of a herd of bullocks
Before a shouting drover. The glad van
Move on at ease, and pause a while to snatch
A passing morsel from the dewy greensward,
While all the blows, the oaths, the indignation,
Fall on the croupe of the ill-fated laggard
That cripples in the rear.

Old Play.

Two or three years glided on, during which the storm of the approaching alteration in church government became each day louder and more perilous. Owing to the circumstances which we have intimated in the end of the last chapter, the Sub-Prior Eustace appeared to have altered considerably his habits of life. He afforded, on all extraordinary occasions, to the Abbot, whether privately, or in the assembled Chapter, the support of his wisdom and experience; but in his ordinary habits he seemed now to live more for himself, and less for the community, than had been his former practice.

He often absented himself for whole days from the convent; and as the adventure of Glendearg dwelt deeply on his memory, he was repeatedly induced to visit that lonely tower, and to take an interest in the orphans who had their shelter under its roof. Besides, he felt a deep anxiety to know whether the volume which he had lost, when so strangely preserved from the lance of the murderer, had again found its way back to the Tower of Glendearg. "It was strange," he thought, "that a spirit," for such he could not help judging the being whose voice he had heard, "should, on the one side, seek the advancement of heresy, and, on the other, interpose to save the life of a zealous Catholic priest."

But from no inquiry which he made of the various inhabitants of the Tower of Glendearg could he learn that the copy of the translated Scriptures, for which he made such diligent inquiry, had again been seen by any of them.

In the meanwhile the good father's occasional visits were of no small consequence to Edward Glendinning and to Mary Avenel. The former displayed a power of apprehending and retaining whatever was taught him, which filled Father Eustace with admiration. He was at once acute and industrious, alert and accurate; one of those rare combinations of talent and industry, which are seldom united.

It was the earnest desire of Father Eustace that the excellent qualities thus early displayed by Edward should be dedicated to the service of the church, to which he thought the youth's own consent might be easily obtained, as he was of a calm, contemplative, retired habit, and seemed to consider knowledge as the principal object, and its enlargement as the greatest pleasure, in life. As to the mother, the Sub-Prior had little doubt that, trained as she was to view the monks of Saint Mary's with such profound reverence, she would be but too happy in an opportunity of enrolling one of her sons in its honoured community. But the good Father proved to be mistaken in both these particulars.

When he spoke to Elspeth Glendinning of that which a mother best loves to hear—the proficiency and abilities of her son—she listened with a delighted ear. But when Father Eustace hinted at the duty of dedicating to the service of the church, talents which seemed fitted to defend and adorn it, the dame endeavoured always to shift the subject; and when pressed farther, enlarged on her own incapacity, as a lone woman, to manage the feu; on the advantage which her neighbours of the township were often taking of her unprotected state, and on the wish she had that Edward might fill his father's place, remain in the tower, and close her eyes.

On such occasions the Sub-Prior would answer, that even in a worldly point of view the welfare of the family would be best consulted by one of the sons entering into the community of Saint Mary's, as it was not to be supposed that he would fail to afford his family the important protection which he could then easily extend towards them. What could be a more pleasing prospect than to see him high in honour? or what more sweet than to have the last duties rendered to her by a son, revered for his holiness of life and exemplary manners? Besides, he endeavoured to impress upon the dame that her eldest son, Halbert, whose bold temper and headstrong indulgence of a wandering humour, rendered him incapable of learning, was, for that reason, as well as that he was her eldest born, fittest to bustle through the affairs of the world, and manage the little fief.

Elspeth durst not directly dissent from what was proposed, for fear of giving displeasure, and yet she always had something to say against it. Halbert, she said, was not like any of the neighbour boys—

he was taller by the head, and stronger by the half, than any boy of his years within the Halidome. But he was fit for no peaceful work that could be devised. If he liked a book ill, he liked a plough or a pattle worse. He had scoured his father's old broadsword — suspended it by a belt round his waist, and seldom stirred without it. He was a sweet boy and a gentle if spoken fair, but cross him and he was a born devil. "In a word," she said, bursting into tears, "deprive me of Edward, good father, and ye bereave my house of prop and pillar; for my heart tells me that Halbert will take to his father's gates, and die his father's death."

When the conversation came to this crisis, the good-humoured monk was always content to drop the discussion for the time, trusting some opportunity would occur of removing her prejudices, for such he thought them, against Edward's proposed destination.

When, leaving the mother, the Sub-Prior addressed himself to the son, animating his zeal for knowledge, and pointing out how amply it might be gratified should he agree to take holy orders, he found the same repugnance which Dame Elspeth had exhibited. Edward pleaded a want of sufficient vocation to so serious a profession — his reluctance to leave his mother, and other objections, which the Sub-Prior treated as evasive.

"I plainly perceive," he said one day, in answer to them, "that the devil has his factors as well as Heaven, and that they are equally, or, alas! the former are perhaps more active, in bespeaking for their master the first of the market. I trust, young man, that neither idleness, nor licentious pleasure, nor the love of worldly gain and worldly grandeur, the chief baits with which the great Fisher of souls conceals his hook, are the causes of your declining the career to which I would incite you. But above all I trust — above all I hope — that the vanity of superior knowledge — a sin with which those who have made proficiency in learning are most frequently beset — has not led you into the awful hazard of listening to the dangerous doctrines which are now afloat concerning religion. Better for you that you were as grossly ignorant as the beasts which perish, than that the pride of knowledge should induce you to lend an ear to the voice of the heretics." Edward Glendinning listened to the rebuke with a downcast look, and failed not, when it was concluded, earnestly to vindicate himself from the charge of having pushed his studies into any subjects which the Church inhibited; and so the monk was left to form vain conjectures respecting the cause of his reluctance to embrace the monastic state.

It is an old proverb, used by Chaucer, and quoted by Elizabeth, that "the greatest clerks are not the wisest men;" and it is as true as if the poet had not rhymed, or the queen reasoned on it. If Father Eustace had not had his thoughts turned so much to the progress of heresy, and so little to what was passing in the tower, he might have read, in the speaking eyes of Mary Avenel, now a girl of fourteen or fifteen, reasons which might disincline her youthful companion towards the monastic vows. I have said, that she also was a promising pupil of the good father, upon whom her innocent and infantine beauty had an effect of which he was himself, perhaps, unconscious. Her rank and expectations entitled her to be taught the arts of reading and writing;—and each lesson which the monk assigned her was conned over in company with Edward, and by him explained and re-explained, and again illustrated, until she became perfectly mistress of it.

In the beginning of their studies, Halbert had been their school companion. But the boldness and impatience of his disposition soon quarreled with an occupation in which, without assiduity and unremitted attention, no progress was to be expected. The Sub-Prior's visits were at irregular intervals, and often weeks would intervene between them, in which case Halbert was sure to forget all that had been prescribed for him to learn, and much which he had partly acquired before. His deficiencies on these occasions gave him pain, but it was not of that sort which produces amendment.

For a time, like all who are fond of idleness, he endeavoured to detach the attention of his brother and Mary Avenel from their task, rather than to learn his own, and such dialogues as the following would ensue.

"Take your bonnet, Edward, and make haste — the Laird of Colmslie is at the head of the glen with his hounds."

"I care not, Halbert," answered the younger brother; "two brace of dogs may kill a deer without my being there to see them, and I must help Mary Avenel with her lesson."

"Ay! you will labour at the monk's lessons till you turn monk yourself," answered Halbert.— "Mary, will you go with me, and I will shew you the cushat's nest I told you of?"

"I cannot go with you, Halbert," answered Mary, "because I must study this lesson — it will take me long to learn it — I am sorry I am so dull, for if I could get my task as fast as Edward, I should like to go with you."

"Should you indeed?" said Halbert; "then I will wait for you — and, what is more, I will try to get my lesson also."

With a smile and a sigh he took up the primer, and began heavily to con over the task which had been assigned him. As if banished from the society of the two others, he sat sad and solitary in one of the deep window-recesses, and after in vain struggling with the difficulties of his task, and his disinclination to learn it, he found himself involuntarily engaged in watching the movements of the other two students, instead of toiling any longer.

The picture which Halbert looked upon was delightful in itself, but somehow or other it afforded very little pleasure to him. The beautiful girl, with looks of simple, yet earnest anxiety, was bent on disentangling those intricacies which obstructed her progress to knowledge, and looking ever and anon to Edward for assistance, while, seated close by her side, and watchful to remove every obstacle from her way, he seemed at once to be proud of the progress which his pupil made, and of the assistance which he was able to render her. There was a bond betwixt them, a strong and interesting tie, the desire of obtaining knowledge, the pride of surmounting difficulties.

Feeling most acutely, yet ignorant of the nature and source of his own emotions, Halbert could no longer endure to look upon this quiet scene, but, starting up, dashed his book from him, and exclaimed aloud. "To the fiend I bequeath all

books, and the dreamers that make them!—I would a score of Southrons would come up the glen, and we should learn how little all this muttering and scribbling is worth."

Mary Avenel and his brother started, and looked at Halbert with surprise, while he went on with great animation, his features swelling, and the tears starting into his eyes as he spoke.—"Yes, Mary—I wish a score of Southrons came up the glen this very day; and you should see one good hand, and one good sword, do more to protect you, than all the books that were ever opened, and all the pens that ever grew on a goose's wing."

Mary looked a little surprised and a little frightened at his vehemence, but instantly replied affectionately, "You are vexed, Halbert, because you do not get your lesson so fast as Edward can; and so am I, for I am as stupid as you—But come, and Edward shall sit betwixt us and teach us."

"He shall not teach *me*," said Halbert, in the same angry mood; "I never can teach *him* to do any thing that is honourable and manly, and he shall not teach *me* any of his monkish tricks.—I hate the monks, with their drawling nasal tone like so many frogs, and their long black petticoats like so many women, and their reverences, and their lordships, and their lazy vassals, that do nothing but peddle in the mire with plough and harrow from Yule to Michaelmas. I will call none lord, but him who wears a sword to make his title good; and I will call none man, but he that can bear himself manlike and masterful."

"For Heaven's sake, peace, brother!" said Edward; "if such words were taken up and reported out of the house, they would be our mother's ruin."

"Report them yourself then, and they will be *your* making, and nobody's marring save mine own. Say that Halbert Glendinning will never be vassal to an old man with a cowl and shaven crown, while there are twenty barons who wear casque and plume that lack bold followers. Let them grant you these wretched acres, and much meal may they bear you to make your *brochan*." He left the room hastily, but instantly returned, and continued to speak with the same tone of quick and irritated feeling. "And you need not think so much, neither of you, and especially you, Edward, need not think so much of your parchment book there, and your cunning in reading it. By my faith, I will soon learn to read as well as you; and —for I know a better teacher than your grim old monk, and a better book than his printed breviary; and since you like scholarcraft so well, Mary Avenel, you shall see whether Edward or I have most of it." He left the apartment, and came not again.

"What can be the matter with him?" said Mary, following Halbert with her eyes from the window, as with hasty and unequal steps he ran up the wild glen—"Where can your brother be going, Edward?—what book?—what teacher does he talk of?"

"It avails not guessing," said Edward. "Halbert is angry, he knows not why, and speaks of he knows not what; let us go again to our lessons, and he will come home when he has tired himself with scrambling among the crags as usual."

But Mary's anxiety on account of Halbert seemed more deeply rooted. She declined prosecuting the task in which they had been so pleasingly engaged, under the excuse of a headach; nor could Edward prevail upon her to resume it again that morning.

Meanwhile Halbert, his head unbonneted, his features swelled with jealous anger, and the tear still in his eye, sped up the wild and upper extremity of the little valley of Glendearg with the speed of a roebuck, choosing, as if in desperate defiance of the difficulties of the way, the wildest and most dangerous paths, and voluntarily exposing himself a hundred times to dangers which he might have escaped by turning a little aside from them. It seemed as if he wished his course to be as straight as that of the arrow to its mark.

He arrived at length in a narrow and secluded *cleuch*, or deep ravine, which ran down into the valley, and contributed a scanty rivulet to the supply of the brook with which Glendearg is watered. Up this he sped with the same precipitate haste which had marked his departure from the tower, nor did he pause and look around until he had reached the fountain from which the rivulet had its rise.

Here Halbert stopt short, and cast a gloomy, and almost a frightened glance around him. A huge rock rose in front, from a cleft of which grew a wild holly-tree, whose dark green branches rustled over the spring which arose beneath. The banks on either hand rose so high, and approached each other so closely, that it was only when the sun was at its meridian height, and during the summer solstice, that its rays could reach the bottom of the chasm in which he stood. But it was now summer, and the hour was noon, so that the unwonted reflection of the sun was dancing in the pellucid fountain.

"It is the season and the hour," said Halbert to himself; "and now I——I might soon become wiser than Edward with all his pains! Mary should see whether he alone is fit to be consulted, and to sit by her side, and hang over her as she reads, and point out every word and every letter. And she loves me better than him—I am sure she does—for she comes of noble blood, and scorns sloth and cowardice.—And do I myself not stand here slothful and cowardly as any priest of them all?—Why should I fear to call upon this form—this shape?—Already have I endured the vision, and why not again?—What can it do to me, who am a man of lith and limb, and have by my side my father's sword? Does my heart beat —do my hairs bristle, at the thought of calling up a painted shadow, and how should I face a band of Southrons in flesh and blood? By the soul of the first Glendinning, I will make proof of the charm!"

He cast the leathern brogue or buskin from his right foot, planted himself in a firm posture, unsheathed his sword, and first looking around to collect his resolution, he bowed three times deliberately towards the holly-tree, and as often to the little fountain repeating at the same time, with a determined voice, the following rhyme:

"Thrice to the holly brake—
Thrice to the well;—
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams on the Lake—
Noon glows on the Fell—
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel!"

These lines were hardly uttered, when there stood the figure of a female clothed in white, within three steps of Halbert Glendinning.

"I guess 'twas frightful there to see
A lady richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly."[1]

CHAPTER XII.

There 's something in that ancient superstition,
Which, erring as it is, our fancy loves.
The spring that, with its thousand crystal bubbles,
Bursts from the bosom of some desert rock
In secret solitude, may well be deem'd
The haunt of something purer, more refined,
And mightier than ourselves.
Old Play.

Young Halbert Glendinning had scarcely pronounced the mystical rhymes, than, as we have mentioned in the conclusion of the last chapter, an appearance, as of a beautiful female, dressed in white, stood within two yards of him. His terror for the moment overcame his natural courage, as well as the strong resolution which he had formed, that the figure which he had now twice seen should not a third time daunt him. But it would seem there is something thrilling and abhorrent to flesh and blood, in the consciousness that we stand in presence of a being in form like to ourselves, but so different in faculties and nature, that we can neither understand its purposes, nor calculate its means of pursuing them.

Halbert stood silent and gasped for breath, his hairs erecting themselves on his head — his mouth open — his eyes fixed, and, as the sole remaining sign of his late determined purpose, his sword pointed towards the apparition. At length, with a voice of ineffable sweetness, the White Lady, for by that name we shall distinguish this being, sung, or rather chanted, the following lines: —

"Youth of the dark eye, wherefore didst thou call me?
Wherefore art thou here, if terrors can appal thee?
He that seeks to deal with us must know nor fear nor failing!
To coward and churl our speech is dark, our gifts are unavailing.
The breeze that brought me hither now, must sweep Egyptian ground,
The fleecy cloud on which I ride for Araby is bound;
The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the breeze sighs for my stay,
For I must sail a thousand miles before the close of day."

The astonishment of Halbert began once more to give way to his resolution, and he gained voice enough to say, though with a faltering accent, "In the name of God, what art thou?" The answer was in melody of a different tone and measure: —

"What I am I must not shew—
What I am thou couldst not know—
Something betwixt heaven and hell—
Something that neither stood nor fell—
Something that through thy wit or will
May work thee good — may work thee ill.
Neither substance quite, nor shadow,
Haunting lonely moor and meadow,
Dancing by the haunted spring,
Riding on the whirlwind's wing;
Aping in fantastic fashion
Every change of human passion,
While o'er our frozen minds they pass,
Like shadows from the mirror'd glass.
Wayward, fickle is our mood,
Hovering betwixt bad and good,
Happier than brief-dated man,
Living twenty times his span;
Far less happy, for we have
Help nor hope beyond the grave!
Man awakes to joy or sorrow;
Ours the sleep that knows no morrow.
This is all that I can shew—
This is all that thou mayest know."

The White Lady paused, and appeared to await an answer; but, as Halbert hesitated how to frame his speech, the vision seemed gradually to fade, and become more and more incorporeal. Justly guessing this to be a symptom of her disappearance, Halbert compelled himself to say, — "Lady, when I saw you in the glen, and when you brought back the black book of Mary of Avenel, thou didst say I should one day learn to read it."

The White Lady replied,

"Ay! and I taught thee the word and the spell,
To waken me here by the Fairies' Well.
But thou hast loved the heron and hawk,
More than to seek my haunted walk;
And thou hast loved the lance and the sword,
More than good text and holy word;
And thou hast loved the deer to track,
More than the lines and the letters black;
And thou art a ranger of moss and of wood,
And scornest the nurture of gentle blood."

"I will do so no longer, fair maiden," said Halbert; "I desire to learn; and thou didst promise me, that when I did so desire, thou wouldst be my helper; I am no longer afraid of thy presence, and I am no longer regardless of instruction." As he uttered these words, the figure of the White Maiden grew gradually as distinct as it had been at first; and what had well-nigh faded into an ill-defined and colourless shadow, again assumed an appearance at least of corporeal consistency, although the hues were less vivid, and the outline of the figure less distinct and defined — so at least it seemed to Halbert — than those of an ordinary inhabitant of the earth. "Wilt thou grant my request," he said, "fair Lady, and give to my keeping the holy book which Mary of Avenel has so often wept for?"

The White Lady replied:

"Thy craven fear my truth accused,
Thine idlehood my trust abused;
He that draws to harbour late,
Must sleep without, or burst the gate.
There is a star for thee which burn'd,
Its influence wanes, its course is turn'd;
Valour and constancy alone
Can bring thee back the chance that 's flown."

"If I have been a loiterer, Lady," answered young Glendinning, "thou shalt now find me willing to press forward with double speed. Other thoughts have filled my mind, other thoughts have engaged my heart, within a brief period — and by Heaven, other occupations shall henceforward fill up my time. I have lived in this day the space of years — I came hither a boy — I will return a man — a man, such as may converse not only with his own kind, but with whatever God permits to be visible to him. I will learn the contents of that mysterious volume — I will learn why the Lady of Avenel loved it — why the priests feared, and would have stolen it — why thou didst twice recover it from their hands. — What mystery is wrapt in it? — Speak, I conjure thee!" The lady assumed an air peculiarly sad and solemn, as drooping her head, and folding her arms on her bosom, she replied:

"Within that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has granted grace

[1] Coleridge's Christabelle.

To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
And better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn."

"Give me the volume, Lady," said young Glendinning. "They call me idle — they call me dull — in this pursuit my industry shall not fail, nor, with God's blessing, shall my understanding. Give me the volume." The apparition again replied:

"Many a fathom dark and deep
I have laid the book to sleep;
Ethereal fires around it glowing —
Ethereal music ever flowing —
The sacred pledge of Heav'n
All things revere,
Each in his sphere,
Save man for whom 'twas giv'n:
Lend thy hand, and thou shalt spy
Things ne'er seen by mortal eye."

Halbert Glendinning boldly reached his hand to the White Lady.

"Fearest thou to go with me?" she said, as his hand trembled at the soft and cold touch of her own—

"Fearest thou to go with me?
Still it is free to thee
A peasant to dwell;
Thou mayst drive the dull steer,
And chase the king's deer,
But never more come near
This haunted well."

"If what thou sayest be true," said the undaunted boy, "my destinies are higher than thine own. There shall be neither well nor wood which I dare not visit. No fear of aught, natural or supernatural, shall bar my path through my native valley."

He had scarce uttered the words, when they both descended through the earth with a rapidity which took away Halbert's breath and every other sensation, saving that of being hurried on with the utmost velocity. At length they stopped with a shock so sudden, that the mortal journeyer through this unknown space must have been thrown down with violence, had he not been upheld by his supernatural companion.

It was more than a minute, ere, looking around him, he beheld a grotto, or natural cavern, composed of the most splendid spars and crystals, which returned in a thousand prismatic hues the light of a brilliant flame that glowed on an altar of alabaster. This altar, with its fire, formed the central point of the grotto, which was of a round form, and very high in the roof, resembling in some respects the dome of a cathedral. Corresponding to the four points of the compass, there went off four long galleries, or arcades, constructed of the same brilliant materials with the dome itself, and the termination of which was lost in darkness.

No human imagination can conceive, or words suffice to describe, the glorious radiance, which, shot fiercely forth by the flame, was returned from so many hundred thousand points of reflection, afforded by the sparry pillars and their numerous angular crystals. The fire itself did not remain steady and unmoved, but rose and fell, sometimes ascending in a brilliant pyramid of condensed flame half way up the lofty expanse, and again fading into a softer and more rosy hue, and hovering, as it were, on the surface of the altar to collect its strength for another powerful exertion. There was no visible fuel by which it was fed, nor did it emit either smoke or vapour of any kind.

What was of all the most remarkable, the black volume so often mentioned lay not only unconsumed, but untouched in the slightest degree, amid this intensity of fire, which, while it seemed to be of force sufficient to melt adamant, had no effect whatever on the sacred book thus subjected to its utmost influence.

The White Lady, having paused long enough to let young Glendinning take a complete survey of what was around him, now said in her usual chant,

"Here lies the volume thou boldly hast sought;
Touch it, and take it,—'twill dearly be bought!"

Familiarized in some degree with marvels, and desperately desirous of shewing the courage he had boasted, Halbert plunged his hand, without hesitation, into the flame, trusting to the rapidity of the motion, to snatch out the volume before the fire could greatly affect him. But he was much disappointed. The flame instantly caught upon his sleeve, and though he withdrew his hand immediately, yet his arm was so dreadfully scorched, that he had well-nigh screamed with pain. He suppressed the natural expression of anguish, however, and only intimated the agony which he felt by a contortion and a muttered groan. The White Lady passed her cold hand over his arm, and, ere she had finished the following metrical chant, his pain had entirely gone, and no mark of the scorching was visible:

"Rash thy deed,
Mortal weed
To immortal flames applying;
Rasher trust
Has thing of dust,
On his own weak worth relying:
Strip thee of such fences vain,
Strip, and prove thy luck again."

Obedient to what he understood to be the meaning of his conductress, Halbert bared his arm to the shoulder, throwing down the remains of his sleeve, which no sooner touched the floor on which he stood than it collected itself together, shrivelled itself up, and was without any visible fire reduced to light tinder, which a sudden breath of wind dispersed into empty space. The White Lady, observing the surprise of the youth, immediately repeated —

"Mortal warp and mortal woof,
Cannot brook this charmed roof;
All that mortal art hath wrought,
In our cell returns to nought.
The molten gold returns to clay,
The polish'd diamond melts away;
All is alter'd all is flown,
Nought stands fast but truth alone.
Not for that thy quest give o'er:
Courage! prove thy chance once more."

Imboldened by her words, Halbert Glendinning made a second effort, and, plunging his bare arm into the flame, took out the sacred volume without feeling either heat or inconvenience of any kind. Astonished, and almost terrified at his own success, he beheld the flame collect itself, and shoot up into one long and final stream, which seemed as if it would ascend to the very roof of the cavern, and then, sinking as suddenly, became totally extinguished. The deepest darkness ensued; but Halbert had no time to consider his situation, for the White Lady had already caught his hand, and they ascended to upper air with the same velocity with which they had sunk into the earth.

They stood by the fountain in the Corri-nan-

shian when they emerged from the bowels of the earth; but on casting a bewildered glance around him, the youth was surprised to observe, that the shadows had fallen far to the east, and that the day was well-nigh spent. He gazed on his conductress for explanation, but her figure began to fade before his eyes—her cheeks grew paler, her features less distinct, her form became shadowy, and blended itself with the mist which was ascending the hollow ravine. What had late the symmetry of form, and the delicate, yet clear hues of feminine beauty, now resembled the flitting and pale ghost of some maiden who has died for love, as it is seen indistinctly and by moonlight, by her perjured lover.

"Stay, spirit!" said the youth, imboldened by his success in the subterranean dome, "thy kindness must not leave me, as one encumbered with a weapon he knows not how to wield. Thou must teach me the art to read, and to understand this volume; else what avails it me that I possess it?"

But the figure of the White Lady still waned before his eye, until it became an outline as pale and indistinct as that of the moon, when the winter morning is far advanced, and ere she had ended the following chant, she was entirely invisible:—

"Alas! alas!
Not ours the grace
These holy characters to trace:
Idle forms of painted air,
Not to us is given to share
The boon bestow'd on Adam's race!
With patience bide,
Heaven will provide
The fitting time, the fitting guide."

The form was already gone, and now the voice itself had melted away in melancholy cadence, softening, as if the Being who spoke had been slowly wafted from the spot where she had commenced her melody.

It was at this moment that Halbert felt the extremity of the terror which he had hitherto so manfully suppressed. The very necessity of exertion had given him spirit to make it, and the presence of the mysterious Being, while it was a subject of fear in itself, had nevertheless given him the sense of protection being near to him. It was when he could reflect with composure on what had passed, that a cold tremor shot across his limbs, his hair bristled, and he was afraid to look around lest he should find at his elbow something more frightful than the first vision. A breeze arising suddenly realized the beautiful and wild idea of the most imaginative of our modern bards[1]—

It fann'd his cheek, it raised his hair,
Like a meadow gale in spring;
It mingled strangely with his fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

The youth stood silent and astonished for a few minutes. It seemed to him that the extraordinary Being he had seen, half his terror, half his protectress, was still hovering on the gale which swept past him, and that she might again make herself sensible to his organs of sight. "Speak!" he said, wildly tossing his arms, "speak yet again—be once more present, lovely vision!—thrice have I now seen thee, yet the idea of thy invisible presence around or beside me, makes my heart beat faster than if the earth yawned and gave up a demon."

[1] Coleridge.

But neither sound nor appearance indicated the presence of the White Lady, and nothing preternatural beyond what he had already witnessed, was again audible or visible. Halbert, in the meanwhile, by the very exertion of again inviting the presence of this mysterious Being, had recovered his natural audacity. He looked around once more, and resumed his solitary path down the valley into whose recesses he had penetrated.

Nothing could be more strongly contrasted than the storm of passion with which he had bounded over stock and crag, in order to plunge himself into the Corri-nan-Shian, and the sobered mood in which he now returned homeward, industriously seeking out the most practicable path, not from a wish to avoid danger, but that he might not by personal toil distract his attention, deeply fixed on the extraordinary scene which he had witnessed. In the former case, he had sought by hazard and bodily exertion to indulge at once the fiery excitation of passion, and to banish the cause of the excitement from his recollection; while now he studiously avoided all interruption to his contemplative walk, lest the difficulty of the way should interfere with, or disturb, his own deep reflections. Thus slowly pacing forth his course, with the air of a pilgrim rather than of a deer-hunter, Halbert about the close of the evening regained his paternal tower.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Miller was of manly make,
To meet him was na mows;
There durst na ten come him to take,
Sae noited he their pows.
Christ's Kirk on the Green.

It was after sunset, as we have already stated, when Halbert Glendinning returned to the abode of his father. The hour of dinner was at noon, and that of supper about an hour after sunset at this period of the year. The former had passed without Halbert's appearing; but this was no uncommon circumstance, for the chase, or any other pastime which occurred, made Halbert a frequent neglecter of hours; and his mother, though angry and disappointed when she saw him not at table, was so much accustomed to his occasional absence, and knew so little how to teach him more regularity, that a testy observation was almost all the censure with which such omissions were visited.

On the present occasion, however, the wrath of good Dame Elspeth soared higher than usual. It was not merely on account of the special tup's-head and trotters, the haggis and the side of mutton, with which her table was set forth, but also because of the arrival of no less a person than Hob Miller, as he was universally termed, though the man's name was Happer.

The object of the Miller's visit to the Tower of Glendearg was like the purpose of those embassies which potentates send to each other's courts, partly ostensible, partly politic. In outward show, Hobb came to visit his friends of the Halidome, and share the festivity common among country folk, after the barn-yard has been filled, and to renew old intimacies by new conviviality. But in very truth he also came to have an eye upon the contents of

each stack, and to obtain such information respecting the extent of the crop reaped and gathered in by each feuar, as might prevent the possibility of *abstracted multures*.

All the world knows that the cultivators of each barony or regality, temporal or spiritual, in Scotland, are obliged to bring their corn to be grinded at the mill of the territory, for which they pay a heavy charge, called the *intown multures*. I could speak to the thirlage of *invecta et illata* too, but let that pass. I have said enough to intimate that I talk not without book. Those of the *Sucken*, or enthralled ground, were liable in penalties, if, deviating from this thirlage, (or thraldom,) they carried their grain to another mill. Now such another mill, erected on the lands of a lay-baron, lay within a tempting and convenient distance of Glendearg; and the Miller was so obliging, and his charges so moderate, that it required Hob Miller's utmost vigilance to prevent evasions of his right of monopoly.

The most effectual means he could devise was this show of good fellowship and neighbourly friendship, — under colour of which he made his annual cruise through the barony — numbered every corn-stack, and computed its contents by the boll, so that he could give a shrewd hint afterwards whether or not the grist came to the right mill.

Dame Elspeth, like her compeers, was obliged to take these domiciliary visits in the sense of politeness; but in her case they had not occurred since her husband's death, probably because the Tower of Glendearg was distant, and there was but a trifling quantity of arable or *infield* land attached to it. This year there had been, upon some speculation of old Martin's, several bolls sown in the out-field, which, the season being fine, had ripened remarkably well. Perhaps this circumstance occasioned the honest Miller's including Glendearg, on this occasion, in his annual round.

Dame Glendinning received with pleasure a visit which she used formerly only to endure with patience; and she had changed her view of the matter chiefly, if not entirely, because Hob had brought with him his daughter Mysie, of whose features she could give so slight an account, but whose dress she had described so accurately to the Sub-Prior.

Hitherto this girl had been an object of very trifling consideration in the eyes of the good widow; but the Sub-Prior's particular and somewhat mysterious inquiries had set her brains to work on the subject of Mysie of the Mill; and she had here asked a broad question, and there she had thrown out an innuendo, and there again she had gradually led on to a conversation on the subject of poor Mysie. And from all inquiries and investigations she had collected, that Mysie was a dark-eyed laughter-loving wench, with cherry-cheeks, and a skin as white as her father's finest bolted flour, out of which was made the Abbot's own wastel-bread. For her temper, she sung and laughed from morning to night; and for her fortune, a material article, besides that which the Miller might have amassed by means of his proverbial golden thumb, Mysie was to inherit a good handsome lump of land, with a prospect of the mill and mill-acres descending to her husband on an easy lease, if a fair word were spoken in season to the Abbot, and to the Prior, and to the Sub-Prior, and to the Sacristan, and so forth.

By turning and again turning these advantages over in her own mind, Elspeth at length came to be of opinion, that the only way to save her son Halbert from a life of "spur, spear, and snafle," as they called that of the border-riders, from the dint of a cloth-yard shaft, or the loop of an inch-cord, was, that he should marry and settle, and that Mysie Happer should be his destined bride.

As if to her wish, Hob Miller arrived on his strong-built mare, bearing on a pillion behind him the lovely Mysie, with cheeks like a peony-rose, (if Dame Glendinning had ever seen one,) spirits all afloat with rustic coquetry, and a profusion of hair as black as ebony. The *beau-idéal* which Dame Glendinning had been bodying forth in her imagination, became unexpectedly realized in the buxom form of Mysie Happer, whom, in the course of half an hour, she settled upon as the maiden who was to fix the restless and untutored Halbert. True, Mysie, as the dame soon saw, was like to love dancing round a may-pole as well as managing a domestic establishment, and Halbert was like to break more heads than he would grind stacks of corn. But then a miller should always be of manly make, and has been described so since the days of Chaucer and James I.[1] Indeed to be able to outdo and bully the whole *Sucken*, (once more we use this barbarous phrase,) in all athletic exercises, was one way to render easy the collection of dues which men would have disputed with a less formidable champion. Then, as to the deficiencies of the miller's wife, the dame was of opinion that they might be supplied by the activity of the miller's mother. "I will keep house for the young folk myself, for the tower is grown very lonely," thought Dame Glendinning, "and to live near the kirk will be mair comfortable in my auld age — and then Edward may agree with his brother about the feu, more especially as he is a favourite with the Sub-Prior, and then he may live in the auld tower like his worthy father before him — and wha kens but Mary Avenel, high-blood as she is, may e'en draw in her stool to the chimney-nook, and sit down here for good and a'? — It's true she has no tocher, but the like of her for beauty and sense ne'er crossed my een; and I have kend every wench in the Halidome of St Mary's — ay, and their mothers that bore them — ay, she is a sweet and a lovely creature as ever tied snood over brown hair — ay, and then, though her uncle keeps her out of her ain for the present time, yet it is to be thought the gray-goose shaft will find a hole in his coat of proof, as, God help us! it has done in many a better man's — And, moreover, if they should stand on their pedigree and gentle race, Edward might say to them, that is, to her gentle kith and kin, 'whilk o' ye was her best friend when she came down the glen to Glendearg in a misty evening, on a beast mair like a cuddie than aught else?' — And if they tax him with churl's

[1] The verse we have chosen for a motto, is from a poem imputed to James I. of Scotland. As for the Miller who figures among the Canterbury pilgrims, besides his sword and buckler, he boasted other attributes, all of which, but especially the last, shew that he relied more on the strength of the outside than that of the inside of his skull.

> The miller was a stout carl for the nones,
> Full big he was of brawn, and eke of bones;
> That proved well, for wheresoe'r he cam;
> At wrestling he wold bear away the ram;
> He was short shoulder'd, broad, a thick gnar;
> There n'as no door that he n'old heave of bar,
> Or break it at a running with his head, &c.

blood, Edward might say, that, *forby* the old proverb, how

> [illegible]
> Maxen gorle bleid;

yet, moreover, there comes no cinrl's blood from Glendinning or Brydone; for, says Edward ——"

The hoarse voice of the Miller at this moment roused the dame from her reverie, and compelled her to remember that if she meant to realize her airy castle, she must begin by laying the foundation in civility to her guest and his daughter, whom she was at that moment most strangely neglecting, though her whole plan turned on conciliating their favour and good opinion, and that, in fact, while arranging matters for so intimate a union with her company, she was suffering them to sit unnoticed, and in their riding gear, as if about to resume their journey. "And so I say, dame," concluded the Miller, "as ye've missed both your husbands, it wunna stand, whye. Mysie and I will tarry our time, but ye maun e'en to Glendearg, and prepare us right kindly to bide with ye."

Starting at once from her dream of marriages and entertainments, balls, bell-ropes, and bell-wethers, Dame Elspeth had for a moment lost the sentiment in the main point, the prospect of the gratification of which so many gallant dreams were formed. But the foundation of Dame Glendinning's house was very battering, not chambrous, and she hastened to restore the equilibrium. Instead of appearing to entertain for her pleasure or mere idle amusement the guests which she might have found something difficult to dismiss otherwise, [illegible] by a bold attack, to disguise his weakness.

A loud exclamation she made, and a passionate complaint she set up against the unkindness of her old friend, who could for an instant doubt the [illegible] of her welcome to him, and to his hopeful daughter: and then a vision of the going home to John Bonnyrigg's, when the ale-wife stood where it did, and had room in it for a friend or two in the scarcity of times—and he too a neighbour that his unprofitable gossip Simon, blessed be his soul, used to think the best friend he had in the Halidome! And so she went on, copious her complaint with so much appearance, that she half-might imposed on herself as well as upon Julian Miller, who had no mind to take any thing in dudgeon; and as it seemed the point to pass the night at Glendearg, would have been equally contented to do so even had the reception been less vehemently importunate.

The old dame's apprehensions on the establishment of the proposed *ménage* for her daughter-in-law, he announced to the perplexed Elspeth, "Nay, dame, what could I see? I ye might have had other guest to grush, for ye invited me in ye chanse saw me — or never know I ye might trust in mind the words Martin and I had about the last barley ye earned — but I am thy multurer's well, sometimes, quick in the thrave. A man seeks but his own, and yet think ye I'd hain [*i.e.* keep] muter and miller's man, that is neither auld knave,[1] and the country rown."

"Alas, that you will say so, neighbour Hob," said Dame Elspeth, "or that Martin should have had any words with you about the mill-dues! I will chide him roundly for it, I promise you, on the faith of a true widow. You know full well that a lone woman is sore put upon by her servants."

"Nay, dame," said the Miller, unbuckling the broad belt which made fast his cloak, and served, at the same time, to suspend by his side a swinging Andrea Ferrara, "bear no grudge at Martin, for I bear none — I take it on me as a thing of mine office, to maintain my right of multure, lock, and goupen.[2] And reason good, for as the old song says,

> I live by my mill, God bless her,
> She's parent, child, and wife.

The poor old slut, I am beholden to her for my living, and bound to stand by her, as I say to my mill-knaves, in right and in wrong. And so should every honest fellow stand by his bread-winner.— And so, Mysie, ye may doff your cloak since our neighbour is so kindly glad to see us — why, I think, we are as blithe to see her — not one in the Halidome pays their multures more duly, sequels, arriage, and carriage, and mill-services, used and wont."

With that the Miller hung his ample cloak without farther ceremony upon a huge pair of stag's antlers, which adorned at once the naked walls of the tower, and served for what we vulgarly call cloak-pins.

In the meantime Dame Elspeth assisted to disembarrass the damsel whom she destined for her future daughter-in-law, of her hood, mantle, and the rest of her riding gear, giving her to appear as beseemed the buxom daughter of the wealthy Miller, gay and goodly, in a white kirtle, the seams of which were embroidered with green silken lace or fringe, entwined with some silver thread. An anxious glance did Elspeth cast upon the good-humoured face, which was now more fully shewn to her, and was only obscured by a quantity of raven black hair, which the maid of the mill had restrained by a snood of green silk, embroidered with silver, corresponding to the trimmings of her kirtle. The countenance itself was exceedingly comely — the eyes black, large, and ruefully good-humoured — the mouth was small — the lips well formed, though somewhat full — the teeth were pearly white — and the chin had a very seducing dimple in it. The form belonging to this joyous face was full and round, and firm and fair. It might become coarse and masculine some years hence, which is the common fault of Scottish beauty; but in Mysie's sixteenth year she had the shape of a Hebe. The anxious Elspeth, with all her maternal partiality, could not help admitting within herself, that a better man than Halbert might go farther and fare worse. She looked a little giddy, and Halbert was not nineteen; still it was time he

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[1] Every miller was a thief, or opprobrious to money, for one proverb of the trade. It was also a common reproach to millers.

[2] The under miller, is in the language of thirlage, called the knave, which, indeed, signified originally his lad. [*Knaie* — servant, but by degrees came to be taken in a worse sense. In the old translation of the Bible, Paul is made to term himself the slave of our Saviour. The allowance of meal taken by the miller's servant claimed knavership.

[2] The goupen was the name given to the quantity the miller took for grinding the meal. The lock denotes a small quantity, and the goupen a handful, both proportions determined by the miller, and sometimes, as it would seem, by the humour of the customer. These and other petty dues were called in general the sequels.

should be settled, for to that point the dame always returned; and here was an excellent opportunity.

The simple cunning of Dame Elspeth now exhausted itself in commendations of her fair guest, from the snood, as they say, to the single-soled shoe. Mysie listened and blushed with pleasure for the first five minutes; but ere ten had elapsed, she began to view the old lady's compliments rather as subjects of mirth than of vanity, and was much more disposed to laugh at than to be flattered with them, for Nature had mingled the good-humour with which she had endowed the damsel with no small portion of shrewdness. Even Hob himself began to tire of hearing his daughter's praises, and broke in with, "Ay, ay, she is a clever quean enough; and, were she five years older, she shall lay a loaded sack on an *aver*[1] with e'er a lass in the Halidome. But I have been looking for your two sons, dame. Men say downby that Halbert's turned a wild springald, and that we may have word of him from Westmoreland one moonlight night or another."

"God forbid, my good neighbour; God, in his mercy, forbid!" said Dame Glendinning earnestly; for it was touching the very key-note of her apprehensions, to hint any probability that Halbert might become one of the marauders so common in the age and country. But, fearful of having betrayed too much alarm on this subject, she immediately added, "That though, since the last rout at Pinkie-cleuch, she had been all of a tremble when a gun or a spear was named, or when men spoke of fighting; yet, thanks to God and our Lady, her sons were like to live and die honest and peaceful tenants to the Abbey, as their father might have done, but for that awful hosting which he went forth to, with mony a brave man that never returned."

"Ye need not tell me of it, dame," said the Miller, "since I was there myself, and made two pair of legs (and these were not mine, but my mare's,) worth one pair of hands. I judged how it would be, when I saw our host break ranks, with rushing on through that broken ploughed field, and so as they had made a pricker of me, I e'en pricked off with myself while the play was good."

"Ay, ay, neighbour," said the dame, "ye were aye a wise and a wary man; if my Simon had had your wit, he might have been here to speak about it this day; but he was aye cracking of his good blood and his high kindred, and less would not serve him than to bide the bang to the last, with the earls, and knights, and squires, that had no wives to greet for them, or else had wives that cared not how soon they were widows; but that is not for the like of us. But touching my son Halbert, there is no fear of him; for if it should be his misfortune to be in the like case, he has the best pair of heels in the Halidome, and could run almost as fast as your mare herself."

"Is this he, neighbour?" quoth the Miller.

"No," replied the mother; "that is my youngest son, Edward, who can read and write like the Lord Abbot himself, if it were not a sin to say so."

"Ay," said the Miller; "and is that the young clerk the Sub-Prior thinks so much of? they say he will come far ben that lad; wha kens but he may come to be Sub-Prior himself?—as broken a ship has come to land."

"To be a Prior, neighbour Miller," said Edward, "a man must first be a priest, and for that I judge I have little vocation."

"He will take to the pleugh-pettle, neighbour," said the good dame; "and so will Halbert too, I trust. I wish you saw Halbert.—Edward, where is your brother?"

"Hunting, I think," replied Edward; "at least he left us this morning to join the Laird of Colmslie and his hounds. I have heard them baying in the glen all day."

"And if I had heard that music," said the Miller, "it would have done my heart good, ay, and may be taken me two or three miles out of my road. When I was the Miller of Morebatttle's knave, I have followed the hounds from Eckford to the foot of Hounam-law—followed them on foot, Dame Glendinning, ay, and led the chase when the Laird of Cessford and his gay riders were all thrown out by the mosses and gills. I brought the stag on my back to Hounam Cross, when the dogs had pulled him down. I think I see the old gray knight, as he sate so upright on his strong war-horse, all white with foam; and 'Miller,' said he to me, 'an thou wilt turn thy back on the mill, and wend with me, I will make a man of thee.' But I chose rather to abide by clap and happer, and the better luck was mine; for the proud Percy caused hang five of the Laird's henchmen at Alnwick for burning a rickle of houses some gate beyond Fow berry, and it might have been my luck as well as another man's."

"Ah, neighbour, neighbour," said Dame Glendinning, "you were aye wise and wary; but if you like hunting, I must say Halbert's the lad to please you. He hath all those fair holiday terms of hawk and hound as ready in his mouth as Tom with the tod's tail, that is the Lord Abbot's ranger."

"Ranges he not homeward at dinner-time, dame," demanded the Miller; "for we call noon the dinner-hour at Kennaquhair?"

The widow was forced to admit, that, even at this important period of the day, Halbert was frequently absent; at which the Miller shook his head, intimating, at the same time, some allusion to the proverb of MacFarlane's geese, which "liked their play better than their meat."[2]

That the delay of dinner might not increase the Miller's disposition to prejudge Halbert, Dame Glendinning called hastily on Mary Avenel to take her task of entertaining Mysie Happer, while she herself rushed to the kitchen, and, entering at once into the province of Tibb Tacket, rummaged among trenchers and dishes, snatched pots from the fire, and placed pans and gridirons on it, accompanying her own feats of personal activity with such a continued list of injunctions to Tibb, that Tibb at length lost patience, and said, "Here was as muckle wark about meating an auld miller, as if they had been to banquet the blood of Bruce." But this, as it was supposed to be spoken aside, Dame Glendinning did not think it convenient to hear.

[1] *Aver*—properly a horse of labour.

[2] See Note E. *MacFarlane's Geese.*

CHAPTER XIV.

Nay, let me have the friends who eat my victuals,
As various as my dishes. — The feast's naught,
Where one huge plate predominates. John Plaintext,
He shall be mighty beef, our English staple;
The worthy Alderman, a butter'd dumpling;
Yon pair of whisker'd Corneis, ruffs and rees:
Their friend the Dandy, a green goose in sippets.
And so the board is spread at once and fill'd
On the same principle — Variety.

New Play

"And what brave lass is this?" said Hob Miller, as Mary Avenel entered the apartment to supply the absence of Dame Elspeth Glendinning.

"The young Lady of Avenel, father," said the Maid of the Mill, dropping as low a curtsy as her rustic manners enabled her to make. The Miller, her father, doffed his bonnet, and made his reverence, not altogether so low perhaps as if the young lady had appeared in the pride of rank and riches, yet so as to give high birth the due homage which the Scotch for a length of time scrupulously rendered to it.

Indeed, from having had her mother's example before her for so many years, and from a native sense of propriety and even of dignity, Mary Avenel had acquired a demeanour, which marked her title to consideration, and effectually checked any attempt at familiarity on the part of those who might be her associates in her present situation, but could not be well termed her equals. She was by nature mild, pensive, and contemplative, gentle in disposition, and most placable when accidentally offended; but still she was of a retired and reserved habit, and shunned to mix in ordinary sports, even when the rare occurrence of a fair or wake gave her an opportunity of mingling with companions of her own age. If at such scenes she was seen for an instant, she appeared to behold them with the composed indifference of one to whom their gaiety was a matter of no interest, and who seemed only desirous to glide away from the scene as soon as she possibly could.

Something also had transpired concerning her being born on All-hallow Eve, and the powers with which that circumstance was supposed to invest her over the invisible world. And from all these particulars combined, the young men and women of the Halidome used to distinguish Mary among themselves by the name of the Spirit of Avenel, as if the fair but fragile form, the beautiful but rather colourless cheek, the dark blue eye, and the shady hair, had belonged rather to the immaterial than the substantial world. The general tradition of the White Lady, who was supposed to wait on the fortunes of the family of Avenel, gave a sort of zest to this piece of rural wit. It gave great offence, however, to the two sons of Simon Glendinning; and when the expression was in their presence applied to the young lady, Edward was wont to check the petulance of those who used it by strength of argument, and Halbert by strength of arm. In such cases Halbert had this advantage, that although he could render no aid to his brother's argument, yet when circumstances required it, he was sure to have that of Edward, who never indeed himself commenced a fray, but, on the other hand, did not testify any reluctance to enter into combat in Halbert's behalf or in his rescue.

But the zealous attachment of the two youths, being themselves, from the retired situation in which they dwelt, comparative strangers in the Halidome, did not serve in any degree to alter the feelings of the inhabitants towards the young lady, who seemed to have dropped amongst them from another sphere of life. Still, however, she was regarded with respect, if not with fondness; and the attention of the Sub-Prior to the family, not to mention the formidable name of Julian Avenel, which every new incident of those tumultuous times tended to render more famous, attached to his niece a certain importance. Thus some aspired to her acquaintance out of pride, while the more timid of the feuars were anxious to inculcate upon their children, the necessity of being respectful to the noble orphan. So that Mary Avenel, little loved because little known, was regarded with a mysterious awe, partly derived from fear of her uncle's moss-troopers, and partly from her own retired and distant habits, enhanced by the superstitious opinions of the time and country.

It was not without some portion of this awe, that Mysie felt herself left alone in company with a young person so distant in rank, and so different in bearing, from herself; for her worthy father had taken the first opportunity to step out unobserved, in order to mark how the barn-yard was filled, and what prospect it afforded of grist to the mill. In youth, however, there is a sort of free-masonry, which, without much conversation, teaches young persons to estimate each other's character, and places them at ease on the shortest acquaintance. It is only when taught deceit by the commerce of the world, that we learn to shroud our character from observation, and to disguise our real sentiments from those with whom we are placed in communion.

Accordingly, the two young women were soon engaged in such objects of interest as best became their age. They visited Mary Avenel's pigeons, which she nursed with the tenderness of a mother; they turned over her slender stores of finery, which yet contained some articles that excited the respect of her companion, though Mysie was too good-humoured to nourish envy. A golden rosary, and some female ornaments marking superior rank, had been rescued in the moment of their utmost adversity, more by Tibb Tacket's presence of mind, than by the care of their owner, who was at that sad period too much sunk in grief to pay any attention to such circumstances. They struck Mysie with a deep impression of veneration; for, excepting what the Lord Abbot and the convent might possess, she did not believe there was so much real gold in the world as was exhibited in these few trinkets, and Mary, however sage and serious, was not above being pleased with the admiration of her rustic companion.

Nothing, indeed, could exhibit a stronger contrast than the appearance of the two girls;—the good-humoured laughter-loving countenance of the Maid of the Mill, who stood gazing with unrepressed astonishment on whatever was in her inexperienced eye rare and costly, and with an humble, and at the same time cheerful acquiescence in her inferiority, asking all the little queries about the use and value of the ornaments, while Mary Avenel, with her quiet composed dignity and placidity of manner, produced them one after another for the amusement of her companion.

As they became gradually more familiar, Mysie of the Mill was just venturing to ask, why Mary Avenel never appeared at the May-pole, and to express her wonder when the young lady said she disliked dancing, when a trampling of horses at the gate of the tower interrupted their conversation.

Mysie flew to the shot window in the full ardour of unrestrained female curiosity. "Saint Mary! sweet lady! here come two well-mounted gallants; will you step this way to look at them?"

"No," said Mary Avenel, "you shall tell me who they are."

"Well, if you like it better," said Mysie — "but how shall I know them? — Stay, I do know one of them, and so do you, lady; he is a blithe man, somewhat light of hand they say, but the gallants of these days think no great harm of that. He is your uncle's henchman, that they call Christie of the Clinthill; and he has not his old green jerkin and the rusty black-jack over it, but a scarlet cloak, laid down with silver lace three inches broad, and a breast-plate you might see to dress your hair in, as well as in that keeking-glass in the ivory frame that you shewed me even now. Come, dear lady, come to the shot-window and see him."

"If it be the man you mean, Mysie," replied the orphan of Avenel, "I shall see him soon enough, considering either the pleasure or comfort the sight will give me."

"Nay, but if you will not come to see gay Christie," replied the Maid of the Mill, her face flushed with eager curiosity, "come and tell me who the gallant is that is with him, the handsomest, the very lovesomest young man I ever saw with sight."

"It is my foster-brother, Halbert Glendinning," said Mary, with apparent indifference; for she had been accustomed to call the sons of Elspeth her foster-brethren, and to live with them as if they had been brothers in earnest.

"Nay, by Our Lady, that it is not," said Mysie; "I know the favour of both the Glendinnings well, and I think this rider be not of our country. He has a crimson velvet bonnet, and long brown hair falling down under it, and a beard on his upper lip, and his chin clean and close shaved, save a small patch on the point of the chin, and a sky-blue jerkin, slashed and lined with white satin, and trunk-hose to suit, and no weapon but a rapier and dagger — Well, if I was a man, I would never wear weapon but the rapier! it is so slender and becoming, instead of having a cart-load of iron at my back, like my father's broad-sword with its great rusty basket-hilt. Do you not delight in the rapier and poniard, lady?"

"The best sword," answered Mary, "if I must needs answer a question of the sort, is that which is drawn in the best cause, and which is best used when it is out of the scabbard."

"But can you not guess who this stranger should be?" said Mysie.

"Indeed, I cannot even attempt it; but to judge by his companion, it is no matter how little he is known," replied Mary.

"My benison on his bonny face," said Mysie, "if he is not going to alight here! Now, I am as much pleased as if my father had given me the silver earrings he has promised me so often; — nay, you had as well come to the window, for you must see him by and by whether you will or not."

I do not know how much sooner Mary Avenel might have sought the point of observation, if she had not been scared from it by the unrestrained curiosity expressed by her buxom friend; but at length the same feeling prevailed over her sense of dignity, and satisfied with having displayed all the indifference that was necessary in point of decorum, she no longer thought herself bound to restrain her curiosity.

From the out-shot or projecting window she could perceive, that Christie of the Clinthill was attended on the present occasion by a very gay and gallant cavalier, who from the nobleness of his countenance and manner, his rich and handsome dress, and the showy appearance of his horse and furniture, must, she agreed with her new friend, be a person of some consequence.

Christie also seemed conscious of something, which made him call out with more than his usual insolence of manner, "What, ho! so ho! the house! Churl peasants, will no one answer when I call? — Ho! Martin, — Tibb, — Dame Glendinning! — a murrain on you, must we stand keeping our horses in the cold here, and they steaming with heat, when we have ridden so sharply?"

At length he was obeyed, and old Martin made his appearance. "Ha!" said Christie, "art thou there, old Truepenny? here, stable me these steeds, and see them well bedded, and stretch thine old limbs by rubbing them down; and see thou quit not the stable till there is not a turned hair on either of them."

Martin took the horses to the stable as commanded, but suppressed not his indignation a moment after he could vent it with safety. "Would not any one think," he said to Jasper, an old ploughman, who, in coming to his assistance, had heard Christie's imperious injunctions, "that this loon, this Christie of the Clinthill, was laird or lord at least of him? No such thing, man! I remember him a little dirty turnspit-boy in the house of Avenel, that every body in a frosty morning like this warmed his fingers by kicking or cuffing! and now he is a gentleman, and swears, d—n him and renounce him, as if the gentlemen could not so much as keep their own wickedness to themselves, without the like of him going to hell in their very company, and by the same road. I have as much a mind as ever I had to my dinner, to go back and tell him to sort his horse himself, since he is as able as I am."

"Hout tout, man!" answered Jasper, "keep a calm sough; better to fleech a fool than fight with him."

Martin acknowledged the truth of the proverb, and, much comforted therewith, betook himself to cleaning the stranger's horse with great assiduity, remarking, it was a pleasure to handle a handsome nag, and turned over the other to the charge of Jasper. Nor was it until Christie's commands were literally complied with, that he deemed it proper after fitting ablutions, to join the party in the spence; not for the purpose of waiting upon them, as a mere modern reader might possibly expect, but that he might have his share of dinner in their company.

In the meanwhile Christie had presented his companion to Dame Glendinning as Sir Piercie Shafton, a friend of his and of his master, come to spend three or four days with little din in the tower. The good dame could not conceive how she

was entitled to such an honour, and would fain have pleaded her want of every sort of convenience to entertain a guest of that quality. But, indeed, the visiter, when he cast his eyes round the bare walls, eyed the huge black chimney, scrutinized the meagre and broken furniture of the apartment, and beheld the embarrassment of the mistress of the family, intimated great reluctance to intrude upon Dame Glendinning a visit, which could scarce, from all appearances, prove otherwise than an inconvenience to her, and a penance to himself.

But the reluctant hostess and her guest had to do with an inexorable man, who silenced all expostulation with, "such was his master's pleasure. And, moreover," he continued, "though the Baron of Avenel's will must, and ought to prove law to all within ten miles around him, yet here, dame," he said, "is a letter from your petticoated baron, the lord-priest yonder, who enjoins you, as you regard his pleasure, that you afford to this good knight such decent accommodation as is in your power, suffering him to live as privately as he shall desire. — And for you, Sir Piercie Shafton," continued Christie, "you will judge for yourself, whether secrecy and safety is not more your object even now, than soft beds and high cheer. And do not judge of the dame's goods by the semblance of her cottage; for you will see by the dinner she is about to spread for us, that the vassal of the kirk is seldom found with her basket bare." To Mary Avenel Christie presented the stranger, after the best fashion he could, as to the niece of his master the baron.

While he thus laboured to reconcile Sir Piercie Shafton to his fate, the widow, having consulted her son Edward on the real import of the Lord Abbot's injunction, and having found that Christie had given a true exposition, saw nothing else left for her but to make that fate as easy as she could to the stranger. He himself also seemed reconciled to his lot by some feeling probably of strong necessity, and accepted with a good grace the hospitality which the dame offered with a very indifferent one.

In fact, the dinner, which soon smoked before the assembled guests, was of that substantial kind which warrants plenty and comfort. Dame Glendinning had cooked it after her best manner; and, delighted with the handsome appearance which her good cheer made when placed on the table, forgot both her plans and the vexations which interrupted them, in the hospitable duty of pressing her assembled visiters to eat and drink, watching every trencher as it waxed empty, and loading it with fresh supplies ere the guest could utter a negative.

In the meanwhile, the company attentively regarded each other's motions, and seemed endeavouring to form a judgment of each other's character. Sir Piercie Shafton condescended to speak to no one but to Mary Avenel, and on her he conferred exactly the same familiar and compassionate, though somewhat scornful sort of attention, which a pretty fellow of these days will sometimes condescend to bestow on a country miss, when there is no prettier or more fashionable woman present. The manner indeed was different, for the etiquette of those times did not permit Sir Piercie Shafton to pick his teeth, or to yawn, or to gabble like the beggar whose tongue (as he says) was cut out by the Turks, or to affect deafness or blindness, or any other infirmity of the organs. But though the embroidery of his conversation was different, the groundwork was the same, and the high-flown and ornate compliments with which the gallant knight of the sixteenth century interlarded his conversation, were as much the offspring of egotism and self-conceit, as the jargon of the coxcombs of our own days.

The English knight was, however, something daunted at finding that Mary Avenel listened with an air of indifference, and answered with wonderful brevity, to all the fine things which ought, as he conceived, to have dazzled her with their brilliancy, and puzzled her by their obscurity. But if he was disappointed in making the desired, or rather the expected impression, upon her whom he addressed, Sir Piercie Shafton's discourse was marvellous in the ears of Mysie the Miller's daughter, and not the less so that she did not comprehend the meaning of a single word which he uttered. Indeed, the gallant knight's language was far too courtly to be understood by persons of much greater acuteness than Mysie's.

It was about this period, that the "only rare poet of his time, the witty, comical, facetiously-quick, and quickly-facetious, John Lylly — he that sate at Apollo's table, and to whom Phœbus gave a wreath of his own bays without snatching"[1] — he, in short, who wrote that singularly coxcomical work, called *Euphues and his England*, was in the very zenith of his absurdity and reputation. The quaint, forced, and unnatural style which he introduced by his "Anatomy of Wit," had a fashion as rapid as it was momentary — all the court ladies were his scholars, and to *parler Euphuisme*, was as necessary a qualification to a courtly gallant, as those of understanding how to use his rapier, or to dance a measure.

It was no wonder that the Maid of the Mill was soon as effectually blinded by the intricacies of this erudite and courtly style of conversation, as she had ever been by the dust of her father's own meal-sacks. But there she sate with her mouth and eyes as open as the mill-door and the two windows, shewing teeth as white as her father's bolted flour, and endeavouring to secure a word or two for her own future use out of the pearls of rhetoric which Sir Piercie Shafton scattered around him with such bounteous profusion.

For the male part of the company, Edward felt ashamed of his own manner and slowness of speech, when he observed the handsome young courtier, with an ease and volubility of which he had no conception, run over all the commonplace topics of high-flown gallantry. It is true, the good sense and natural taste of young Glendinning soon informed him that the gallant cavalier was speaking nonsense. But, alas! where is the man of modest merit, and real talent, who has not suffered from being outshone in conversation, and outstripped in the race of life, by men of less reserve, and of qualities more showy, though less substantial? and well constituted must the mind be, that can yield up the prize without envy to competitors more worthy than himself.

[1] Such, and yet more extravagant, are the compliments paid to this author by his editor Blount. Notwithstanding all exaggeration, Lylly was really a man of wit and imagination, though both were deformed by the most unnatural affectation that ever disgraced a printed page.

Edward Glendinning had no such philosophy. While he despised the jargon of the gay cavalier, he envied the facility with which he could run on, as well as the courtly tone and expression, and the perfect ease and elegance with which he offered all the little acts of politeness to which the duties of the table gave opportunity. And if I am to speak truth, I must own that he envied those qualities the more as they were all exercised in Mary Avenel's service, and, although only so far accepted as they could not be refused, intimated a wish on the stranger's part to place himself in her good graces, as the only person in the room to whom he thought it worth while to recommend himself. His title, rank, and very handsome figure, together with some sparks of wit and spirit which flashed across the cloud of nonsense which he uttered, rendered him, as the words of the old song say, "a lad for a lady's viewing;" so that poor Edward, with all his real worth and acquired knowledge, in his home-spun doublet, blue cap, and deerskin trowsers, looked like a clown beside the courtier, and, feeling the full inferiority, nourished no good-will to him by whom he was eclipsed.

Christie, on the other hand, so soon as he had satisfied to the full a commodious appetite, by means of which persons of his profession could, like the wolf and eagle, gorge themselves with as much food at one meal as might serve them for several days, began also to feel himself more in the background than he liked to be. This worthy had, amongst his other good qualities, an excellent opinion of himself; and, being of a bold and forward disposition, had no mind to be thrown into the shade by any one. With an impudent familiarity which such persons mistake for graceful ease, he broke in upon the knight's finest speeches with as little remorse as he would have driven the point of his lance through a laced doublet.

Sir Piercie Shafton, a man of rank and high birth, by no means encouraged or endured this familiarity, and requited the intruder either with total neglect, or such laconic replies, as intimated a sovereign contempt for the rude spearman, who affected to converse with him upon terms of equality.

The Miller held his peace; for, as his usual conversation turned chiefly on his clapper and tolldish, he had no mind to brag of his wealth in presence of Christie of the Clinthill, or to intrude his discourse on the English cavalier.

A little specimen of the conversation may not be out of place, were it but to shew young ladies what fine things they have lost by living when Euphuism is out of fashion.

"Credit me, fairest lady," said the knight, "that such is the cunning of our English courtiers of the hodiernal strain, that, as they have infinitely refined upon the plain and rusticial discourse of our fathers, which, as I may say, more beseemed the mouths of country roisterers in a May-game than that of courtly gallants in a galliard, so I hold it ineffably and unutterably impossible, that those who may succeed us in that garden of wit and courtesy shall alter or amend it. Venus delighted but in the language of Mercury, Bucephalus will stoop to no one but Alexander, none can sound Apollo's pipe but Orpheus."

"Valiant sir," said Mary, who could scarcely help laughing, "we have but to rejoice in the chance which hath honoured this solitude with a glimpse of the sun of courtesy, though it rather blinds than enlightens us."

"Pretty and quaint, fairest lady," answered the Euphuist. "Ah, that I had with me my Anatomy of Wit — that all-to-be-unparalleled volume — that quintessence of human wit — that treasury of quaint invention — that exquisitely-pleasant-to-read, and inevitably-necessary-to-be-remembered manual, of all that is worthy to be known — which indoctrines the rude in civility, the dull in intellectuality, the heavy in jocosity, the blunt in gentility, the vulgar in nobility, and all of them in that unutterable perfection of human utterance, that eloquence which no other eloquence is sufficient to praise, that art which, when we call it by its own name of Euphuism, we bestow on it its richest panegyric."

"By Saint Mary," said Christie of the Clinthill, "if your worship had told me that you had left such stores of wealth as you talk of at Prudhoe Castle, Long Dickie and I would have had them off with us if man and horse could have carried them; but you told us of no treasure I wot of, save the silver tongs for turning up your mustachoes."

The knight treated this intruder's mistake — for certainly Christie had no idea that all these epithets which sounded so rich and splendid, were lavished upon a small quarto volume — with a stare, and then turning again to Mary Avenel, the only person whom he thought worthy to address, he proceeded in his strain of high-flown oratory, "Even thus," said he, "do hogs contemn the splendour of Oriental pearls; even thus are the delicacies of a choice repast in vain offered to the long-eared grazer of the common, who turneth from them to devour a thistle. Surely as idle is it to pour forth the treasures of oratory before the eyes of the ignorant, and to spread the dainties of the intellectual banquet before those who are, morally and metaphysically speaking, no better than asses."

"Sir Knight, since that is your quality," said Edward, "we cannot strive with you in loftiness of language; but I pray you in fair courtesy, while you honour my father's house with your presence, to spare us such vile comparisons."

"Peace, good villagio," said the knight, gracefully waving his hand, "I prithee peace, kind rustic; and you, my guide, whom I may scarce call honest, let me prevail upon you to imitate the laudable taciturnity of that honest yeoman, who sits as mute as a mill-post, and of that comely damsel, who seems as with her ears she drank in what she did not altogether comprehend, even as a palfrey listening to a lute, whereof, howsoever, he knoweth not the gamut."

"Marvellous fine words," at length said dame Glendinning, who began to be tired of sitting so long silent, "marvellous fine words, neighbour Happer, are they not?"

"Brave words — very brave words — very exceeding pyet words," answered the Miller; "nevertheless, to speak my mind, a lippy of bran were worth a bushel o' them."

"I think so too, under his worship's favour," answered Christie of the Clinthill. "I well remember that at the race of Morham, as we call it, near Berwick, I took a young Southern fellow out of saddle with my lance, and cast him, it might be, a gad's length from his nag; and so, as he had some gold on his laced doublet, I deemed he might

ha' the like on it in his pocket too, though that is a rule that does not aye hold good — So I was speaking to him of ransom, and out he comes with a handful of such terms as his honour there hath gleaned up, and craved me for mercy, as I was a true son of Mars, and such like."

"And obtained no mercy at thy hand, I dare be sworn," said the knight, who deigned not to speak Euphuism excepting to the fair sex.

"By my troggs," replied Christie, "I would have thrust my lance down his throat, but just then they flung open that accursed postern gate, and forth pricked old Hunsdon, and Henry Carey, and as many fellows at their heels as turned the chase northward again. So I e'en pricked Bayard with the spur, and went off with the rest; for a man should ride when he may not wrestle, as they say in Tynedale."

"Trust me," said the knight, again turning to Mary Avenel, "if I do not pity you, lady, who, being of noble blood, are thus in a manner compelled to abide in the cottage of the ignorant, like the precious stone in the head of the toad, or like a precious garland on the brow of an ass. — But soft, what gallant have we here, whose garb savoureth more of the rustic than doth his demeanour, and whose looks seem more lofty than his habit? even as ——"

"I pray you, Sir Knight," said Mary, "to spare your courtly similitudes for refined ears, and give me leave to name unto you my foster-brother, Halbert Glendinning."

"The son of the good dame of the cottage, as I opine," answered the English knight; "for by some such name did my guide discriminate the mistress of this mansion, which you, madam, enrich with your presence. — And yet, touching this juvenal, he hath that about him which belongeth to higher birth, for all are not black who dig coals ——"

"Nor all white who are millers," said honest Happer, glad to get in a word, as they say, edgeways.

Halbert, who had sustained the glance of the Englishman with some impatience, and knew not what to make of his manner and language, replied with some asperity, "Sir Knight, we have in this land of Scotland an ancient saying, 'Scorn not the bush that bields you' — you are a guest of my father's house to shelter you from danger, if I am rightly informed by the domestics. Scoff not its homeliness, nor that of its inmates — ye might long have abidden at the court of England, ere we had sought your favour, or cumbered you with our society. Since your fate has sent you hither amongst us, be contented with such fare and such converse as we can afford you, and scorn us not for our kindness; for the Scots wear short patience and long daggers."

All eyes were turned on Halbert while he was thus speaking, and there was a general feeling that his countenance had an expression of intelligence, and his person an air of dignity, which they had never before observed. Whether it were that the wonderful Being with whom he had so lately held communication, had bestowed on him a grace and dignity of look and bearing which he had not before, or whether the being conversant in high matters, and called to a destiny beyond that of other men, had a natural effect in giving becoming confidence to his language and manner, we pretend not to determine. But it was evident to all, that, from this day, young Halbert was an altered man; that he acted with the steadiness, promptitude, and determination, which belonged to riper years, and bore himself with a manner which appertained to higher rank.

The knight took the rebuke with good humour. "By mine honour," he said, "thou hast reason on thy side, good juvenal — nevertheless, I spoke not as in ridicule of the roof which relieves me, but rather in your own praise, to whom, if this roof be native, thou mayst nevertheless rise from its lowliness; even as the lark, which maketh its humble nest in the furrow, ascendeth towards the sun, as well as the eagle which buildeth her eyry in the cliff."

This high-flown discourse was interrupted by Dame Glendinning, who, with all the busy anxiety of a mother, was loading her son's trencher with food, and dinning in his ear her reproaches on account of his prolonged absence. "And see," she said, "that you do not one day get such a sight while you are walking about among the haunts of them that are not of our flesh and bone, as befell Mungo Murray when he slept on the greensward ring of the Auld Kirkhill at sunset, and wakened at daybreak in the wild hills of Breadalbane. And see that, when you are looking for deer, the red stag does not gall you as he did Diccon Thorburn, who never overcast the wound that he took from a buck's horn. And see, when you go swaggering about with a long broadsword by your side, whilk it becomes no peaceful man to do, that you dinna meet with them that have broadsword and lance both — there are enow of rank riders in this land, that neither fear God nor regard man."

Here her eye, "in a fine frenzy rolling," fell full upon that of Christie of the Clinthill, and at once her fears for having given offence interrupted the current of maternal rebuke, which, like rebuke matrimonial, may be often better meant than timed. There was something of sly and watchful significance in Christie's eye, an eye gray, keen, fierce, yet wily, formed to express at once cunning and malice, which made the dame instantly conjecture she had said too much, while she saw in imagination her twelve goodly cows go lowing down the glen in a moonlight night, with half a score of Border spearmen at their heels.

Her voice, therefore, sunk from the elevated tone of maternal authority into a whimpering apologetic sort of strain, and she proceeded to say, "It is no that I have only ill thoughts of the Border riders, for Tibb Tacket there has often heard me say that I thought spear and bridle as natural to a Borderman as a pen to a priest, or a feather-fan to a lady; and — have you not heard me say it, Tibb?"

Tibb shewed something less than her expected alacrity in attesting her mistress's deep respect for the freebooters of the southland hills; but, thus conjured, did at length reply, "Hout ay, mistress, I 'se warrant I have heard you say something like that."

"Mother!" said Halbert, in a firm and commanding tone of voice, "what or whom is it that you fear under my father's roof? — I well hope that it harbours not a guest in whose presence you are afraid to say your pleasure to me or my brother? I am sorry I have been detained so late, being

ignorant of the fair company which I should encounter on my return.—I pray you let this excuse suffice: and what satisfies you will, I trust, be nothing less than acceptable to your guests."

An answer calculated so justly betwixt the submission due to his parent, and the natural feeling of dignity in one who was by birth master of the mansion, excited universal satisfaction. And as Elspeth herself confessed to Tibb on the same evening, "She did not think it had been in the callant. Till that night, he took pets and passions if he was spoke to, and lap through the house like a four-year-auld at the least word of advice that was minted at him, but now he spoke as grave and as douce as the Lord Abbot himself. She kendna," she said, "what might be the upshot of it, but it was like he was a wonderfu' callant even now."

The party then separated, the young men retiring to their apartments, the elder to their household cares. While Christie went to see his horse properly accommodated, Edward betook himself to his book, and Halbert, who was as ingenious in employing his hands as he had hitherto appeared imperfect in mental exertion, applied himself to constructing a place of concealment in the floor of his apartment by raising a plank, beneath which he resolved to deposit that copy of the Holy Scriptures which had been so strangely regained from the possession of men and spirits.

In the meanwhile, Sir Piercie Shafton sate still as a stone, in the chair in which he had deposited himself, his hands folded on his breast, his legs stretched straight out before him and resting upon the heels, his eyes cast up to the ceiling as if he had meant to count every mesh of every cobweb with which the arched roof was canopied, wearing at the same time a face of as solemn and imperturbable gravity, as if his existence had depended on the accuracy of his calculation.

He could scarce be roused from his listless state of contemplative absorption so as to take some supper, a meal at which the younger females appeared not. Sir Piercie stared around twice or thrice as if he missed something; but he asked not for them, and only evinced his sense of a proper audience being wanting, by his abstraction and absence of mind, seldom speaking until he was twice addressed, and then replying, without trope or figure, in that plain English, which nobody could speak better when he had a mind.

Christie, finding himself in undisturbed possession of the conversation, indulged all who chose to listen with details of his own wild and inglorious warfare, while Dame Elspeth's curch bristled with horror, and Tibb Tacket, rejoiced to find herself once more in the company of a jack-man, listened to his tales, like Desdemona to Othello's, with undisguised delight. Meantime the two young Glendinnings were each wrapped up in his own reflections, and only interrupted in them by the signal to move bedward.

CHAPTER XV.

> He strikes no coin, 'tis true, but coins new phrases,
> And vends them forth as knaves vend gilded counters,
> Which wise men scorn, and fools accept in payment.
> *Old Play.*

In the morning Christie of the Clinthill was no where to be seen. As this worthy personage did seldom pique himself on sounding a trumpet before his movements, no one was surprised at his moonlight departure, though some alarm was excited lest he had not made it empty-handed. So, in the language of the national ballad,

> Some ran to cupboard, and some to kist,
> But nought was away that could be mist.

All was in order, the key of the stable left above the door, and that of the iron grate in the inside of the lock. In short, the retreat had been made with scrupulous attention to the security of the garrison, and so far Christie left them nothing to complain of.

The safety of the premises was ascertained by Halbert, who, instead of catching up a gun or crossbow, and sallying out for the day as had been his frequent custom, now, with a gravity beyond his years, took a survey of all around the tower, and then returned to the spence, or public apartment, in which, at the early hour of seven, the morning-meal was prepared.

There he found the Euphuist in the same elegant posture of abstruse calculation which he had exhibited on the preceding evening, his arms folded in the same angle, his eyes turned up to the same cobwebs, and his heels resting on the ground as before. Tired of this affectation of indolent importance, and not much flattered with his guest's persevering in it to the last, Halbert resolved at once to break the ice, being determined to know what circumstance had brought to the Tower of Glendinning a guest at once so supercilious and so silent.

"Sir Knight," he said with some firmness, "I have twice given you good morning, to which the absence of your mind hath, I presume, prevented you from yielding attention, or from making return. This exchange of courtesy is at your pleasure to give or withhold—But, as what I have farther to say concerns your comfort and your motions in an especial manner, I will entreat you to give me some signs of attention, that I may be sure I am not wasting my words on a monumental image."

At this unexpected address, Sir Piercie Shafton opened his eyes, and afforded the speaker a broad stare; but as Halbert returned the glance without either confusion or dismay, the knight thought proper to change his posture, draw in his legs, raise his eyes, fix them on young Glendinning, and assume the appearance of one who listens to what is said to him. Nay, to make his purpose more evident, he gave voice to his resolution in these words, "Speak! we do hear."

"Sir Knight," said the youth, "it is the custom of this Halidome, or patrimony of St Mary's, to trouble with inquiries no guests who receive our hospitality, providing they tarry in our house only for a single revolution of the sun. We know that both criminals and debtors come hither for sanctuary, and we scorn to extort from the pilgrim,

whom chance may make our guest, an avowal of the cause of his pilgrimage and penance. But when one so high above our rank as yourself, Sir Knight, and especially one to whom the possession of such pre-eminence is not indifferent, shews his determination to be our guest for a longer time, it is our usage to inquire of him whence he comes, and what is the cause of his journey?"

The English knight gaped twice or thrice before he answered, and then replied in a bantering tone, "Truly, good villagio, your question hath in it somewhat of embarrassment, for you ask me of things concerning which I am not as yet altogether determined what answer I may find it convenient to make. Let it suffice thee, kind juvenal, that thou hast the Lord Abbot's authority for treating me to the best of that power of thine, which, indeed, may not always so well suffice for my accommodation as either of us would desire."

"I must have a more precise answer than this, Sir Knight," said the young Glendinning.

"Friend," said the knight, "be not outrageous. It may suit your northern manners thus to press harshly upon the secrets of thy betters; but believe me, that even as the lute, struck by an unskilful hand, doth produce discords, so——" At this moment the door of the apartment opened, and Mary Avenel presented herself—"But who can talk of discords," said the knight, assuming his complimentary vein and humour, "when the soul of harmony descends upon us in the presence of surpassing beauty! For even as foxes, wolves, and other animals void of sense and reason, do fly from the presence of the resplendent sun of heaven when he arises in his glory, so do strife, wrath, and all ireful passions retreat, and, as it were, scud away, from the face which now beams upon us, with power to compose our angry passions, illuminate our errors and difficulties, soothe our wounded minds, and lull to rest our disorderly apprehensions; for as the heat and warmth of the eye of day is to the material and physical world, so is the eye which I now bow down before to that of the intellectual microcosm."

He concluded with a profound bow; and Mary Avenel, gazing from one to the other, and plainly seeing that something was amiss, could only say, "For heaven's sake, what is the meaning of this?"

The newly-acquired tact and intelligence of her foster-brother was as yet insufficient to enable him to give an answer. He was quite uncertain how he ought to deal with a guest, who, preserving a singularly high tone of assumed superiority and importance, seemed nevertheless so little serious in what he said, that it was quite impossible to discern with accuracy whether he was in jest or earnest.

Forming, however, the internal resolution to bring Sir Piercie Shafton to a reckoning at a more fit place and season, he resolved to prosecute the matter no farther at present; and the entrance of his mother with the damsel of the Mill, and the return of the honest Miller from the stack-yard, where he had been numbering and calculating the probable amount of the season's grist, rendered farther discussion impossible for the moment.

In the course of the calculation it could not but strike the man of meal and grindstones, that, after the church's dues were paid, and after all which he himself could by any means deduct from the crop, still the residue which must revert to Dame Glendinning could not be less than considerable. I wot not if this led the honest Miller to nourish any plans similar to those adopted by Elspeth; but it is certain that he accepted with grateful alacrity an invitation which the dame gave to his daughter, to remain a week or two as her guest at Glendearg.

The principal persons being thus in high good humour with each other, all business gave place to the hilarity of the morning repast; and so much did Sir Piercie appear gratified by the attention which was paid to every word that he uttered by the nut-brown Mysie, that, notwithstanding his high birth and distinguished quality, he bestowed on her some of the more ordinary and second-rate tropes of his elocution.

Mary Avenel, when relieved from the awkwardness of feeling the full weight of his conversation addressed to herself, enjoyed it much more; and the good knight, encouraged by those conciliating marks of approbation from the sex, for whose sake he cultivated his oratorical talents, made speedy intimation of his purpose to be more communicative than he had shewn himself in his conversation with Halbert Glendinning, and gave them to understand, that it was in consequence of some pressing danger that he was at present their involuntary guest.

The conclusion of the breakfast was a signal for the separation of the company. The Miller went to prepare for his departure; his daughter to arrange matters for her unexpected stay; Edward was summoned to consultation by Martin concerning some agricultural matter, in which Halbert could not be brought to interest himself; the dame left the room upon her household concerns, and Mary was in the act of following her, when she suddenly recollected, that if she did so, the strange knight and Halbert must be left alone together, at the risk of another quarrel.

The maiden no sooner observed this circumstance, than she instantly returned from the door of the apartment, and, seating herself in a small stone window-seat, resolved to maintain that curb which she was sensible her presence imposed on Halbert Glendinning, of whose quick temper she had some apprehensions.

The stranger marked her motions, and, either interpreting them as inviting his society, or obedient to those laws of gallantry which permitted him not to leave a lady in silence and solitude, he instantly placed himself near to her side and opened the conversation as follows:—

"Credit me, fair lady," he said, addressing Mary Avenel, "it much rejoiceth me, being, as I am, a banished man from the delights of mine own country, that I shall find here, in this obscure and silvan cottage of the north, a fair form and a candid soul, with whom I may explain my mutual sentiments. And let me pray you in particular, lovely lady, that, according to the universal custom now predominant in our court, the garden of superior wits, you will exchange with me some epithet whereby you may mark my devotion to your service. Be henceforward named, for example, my Protection, and let me be your Affability."

"Our northern and country manners, Sir Knight, do not permit us to exchange epithets with those to whom we are strangers," replied Mary Avenel.

"Nay, but see now," said the knight, "how you are startled! even as the unbroken steed, which

swerves aside from the shaking of a hankerchief, though he must in time encounter the waving of a pennon. This courtly exchange of epithets of honour, is no more than the compliments which pass between valour and beauty, wherever they meet, and under whatever circumstances. Elizabeth of England herself calls Philip Sydney her Courage, and he in return calls that princess his Inspiration. Wherefore, my fair Protection, for by such epithet it shall be mine to denominate you——"

"Not without the young lady's consent, sir!" interrupted Halbert; "most truly do I hope your courtly and quaint breeding will not so far prevail over the more ordinary rules of civil behaviour."

"Fair tenant of an indifferent copyhold," replied the knight, with the same coolness and civility of mien, but in a tone somewhat more lofty than he used to the young lady, "we do not in the southern parts, much intermingle discourse, save with those with whom we may stand on some footing of equality; and I must, in all discretion, remind you, that the necessity which makes us inhabitants of the same cabin, doth not place us otherwise on a level with each other."

"By Saint Mary," replied young Glendinning, "it is my thought that it does; for plain men hold, that he who asks the shelter is indebted to him who gives it; and so far, therefore, is our rank equalized while this roof covers us both."

"Thou art altogether deceived," answered Sir Piercie; "and that thou mayst fully adapt thyself to our relative condition, know that I account not myself thy guest, but that of thy master, the Lord Abbot of St Mary's, who, for reasons best known to himself and me, chooseth to administer his hospitality to me through the means of thee, his servant and vassal, who art, therefore, in good truth, as passive an instrument of my accommodation as this ill-made and rugged joint-stool on which I sit, or as the wooden trencher from which I eat my coarse commons. Wherefore," he added, turning to Mary, "fairest mistress, or rather, as I said before, most lovely Protection[1]——"

Mary Avenel was about to reply to him, when the stern, fierce, and resentful expression of voice and countenance with which Halbert exclaimed, "Not from the King of Scotland, did he live, would I brook such terms!" induced her to throw herself between him and the stranger, exclaiming, "For God's sake, Halbert, beware what you do!"

"Fear not, fairest Protection," replied Sir Piercie, with the utmost serenity, "that I can be provoked by this rustical and mistaught juvenal to do aught misbecoming your presence or mine own dignity; for as soon shall the gunner's linstock give fire unto the icicle, as the spark of passion inflame my blood, tempered as it is to serenity by the respect due to the presence of my gracious Protection."

"You may well call her your protection, Sir Knight," said Halbert; "by Saint Andrew, it is the only sensible word I have heard you speak! But we may meet where her protection shall no longer afford you shelter."

"Fairest Protection," continued the courtier, not even honouring with a look, far less with a direct reply, the threat of the incensed Halbert, "doubt not that thy faithful Affability will be more commoved by the speech of this rudesby, than the bright and serene moon is perturbed by the baying of the cottage-cur, proud of the height of his own dung-hill, which, in his conceit, lifteth him nearer unto the majestic luminary."

To what lengths so unsavoury a simile might have driven Halbert's indignation, is left uncertain; for at that moment Edward rushed into the apartment with the intelligence that two most important officers of the Convent, the Kitchener and Refectioner, were just arrived with a sumpter-mule, loaded with provisions, announcing that the Lord Abbot, the Sub-Prior, and the Sacristan, were on their way thither. A circumstance so very extraordinary had never been recorded in the annals of Saint Mary's, or in the traditions of Glendearg, though there was a faint legendary report that a certain Abbot had dined there in old days, after having been bewildered in a hunting expedition amongst the wilds which lie to the northward. But that the present Lord Abbot should have taken a voluntary journey to so wild and dreary a spot, the very Kamtschatka of the Halidome, was a thing never dreamt of; and the news excited the greatest surprise in all the members of the family saving Halbert alone.

This fiery youth was too full of the insult he had received to think of any thing as unconnected with it. "I am glad of it," he exclaimed; "I am glad the Abbot comes hither. I will know of him by what right this stranger is sent hither to domineer over us under our father's roof, as if we were slaves and not freemen. I will tell the proud priest to his beard——"

"Alas! alas! my brother," said Edward, "think what these words may cost thee!"

"And what will, or what can they cost me," said Halbert, "that I should sacrifice my human feelings and my justifiable resentment to the fear of what the Abbot can do?"

"Our mother—our mother!" exclaimed Edward; "think, if she is deprived of her home, expelled from her property, how can you amend what your rashness may ruin?"

"It is too true, by Heaven!" said Halbert striking his forehead. Then, stamping his foot against the floor to express the full energy of the passion to which he dared no longer give vent, he turned round and left the apartment.

Mary Avenel looked at the stranger knight, while she was endeavouring to frame a request that he would not report the intemperate violence of her foster-brother to the prejudice of his family, in the mind of the Abbot. But Sir Piercie, the very pink of courtesy, conjectured her meaning from her embarrassment, and waited not to be entreated.

"Credit me, fairest Protection," said he, "your Affability is less than capable of seeing or hearing, far less of reciting or reiterating, aught of an unseemly nature which may have chanced while I enjoyed the Elysium of your presence. The winds of idle passion may indeed rudely agitate the bosom of the rude; but the heart of the courtier is polished to resist them. As the frozen lake receives not the influence of the breeze, even so——"

The voice of Dame Glendinning, in shrill summons, here demanded Mary Avenel's attendance, who instantly obeyed, not a little glad to escape from the compliments and similies of this court-like gallant. Nor was it apparently less a relief on

[1] See Note F. *Epithets.*

his part; for no sooner was she past the threshold of the room, than he exchanged the look of formal and elaborate politeness which had accompanied each word he had uttered hitherto, for an expression of the utmost lassitude and ennui; and after indulging in one or two portentous yawns, broke forth into a soliloquy.

"What the foul fiend sent this wench hither? As if it were not sufficient plague to be harboured in a hovel that would hardly serve for a dog's kennel in England, baited by a rude peasant-boy, and dependent on the faith of a mercenary ruffian, but I cannot even have time to muse over my own mishap, but must come aloft, frisk, fidget, and make speeches, to please this pale hectic phantom, because she has gentle blood in her veins! By mine honour, setting prejudice aside, the mill-wench is the more attractive of the two — But patienza, Piercie Shafton; thou must not lose thy well-earned claim to be accounted a devout servant of the fair sex, a witty-brained, prompt, and accomplished courtier. Rather thank heaven, Piercie Shafton, which hath sent thee a subject, wherein, without derogating from thy rank, (since the honours of the Avenel family are beyond dispute,) thou mayest find a whetstone for thy witty compliments, a strop whereon to sharpen thine acute ingine, a butt whereat to shoot the arrows of thy gallantry. For even as a Bilboa blade, the more it is rubbed, the brighter and the sharper will it prove, so —— But what need I waste my stock of similitudes in holding converse with myself? — Yonder comes the monkish retinue, like some half score of crows winging their way slowly up the valley — I hope, a'gad, they have not forgotten my trunk-mails of apparel amid the ample provision they have made for their own belly-timber — Mercy, a'gad, I were finely holped up if the vesture has miscarried among the thievish Borderers!"

Stung by this reflection, he ran hastily down stairs, and caused his horse to be saddled, that he might, as soon as possible, ascertain this important point, by meeting the Lord Abbot and his retinue as they came up the glen. He had not ridden a mile before he met them advancing with the slowness and decorum which became persons of their dignity and profession. The knight failed not to greet the Lord Abbot with all the formal compliments with which men of rank at that period exchanged courtesies. He had the good fortune to find that his mails were numbered among the train of baggage which attended upon the party; and, satisfied in that particular, he turned his horse's head, and accompanied the Abbot to the Tower of Glendearg.

Great, in the meanwhile, had been the turmoil of the good Dame Elspeth and her coadjutors, to prepare for the fitting reception of the Father Lord Abbot and his retinue. The monks had indeed taken care not to trust too much to the state of her pantry; but she was not the less anxious to make such additions as might enable her to claim the thanks of her feudal lord and spiritual father. Meeting Halbert, as, with his blood on fire, he returned from his altercation with her guest, she commanded him instantly to go forth to the hill, and not to return without venison; reminding him that he was apt enough to go thither for his own pleasure, and must now do so for the credit of the house.

The Miller, who was now hastening his journey homewards, promised to send up some salmon by his own servant. Dame Elspeth, who by this time thought she had guests enough, had begun to repent of her invitation to poor Mysie, and was just considering by what means, short of giving offence, she could send off the Maid of the Mill behind her father, and adjourn all her own aerial architecture till some future opportunity, when this unexpected generosity on the part of the sire rendered any present attempt to return his daughter on his hands too highly ungracious to be farther thought on. So the Miller departed alone on his homeward journey.

Dame Elspeth's sense of hospitality proved in this instance its own reward; for Mysie had dwelt too near the Convent to be altogether ignorant of the noble art of cookery, which her father patronized to the extent of consuming on festival days such dainties as his daughter could prepare in emulation of the luxuries of the Abbot's kitchen. Laying aside, therefore, her holiday kirtle, and adopting a dress more suitable to the occasion, the good-humoured maiden bared her snowy arms above the elbows; and, as Elspeth acknowledged, in the language of the time and country, took "entire and aefauld part with her" in the labours of the day; shewing unparalleled talent, and indefatigable industry, in the preparation of *mortreux*, *blanc-manger*, and heaven knows what delicacies besides, which Dame Glendinning, unassisted by her skill, dared not even have dreamt of presenting.

Leaving this able substitute in the kitchen, and regretting that Mary Avenel was so brought up, that she could intrust nothing to her care, unless it might be seeing the great chamber strewed with rushes, and ornamented with such flowers and branches as the season afforded, Dame Elspeth hastily donned her best attire, and with a beating heart presented herself at the door of her little tower, to make her obeisance to the Lord Abbot as he crossed her humble threshold. Edward stood by his mother, and felt the same palpitation, which his philosophy was at a loss to account for. He was yet to learn how long it is ere our reason is enabled to triumph over the force of external circumstances, and how much our feelings are affected by novelty, and blunted by use and habit.

On the present occasion, he witnessed with wonder and awe the approach of some half-score of riders, sober men upon sober palfreys, muffled in their long black garments, and only relieved by their white scapularies, shewing more like a funeral procession than aught else, and not quickening their pace beyond that which permitted easy conversation and easy digestion. The sobriety of the scene was indeed somewhat enlivened by the presence of Sir Piercie Shafton, who, to shew that his skill in the manege was not inferior to his other accomplishments, kept alternately pressing and checking his gay courser, forcing him to piaffe, to caracole, to passage, and to do all the other feats of the school, to the great annoyance of the Lord Abbot, the wonted sobriety of whose palfrey became at length discomposed by the vivacity of its companion, while the dignitary kept crying out in bodily alarm, "I do pray you, sir — Sir Knight — good now, Sir Piercie — Be quiet, Benedict, there is a good steed — soh, poor fellow!" and uttering all the other precatory and soothing exclamations by which a timid horseman usually bespeaks the favour of a

frisky companion, or of his own unquiet nag, and concluding the bead-roll with a sincere *Deo gratias* so soon as he alighted in the court-yard of the Tower of Glendearg.

The inhabitants unanimously knelt down to kiss the hand of the Lord Abbot, a ceremony which even the monks were often condemned to. Good Abbot Boniface was too much fluttered by the incidents of the latter part of his journey, to go through this ceremony with much solemnity, or indeed with much patience. He kept wiping his brow with a snow-white handkerchief with one hand, while another was abandoned to the homage of his vassals; and then signing the cross with his outstretched arm, and exclaiming, "Bless ye — bless ye, my children!" he hastened into the house, and murmured not a little at the darkness and steepness of the rugged winding stair, whereby he at length scaled the spence destined for his entertainment, and, overcome with fatigue, threw himself, I do not say into an easy chair, but into the easiest the apartment afforded.

CHAPTER XVI.

> A courtier extraordinary, who by diet
> Of meats and drinks, his temperate exercise,
> Choice music, frequent bath, his horary shifts
> Of shirts and waistcoats, means to immortalize
> Mortality itself, and makes the essence
> Of his whole happiness the trim of court.
>
> *Magnetic Lady.*

When the Lord Abbot had suddenly and superciliously vanished from the eyes of his expectant vassals, the Sub-Prior made amends for the negligence of his principal, by the kind and affectionate greeting which he gave to all the members of the family, but especially to Dame Elspeth, her foster-daughter, and her son Edward. "Where," he even condescended to inquire, "is that naughty Nimrod, Halbert? — He hath not yet, I trust, turned, like his great prototype, his hunting-spear against man!"

"O no, an it please your reverence," said Dame Glendinning, "Halbert is up at the glen to get some venison, or surely he would not have been absent when such a day of honour dawned upon me and mine."

"Oh, to get savoury meat, such as our soul loveth," muttered the Sub-Prior; "it has been at times an acceptable gift. — I bid you good morrow, my good dame, as I must attend upon his lordship the Father Abbot."

"And O, reverend sir," said the good widow, detaining him, "if it might be your pleasure to take part with us if there is any thing wrong; and if there is any thing wanted, to say that it is just coming, or to make some excuses your learning best knows how. Every bit of vassail and silver work have we been spoiled of since Pinkie Cleuch, when I lost poor Simon Glendinning, that was the warst of a'."

"Never mind — never fear," said the Sub-Prior, gently extricating his garment from the anxious grasp of Dame Elspeth, "the Refectioner has with him the Abbot's plate and drinking cups; and I pray you to believe that whatever is short in your entertainment will be deemed amply made up in your good-will."

So saying, he escaped from her and went into the spence, where such preparations as haste permitted were making for the noon collation of the Abbot and the English knight. Here he found the Lord Abbot, for whom a cushion, composed of all the plaids in the house, had been unable to render Simon's huge elbow-chair a soft or comfortable place of rest.

"Benedicite!" said Abbot Boniface, "now marry fie upon these hard benches with all my heart — they are as uneasy as the *scabella* of our novices. Saint Jude be with us, Sir Knight, how have you contrived to pass over the night in this dungeon? An your bed was no softer than your seat, you might as well have slept on the stone couch of Saint Pacomius. After trotting a full ten miles, a man needs a softer seat than has fallen to my hard lot."

With sympathizing faces, the Sacristan and the Refectioner ran to raise the Lord Abbot, and to adjust his seat to his mind, which was at length accomplished in some sort, although he continued alternately to bewail his fatigue, and to exult in the conscious sense of having discharged an arduous duty. "You errant cavaliers," said he, addressing the knight, "may now perceive that others have their travail and their toils to undergo as well as your honoured faculty. And this I will say for myself and the soldiers of Saint Mary, among whom I may be termed captain, that it is not our wont to flinch from the heat of the service, or to withdraw from the good fight. No, by Saint Mary! — no sooner did I learn that you were here, and dared not for certain reasons come to the Monastery, where, with as good will, and with more convenience, we might have given you a better reception, than, striking the table with my hammer, I called a brother — Timothy, said I, let them saddle Benedict — let them saddle my black palfrey, and bid the Sub-Prior and some half-score of attendants be in readiness to-morrow after matins — we would ride to Glendearg. — Brother Timothy stared, thinking, I imagine, that his ears had scarce done him justice — but I repeated my commands, and said, Let the Kitchener and Refectioner go before to aid the poor vassals to whom the place belongs in making a suitable collation. So that you will consider, good Sir Piercie, our mutual incommodities, and forgive whatever you may find amiss."

"By my faith," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "there is nothing to forgive — If you spiritual warriors have to submit to the grievous incommodities which your lordship narrates, it would ill become me, a sinful and secular man, to complain of a bed as hard as a board, of broth which relished as if made of burnt wool, of flesh, which, in its sable and singed shape, seemed to put me on a level with Richard Cœur-de-Lion, when he ate up the head of a Moor carbonadoed, and of other viands savouring rather of the rusticity of this northern region."

"By the good Saints, sir," said the Abbot, somewhat touched in point of his character for hospitality, of which he was in truth a most faithful and zealous professor, "it grieves me to the heart that you have found our vassals no better provided for your reception — Yet I crave leave to observe, that if Sir Piercie Shafton's affairs had permitted him to honour with his company our poor house of Saint Mary's, he might have had less to complain of in respect of easements."

"To give your lordship the reasons," said Sir

Piercie Shafton, "why I could not at this present time approach your dwelling, or avail myself of its well known and undoubted hospitality, craves either some delay, or," looking around him, "a limited audience."

The Lord Abbot immediately issued his mandate to the Refectioner: "Hie thee to the kitchen, Brother Hilarius, and there make inquiry of our brother the Kitchener, within what time he opines that our collation may be prepared, since sin and sorrow it were, considering the hardships of this noble and gallant knight, no whit mentioning or weighing those we ourselves have endured, if we were now either to advance or retard the hour of refection beyond the time when the viands are fit to be set before us."

Brother Hilarius parted with an eager alertness to execute the will of his Superior, and returned with the assurance, that punctually at one afternoon would the collation be ready.

"Before that time," said the accurate Refectioner, "the wafers, flamms, and pastry-meat, will scarce have had the just degree of fire which learned pottingers prescribe as fittest for the body; and if it should be past one o'clock, were it but ten minutes, our brother the Kitchener opines, that the haunch of venison would suffer in spite of the skill of the little turn-broche whom he has recommended to your holiness by his praises."

"How!" said the Abbot, "a haunch of venison! —from whence comes that dainty? I remember not thou didst intimate its presence in thy hamper of vivers."

"So please your holiness and lordship," said the Refectioner, "he is a son of the woman of the house who hath shot it and sent it in — killed but now; yet, as the animal heat hath not left the body, the Kitchener undertakes it shall eat as tender as a young chicken — and this youth hath a special gift in shooting deer, and never misses the heart or the brain; so that the blood is not driven through the flesh, as happens too often with us. It is a hart of grease — your holiness has seldom seen such a haunch."

"Silence, Brother Hilarius," said the Abbot, wiping his mouth; "it is not beseeming our order to talk of food so earnestly, especially as we must oft have our animal powers exhausted by fasting, and be accessible (as being ever mere mortals) to those signs of longing" (he again wiped his mouth) "which arise on the mention of victuals to an hungry man. — Minute down, however, the name of that youth — it is fitting merit should be rewarded, and he shall hereafter be a *frater ad succurrendum* in the kitchen and buttery."

"Alas! reverend Father, and my good lord," replied the Refectioner, "I did inquire after the youth, and I learn he is one who prefers the casque to the cowl, and the sword of the flesh to the weapons of the spirit."

"And if it be so," said the Abbot, "see that thou retain him as a deputy-keeper and man-at-arms, and not as a lay brother of the Monastery — for old Tallboy, our forester, waxes dim-eyed, and hath twice spoiled a noble buck, by hitting him unwarily on the haunch. Ah! 'tis a foul fault, the abusing by evil-killing, evil-dressing, evil-appetite, or otherwise, the good creatures indulged to us for our use. Wherefore, secure us the service of this youth, Brother Hilarius, in the way that may best suit him. — And now, Sir Piercie Shafton, since the fates have assigned us a space of well-nigh an hour, ere we dare hope to enjoy more than the vapour or savour of our repast, may I pray you, of your courtesy, to tell me the cause of this visit; and, above all, to inform us, why you will not approach our more pleasant and better furnished *hospitium?*"

"Reverend Father, and my very good lord," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "it is well known to your wisdom, that there are stone walls which have ears, and that secrecy is to be looked to in matters which concern a man's head."

The Abbot signed to his attendants, excepting the Sub-Prior, to leave the room, and then said, "Your valour, Sir Piercie, may freely unburden yourself before our faithful friend and counsellor Father Eustace, the benefits of whose advice we may too soon lose, inasmuch as his merits will speedily recommend him to an higher station, in which, we trust, he may find the blessing of a friend and adviser as valuable as himself, since I may say of him, as our claustral rhyme goeth,[1]

> 'Dixit Abbas ad prioris,
> Tu es homo boni moris,
> Quia semper sanioris
> Mihi das concilia.'

Indeed," he added, "the office of Sub-Prior is altogether beneath our dear brother; nor can we elevate him unto that of Prior, which, for certain reasons, is at present kept vacant amongst us. Howbeit, Father Eustace is fully possessed of my confidence, and worthy of yours, and well may it be said of him, *Intravit in secretis nostris.*"

Sir Piercie Shafton bowed to the reverend brethren, and, heaving a sigh, as if he would have burst his steel cuirass, he thus commenced his speech: —

"Certes, reverend sirs, I may well heave such a suspiration, who have, as it were, exchanged heaven for purgatory, leaving the lightsome sphere of the royal court of England, for a remote nook in this inaccessible desert — quitting the tilt-yard, where I was ever ready among my compeers to splinter a lance, either for the love of honour, or for the honour of love, in order to couch my knightly spear against base and pilfering besognios and marauders — exchanging the lighted halls, wherein I used nimbly to pace the swift coranto, or to move with a loftier grace in the stately galliard, for this rugged and decayed dungeon of rusty-coloured stone — quitting the gay theatre, for the solitary chimney-nook of a Scottish dog-house — bartering the sounds of the soul-ravishing lute, and the love-awakening viol-de-gamba, for the discordant squeak of a northern bagpipe — above all, exchanging the smiles of those beauties, who form a galaxy around the throne of England, for the cold courtesy of an untaught damsel, and the bewildered stare of a miller's maiden. More might I say, of the exchange of the conversation of gallant knights and gay courtiers of mine own order and capacity, whose conceits are bright and vivid as the lightning, for that of monks and churchmen — but it were discourteous to urge that topic."

The Abbot listened to this list of complaints with great round eyes, which evinced no exact intelli-

[1] The rest of this doggerel rhyme may be found in Fosbrooke's learned work on British Monachism.

gence of the orator's meaning; and when the knight paused to take breath, he looked with a doubtful and inquiring eye at the Sub-Prior, not well knowing in what tone he should reply to an exordium so extraordinary. The Sub-Prior accordingly stepped in to the relief of his principal.

"We deeply sympathize with you, Sir Knight, in the several mortifications and hardships to which fate has subjected you, particularly in that which has thrown you into the society of those, who, as they were conscious they deserved not such an honour, so neither did they at all desire it. But all this goes little way to expound the cause of this train of disasters, or, in plainer words, the reason which has compelled you into a situation having so few charms for you."

"Gentle and reverend sir," replied the knight, "forgive an unhappy person, who, in giving a history of his miseries, dilateth upon them extremely, even as he who, having fallen from a precipice, looketh upward to measure the height from which he hath been precipitated."

"Yea, but," said Father Eustace, "methinks it were wiser in him to tell those who come to lift him up, which of his bones have been broken."

"You, reverend sir," said the knight, "have, in the encounter of our wits, made a fair attaint; whereas I may be in some sort said to have broken my staff across.[1] Pardon me, grave sir, that I speak the language of the tilt-yard, which is doubtless strange to your reverend ears. — Ah! brave resort of the noble, the fair, and the gay! — Ah! throne of love, and citadel of honour! — Ah! celestial beauties, by whose bright eyes it is graced! Never more shall Piercie Shafton advance, as the centre of your radiant glances, couch his lance, and spur his horse at the sound of the spirit-stirring trumpets, nobly called the voice of war — never more shall he baffle his adversary's encounter boldly, break his spear dexterously, and, ambling around the lovely circle, receive the rewards with which beauty honours chivalry!"

Here he paused, wrung his hands, looked upwards, and seemed lost in contemplation of his own fallen fortunes.

"Mad, very mad," whispered the Abbot to the Sub-Prior; "I would we were fairly rid of him; for, of a truth, I expect he will proceed from raving to mischief — Were it not better to call up the rest of the brethren?"

But the Sub-Prior knew better than his Superior how to distinguish the jargon of affectation from the ravings of insanity, and although the extremity of the knight's passion seemed altogether fantastic, yet he was not ignorant to what extravagancies the fashion of the day can conduct its votaries.

Allowing, therefore, two minutes' space to permit the knight's enthusiastic feelings to exhaust themselves, he again gravely reminded him that the Lord Abbot had taken a journey, unwonted to his age and habits, solely to learn in what he could serve Sir Piercie Shafton — that it was altogether impossible he could do so without his receiving distinct information of the situation in which he had now sought refuge in Scotland. — "The day wore on," he observed, looking at the window; "and if the Abbot should be obliged to return to the Monastery without obtaining the necessary intelligence, the regret might be mutual, but the inconvenience was like to be all on Sir Piercie's own side."

The hint was not thrown away.

"O, goddess of courtesy!" said the knight, "can I have so far forgotten thy behests, as to make this good prelate's ease and time a sacrifice to my vain complaints! Know, then, most worthy, and not less worshipful, that I, your poor visiter and guest, am by birth nearly bound to the Piercie of Northumberland, whose fame is so widely blown through all parts of the world where English worth hath been known. Now, this present Earl of Northumberland, of whom I propose to give you the brief history——"

"It is altogether unnecessary," said the Abbot; "we know him to be a good and true nobleman, and a sworn upholder of our Catholic faith, in the spite of the heretical woman who now sits upon the throne of England. And it is specially as his kinsman, and as knowing that ye partake with him in such devout and faithful belief and adherence to our holy Mother Church, that we say to you, Sir Piercie Shafton, that ye be heartily welcome to us, and that, an we wist how, we would labour to do you good service in your extremity."

"For such kind offer I rest your most humble debtor," said Sir Piercie; "nor need I at this moment say more than that my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland, having devised with me and some others, the choice and picked spirits of the age, how and by what means the worship of God, according to the Catholic Church, might be again introduced into this distracted kingdom of England, (even as one deviseth, by the assistance of his friend, to catch and to bridle a runaway steed,) it pleased him so deeply to intrust me in those communications, that my personal safety becomes, as it were, entwined or complicated therewith. Natheless, as we have had sudden reason to believe, this Princess Elizabeth, who maintaineth around her a sort of counsellors skilful in tracking whatever schemes may be pursued for bringing her title into challenge, or for erecting again the discipline of the Catholic church, has obtained certain knowledge of the trains which we had laid before we could give fire unto them. Wherefore, my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland, thinking it best belike that one man should take both blame and shame for the whole, did lay the burden of all this trafficking upon my back; which load I am the rather content to bear, in that he hath always shewn himself my kind and honourable kinsman, as well as that my estate, I wot not how, hath of late been somewhat insufficient to maintain the expense of those braveries, wherewith it is incumbent on us, who are chosen and selected spirits, to distinguish ourselves from the vulgar."

"So that possibly," said the Sub-Prior, "your private affairs rendered a foreign journey less incommodious to you than it might have been to the noble earl, your right worthy cousin?"

"You are right, reverend sir," answered the courtier; "*rem acu* — you have touched the point with a needle — My cost and expenses had been indeed somewhat lavish at the late triumphs and

[1] *Attaint* was a term of tilting used to express the champion's having *attained* his mark, or, in other words, struck his lance straight and fair against the helmet or breast of his adversary. Whereas to break the lance across, intimated a total failure in directing the point of the weapon on the object of his aim.

tourneys, and the flat-capp'd citizens had shewn themselves unwilling to furnish my pocket for new gallantries for the honour of the nation, as well as for mine own peculiar glory — and, to speak truth, it was in some part the hope of seeing these matters amended that led me to desire a new world in England."

"So that the miscarriage of your public enterprise, with the derangement of your own private affairs," said the Sub-Prior, "have induced you to seek Scotland as a place of refuge?"

"*Rem acu*, once again," said Sir Piercie; "and not without good cause, since my neck, if I remained, might have been brought within the circumstances of a halter — and so speedy was my journey northward, that I had but time to exchange my peach-coloured doublet of Genoa velvet, thickly laid over with goldsmith's work, for this cuirass, which was made by Bonamico of Milan, and travelled northward with all speed, judging that I might do well to visit my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland, at one of his numerous castles. But as I posted towards Alnwick, even with the speed of a star, which, darting from its native sphere, shoots wildly downwards, I was met at Northallerton by one Henry Vaughan, a servant of my right honourable kinsman, who shewed me, that as then I might not with safety come to his presence, seeing that, in obedience to orders from his court, he was obliged to issue out letters for my incarceration."

"This," said the Abbot, "seems but hard measure on the part of your honourable kinsman."

"It might be so judged, my lord," replied Sir Piercie; "nevertheless, I will stand to the death for the honour of my Right Honourable Cousin of Northumberland. Also, Henry Vaughan gave me, from my said cousin, a good horse, and a purse of gold, with two Border-prickers, as they are called, for my guides, who conducted me, by such roads and by-paths as have never been seen since the days of Sir Lancelot and Sir Tristrem, into this kingdom of Scotland, and to the house of a certain baron, or one who holds the style of such, called Julian Avenel, with whom I found such reception as the place and party could afford."

"And that," said the Abbot, "must have been right wretched; "for, to judge from the appetite which Julian sheweth when abroad, he hath not, I judge, over-abundant provision at home."

"You are right, sir — your reverence is in the right," continued Sir Piercie; "we had but lenten fare, and, what was worse, a score to clear at the departure; for though this Julian Avenel called us to no reckoning, yet he did so extravagantly admire the fashion of my poniard — the *poignet* being of silver exquisitely hatched, and indeed the weapon being altogether a piece of exceeding rare device and beauty — that in faith I could not for very shame's sake but pray his acceptance of it; words which he gave me not the trouble of repeating twice, before he had stuck it into his greasy buff-belt, where, credit me, reverend sir, it shewed more like a butcher's knife than a gentleman's dagger."

"So goodly a gift might at least have purchased you a few days' hospitality," said Father Eustace.

"Reverend sir," said Sir Piercie, "had I abidden with him, I should have been complimented out of every remnant of my wardrobe — actually flayed, by the hospitable gods I swear it! Sir, he secured my spare doublet, and had a pluck at my galligaskins — I was enforced to beat a retreat before I was altogether unrigged. That Border knave, his serving-man, had a pluck at me too, and usurped a scarlet cassock and steel cuirass belonging to the page of my body, whom I was fain to leave behind me. In good time I received a letter from my Right Honourable Cousin, shewing me that he had written to you in my behalf, and sent to your charge two mails filled with wearing apparel — namely, my rich crimson silk doublet, slashed out and lined with cloth of gold, which I wore at the last revels, with baldric and trimmings to correspond — also two pair black silk slops, with hanging garters of carnation silk — also the flesh-coloured silken doublet, with the trimmings of fur, in which I danced the salvage man at the Gray's-Inn mummery — also ——"

"Sir Knight," said the Sub-Prior, "I pray you to spare the farther inventory of your wardrobe. The monks of Saint Mary's are no free-booting barons, and whatever part of your vestments arrived at our house, have been this day faithfully brought hither, with the mails which contained them. I may presume from what has been said, as we have indeed been given to understand by the Earl of Northumberland, that your desire is to remain for the present as unknown and as unnoticed, as may be consistent with your high worth and distinction?"

"Alas, reverend father!" replied the courtier, "a blade when it is in the scabbard cannot give lustre, a diamond when it is in the casket cannot give light, and worth, when it is compelled by circumstances to obscure itself, cannot draw observation — my retreat can only attract the admiration of those few to whom circumstances permit its displaying itself."

"I conceive now, my venerable father and lord," said the Sub-Prior, "that your wisdom will assign such a course of conduct to this noble knight, as may be alike consistent with his safety, and with the weal of the community. For you wot well, that perilous strides have been made in these audacious days, to the destruction of all ecclesiastical foundations, and that our holy community has been repeatedly menaced. Hitherto they have found no flaw in our raiment; but a party, friendly as well to the Queen of England, as to the heretical doctrines of the schismatical church, or even to worse and wilder forms of heresy, prevails now at the court of our sovereign, who dare not yield to her suffering clergy the protection she would gladly extend to them."

"My lord, and reverend sir," said the knight, "I will gladly relieve you of my presence, while ye canvass this matter at your freedom; and to speak truly, I am desirous to see in what case the chamberlain of my noble kinsman hath found my wardrobe, and how he hath packed the same, and whether it has suffered from the journey — there are four suits of as pure and elegant device as ever the fancy of a fair lady doated upon, every one having a treble, and appropriate change of ribbons, trimmings, and fringes, which, in case of need, may as it were renew each of them, and multiply the four into twelve. — There is also my sad-coloured riding-suit, and three cut-work shirts with

falling bands — I pray you, pardon me — I must needs see how matters stand with them without farther dallying."

Thus speaking, he left the room; and the Sub-Prior, looking after him significantly, added, "Where the treasure is will the heart be also."

"Saint Mary preserve our wits!" said the Abbot, stunned with the knight's abundance of words; "were man's brains ever so stuffed with silk and broadcloth, cut-work, and I wot not what besides! And what could move the Earl of Northumberland to assume for his bosom counsellor, in matters of depth and danger, such a feather-brained coxcomb as this?"

"Had he been other than what he is, venerable father," said the Sub-Prior, "he had been less fitted for the part of scape-goat, to which his Right Honourable Cousin had probably destined him from the commencement, in case of their plot failing. I know something of this Piercie Shafton. The legitimacy of his mother's descent from the Piercie family, the point on which he is most jealous, hath been called in question. If hairbrained courage, and an outrageous spirit of gallantry, can make good his pretensions to the high lineage he claims, these qualities have never been denied him. For the rest, he is one of the ruffling gallants of the time, like Rowland Yorke, Stukely,[1] and others, who wear out their fortunes, and endanger their lives, in idle braveries, in order that they may be esteemed the only choice gallants of the time; and afterwards endeavour to repair their estate, by engaging in the desperate plots and conspiracies which wiser heads have devised. To use one of his own conceited similitudes, such courageous fools resemble hawks, which the wiser conspirator keeps hooded and blinded on his wrist until the quarry is on the wing, and who are then flown at them."

"Saint Mary," said the Abbot, "he were an evil guest to introduce into our quiet household. Our young monks make bustle enough, and more than is beseeming God's servants, about their outward attire already — this knight were enough to turn their brains, from the *Vestiarius* down to the very scullion boy."

"A worse evil might follow," said the Sub-Prior: "in these bad days, the patrimony of the church is bought and sold, forfeited and distrained, as if it were the unhallowed soil appertaining to a secular baron. Think what penalty awaits us, were we convicted of harbouring a rebel to her whom they call the Queen of England! There would neither be wanting Scottish parasites to beg the lands of the foundation, nor an army from England to burn and harry the Halidome. The men of Scotland were once Scotsmen, firm and united in their love of their country, and throwing every other consideration aside when the frontier was menaced — now they are — what shall I call them — the one part French, the other part English, considering their dear native country merely as a prize-fighting stage, upon which foreigners are welcome to decide their quarrels."

"Benedicite!" replied the Abbot, "they are indeed slippery and evil times."

"And therefore," said Father Eustace, "we must walk warily — we must not, for example, bring this man — this Sir Piercie Shafton, to our house of Saint Mary's."

"But how then shall we dispose of him?" replied the Abbot; "bethink thee that he is a sufferer for holy Church's sake — that his patron, the Earl of Northumberland, hath been our friend, and that, lying so near us, he may work us weal or wo according as we deal with his kinsman."

"And, accordingly," said the Sub-Prior, "for these reasons, as well as for discharge of the great duty of Christian charity, I would protect and relieve this man. Let him not go back to Julian Avenel — that unconscientious baron would not stick to plunder the exiled stranger — Let him remain here — the spot is secluded, and if the accommodation be beneath his quality, discovery will become the less likely. We will make such means for his convenience as we can devise."

"Will he be persuaded, thinkest thou?" said the Abbot; "I will leave my own travelling bed for his repose, and send up a suitable easy-chair."

"With such easements," said the Sub-Prior, "he must not complain; and then, if threatened by any sudden danger, he can soon come down to the sanctuary, where we will harbour him in secret until means can be devised of dismissing him in safety."

"Were we not better," said the Abbot, "send him on to the court, and get rid of him at once?"

"Ay, but at the expense of our friends — this butterfly may fold his wings, and lie under cover in the cold air of Glendearg; but were he at Holyrood, he would, did his life depend on it, expand his spangled drapery in the eyes of the queen and court — Rather than fail of distinction, he would sue for love to our gracious sovereign — the eyes of all men would be upon him in the course of three short days, and the international peace of the two ends of the island endangered for a creature, who, like a silly moth, cannot abstain from fluttering round a light."

"Thou hast prevailed with me, Father Eustace," said the Abbot, "and it will go hard but I improve on thy plan — I will send up in secret, not only household stuff, but wine and wassell-bread. There is a young swankie here who shoots venison well. I will give him directions to see that the knight lacks none."

"Whatever accommodation he can have, which infers not a risk of discovery," said the Sub-Prior, "it is our duty to afford him."

"Nay," said the Abbot, "we will do more, and will instantly despatch a servant express to the keeper of our revestiary to send us such things as he may want, even this night. See it done, good father."

"I will," answered Father Eustace; "but I hear the gull clamorous for some one to truss his points.[2] He will be fortunate if he lights on any one here who can do him the office of groom of the chamber."

"I would he would appear," said the Abbot, "for here comes the Refectioner with the collation — By my faith, the ride hath given me a sharp appetite!"

See Note G. *Rowland Yorke, and Stukely.*

2 The points were the strings of cord or ribbon, (so called, because *pointed* with metal like the laces of women's stays,) which attached the doublet to the hose. They were very numerous, and required assistance to tie them properly, which was called *trussing*.

CHAPTER XVII.

I'll seek for other aid — Spirits, they say,
Flit round invisible, as thick as motes
Dance in the sunbeam. If that spell
Or necromancer's sigil can compel them,
They shall hold council with me.

JAMES DUFF.

THE reader's attention must be recalled to Halbert Glendinning, who had left the Tower of Glendearg immediately after his quarrel with its new guest, Sir Piercie Shafton. As he walked with a rapid pace up the glen, Old Martin followed him, beseeching him to be less hasty.

"Halbert," said the old man, "you will never live to have white hair, if you take fire thus at every spark of provocation."

"And why should I wish it, old man," said Halbert, "if I am to be the butt that every fool may aim a shaft of scorn against? — What avails it, old man, that you yourself move, sleep, and wake, eat thy niggard meal, and repose on thy hard pallet? — Why art thou so well pleased that the morning should call thee up to daily toil, and the evening again lay thee down a wearied-out wretch? Were it not better sleep and wake no more, than to undergo this dull exchange of labour for insensibility and of insensibility for labour?"

"God help me," answered Martin, "there may be truth in what thou sayest — but walk slower, for my old limbs cannot keep pace with your young legs — walk slower, and I will tell you why age, though unlovely, is yet endurable."

"Speak on then," said Halbert, slackening his pace, "but remember we must seek venison to refresh the fatigues of these holy men, who will this morning have achieved a journey of ten miles; and if we reach not the Brocksburn head, we are scarce like to see an antler."

"Then know, my good Halbert," said Martin, "whom I love as my own son, that I am satisfied to live till death calls me, because my Maker wills it. Ay, and although I spend what men call a hard life, pinched with cold in winter, and burnt with heat in summer, though I feed hard and sleep hard, and am held mean and despised, yet I bethink me, that were I of no use on the face of this fair creation, God would withdraw me from it."

"Thou poor old man," said Halbert, "and can such a vain conceit as this of thy fancied use, reconcile thee to a world where thou playest so poor a part?"

"My part was nearly as poor," said Martin, "my person nearly as much despised, the day that I saved my mistress and her child from perishing in the wilderness."

"Right, Martin," answered Halbert, "there, indeed, thou didst what might be a sufficient apology for a whole life of insignificance."

"And do you account it for nothing, Halbert, that I should have the power of giving you a lesson of patience, and submission to the destinies of Providence? Methinks there is use for the gray hairs on the old scalp, were it but to instruct the green head by precept and by example."

Halbert held down his face, and remained silent for a minute or two, and then resumed his discourse: "Martin, seest thou aught changed in me of late?"

"Surely," said Martin. "I have always known you hasty, wild, and inconsiderate, rude, and prompt to speak at the volley and without reflection; but now, methinks, your bearing, without losing its natural fire, has something in it of force and dignity which it had not before. It seems as if you had fallen asleep a carle, and awakened a gentleman."

"Thou canst judge, then, of noble bearing?" said Halbert.

"Surely," answered Martin, "in some sort I can; for I have travelled through court, and camp, and city, with my master Walter Avenel, although he could do nothing for me in the long run, but give me room for two score of sheep on the hill — and surely even now, while I speak with you, I feel sensible that my language is more refined than it is my wont to use, and that — though I know not the reason — the rude northern dialect, so familiar to my tongue, has given place to a more town-bred speech."

"And this change in thyself and me, thou canst by no means account for?" said young Glendinning.

"Change!" replied Martin, "by our Lady it is not so much a change which I feel, as a recalling and renewing sentiments and expressions which I had some thirty years since, ere Tibb and I set up our humble household. It is singular, that your society should have this sort of influence over me, Halbert, and that I should never have experienced it ere now."

"Thinkest thou," said Halbert, "thou seest in me aught that can raise me from this base, low, despised state, into one where I may rank with those proud men, who now despise my clownish poverty?"

Martin paused an instant, and then answered "Doubtless you may, Halbert; as broken a ship has come to land. Heard ye never of Hughie Dun, who left this Halidome some thirty-five years gone by? A deliverly fellow was Hughie — could read and write like a priest, and could wield brand and buckler with the best of the riders. I mind him — the like of him was never seen in the Halidome of Saint Mary's, and so was seen of the preferment that God sent him."

"And what was that?" said Halbert, his eyes sparkling with eagerness.

"Nothing less," answered Martin, "than body-servant to the Archbishop of Saint Andrews!"

Halbert's countenance fell. — "A servant — and to a priest? Was this all that knowledge and activity could raise him to?"

Martin, in his turn, looked with wistful surprise in the face of his young friend. "And to what could fortune lead him farther?" answered he. "The son of a kirk-feuar is not the stuff that lords and knights are made of. Courage and school craft cannot change churl's blood into gentle blood, I trow. I have heard, forby, that Hughie Dun left a good five hundred punds of Scots money to his only daughter, and that she married the Bailie of Pittenweem."

At this moment, and while Halbert was embarrassed with devising a suitable answer, a deer bounded across their path. In an instant the cross-bow was at the youth's shoulder, the bolt whistled, and the deer, after giving one bound upright, dropt dead on the green sward.

"There lies the venison our dame wanted," said Martin; "who would have thought of an out-lying stag being so low down the glen at this season? —

And it is a hart of grease too, in full season, and three inches of fat on the brisket. Now this is all your luck, Halbert, that follows you, go where you like. Were you to put in for it, I would warrant you were made one of the Abbot's yeoman-prickers, and ride about in a purple doublet as bold as the best."

"Tush, man," answered Halbert, "I will serve the Queen or no one. Take thou care to have down the venison to the Tower, since they expect it. I will on to the moss. I have two or three bird-bolts at my girdle, and it may be I shall find wild-fowl."

He hastened his pace, and was soon out of sight. Martin paused for a moment, and looked after him. "There goes the making of a right gallant stripling, an ambition have not the spoiling of him — Serve the Queen! said he. By my faith, and she hath worse servants, from all that I e'er heard of him. And wherefore should he not keep a high head? They that ettle to the top of the ladder will at least get up some rounds. They that mint[1] at a gown of gold, will always get a sleeve of it. But come, sir, (addressing the stag,) you shall go to Glendearg on my two legs somewhat more slowly than you were frisking it even now on your own four nimble shanks. Nay, by my faith, if you be so heavy, I will content me with the best of you, and that's the haunch and the nombles, and e'en heave up the rest on the old oak-tree yonder, and come back for it with one of the yauds."[2]

While Martin returned to Glendearg with the venison, Halbert prosecuted his walk, breathing more easily since he was free of his companion. "The domestic of a proud and lazy priest — body-squire to the Archbishop of Saint Andrews," he repeated to himself; "and this, with the privilege of allying his blood with the Bailie of Pittenweem, is thought a preferment worth a brave man's struggling for; — nay more, a preferment which, if allowed, should crown the hopes, past, present, and to come, of the son of a Kirk-vassal! By Heaven, but that I find in me a reluctance to practise their acts of nocturnal rapine, I would rather take the jack and lance, and join with the Border-riders. — Something I will do. Here, degraded and dishonoured, I will not live the scorn of each whiffling stranger from the South, because, forsooth, he wears tinkling spurs on a tawny boot. This thing — this phantom, be it what it will, I will see it once more. Since I spoke with her, and touched her hand, thoughts and feelings have dawned on me, of which my former life had not even dreamed; but shall I, who feel my father's glen too narrow for my expanding spirit, brook to be bearded in it by this vain gewgaw of a courtier, and in the sight too of Mary Avenel? I will not stoop to it, by Heaven!"

As he spoke thus, he arrived in the sequestered glen of Corri-nan-shian, as it verged upon the hour of noon. A few moments he remained looking upon the fountain, and doubting in his own mind with what countenance the White Lady might receive him. She had not indeed expressly forbidden his again evoking her; but yet there was something like such a prohibition implied in the farewell, which recommended him to wait for another guide.

Halbert Glendinning did not long, however, allow himself to pause. Hardihood was the natural characteristic of his mind; and under the expansion and modification which his feelings had lately undergone, it had been augmented rather than diminished. He drew his sword, undid the buskin from his foot, bowed three times with deliberation towards the fountain, and as often towards the tree, and repeated the same rhyme as formerly,—

"Thrice to the holy brake —
Thrice to the well: —
I bid thee awake,
White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams on the lake —
Noon glows on the fell —
Wake thee, O wake,
White Maid of Avenel!"

His eye was on the holly bush as he spoke the last line; and it was not without an involuntary shuddering that he saw the air betwixt his eye and that object become more dim, and condense, as it were, into the faint appearance of a form, through which, however, so thin and transparent was the first appearance of the phantom, he could discern the outline of the bush, as through a veil of fine crape. But, gradually, it darkened into a more substantial appearance, and the White Lady stood before him with displeasure on her brow. She spoke, and her speech was still song, or rather measured chant; but, as if now more familiar, it flowed occasionally in modulated blank-verse, and at other times in the lyrical measure which she had used at their former meeting.

"This is the day when the fairy kind
Sit weeping alone for their hopeless lot,
And the wood-maiden sighs to the sighing wind,
And the mer-maiden weeps in her crystal grot:
For this is the day that a deed was wrought,
In which we have neither part nor share,
For the children of clay was salvation bought,
But not for the forms of sea or air!
And ever the mortal is most forlorn,
Who meeteth our race on the Friday morn."

"Spirit," said Halbert Glendinning boldly, "it is bootless to threaten one who holds his life at no rate. Thine anger can but slay; nor do I think thy power extendeth, or thy will stretcheth, so far. The terrors which your race produce upon others, are vain against me. My heart is hardened against fear, as by a sense of despair. If I am, as thy words infer, of a race more peculiarly the care of Heaven than thine, it is mine to call, it must be thine to answer. I am the nobler being."

As he spoke, the figure looked upon him with a fierce and ireful countenance, which, without losing the similitude of that which it usually exhibited, had a wilder and more exaggerated cast of features. The eyes seemed to contract and become more fiery, and slight convulsions passed over the face, as if it was about to be transformed into something hideous. The whole appearance resembled those faces which the imagination summons up when it is disturbed by laudanum, but which do not remain under the visionary's command, and, beautiful in their first appearance, become wild and grotesque ere we can arrest them.

But when Halbert had concluded his bold speech, the White Lady stood before him with the same pale, fixed, and melancholy aspect, which she usually bore. He had expected the agitation which she exhibited would conclude in some frightful

[1] *Mint* — aim at.
[2] *Yauds* — horses; more particularly horses of labour.

metamorphosis. Folding her arms on her bosom, the phantom replied,—

"Daring youth! for thee it is well,
Here calling me in haunted dell,
That thy heart has not quail'd,
Nor thy courage fail'd,
And that thou couldst brook
The angry look
Of Her of Avenel.
Did one limb shiver,
Or an eyelid quiver,
Thou wert lost for ever.
Though I am form'd from the ether blue,
And my blood is of the unfallen dew,
And thou art framed of mud and dust,
'Tis thine to speak, reply I must."

"I demand of thee, then," said the youth, "by what charm it is that I am thus altered in mind and in wishes—that I think no longer of deer or dog, of bow or bolt—that my soul spurns the bounds of this obscure glen—that my blood boils at an insult from one by whose stirrup I would some days since have run for a whole summer's morn, contented and honoured by the notice of a single word? Why do I now seek to mate me with princes, and knights, and nobles?—Am I the same, who but yesterday, as it were, slumbered in contented obscurity, but who am to-day awakened to glory and ambition?—Speak—tell me, if thou canst, the meaning of this change?—Am I spell-bound?—or have I till now been under the influence of a spell, that I feel as another being, yet am conscious of remaining the same? Speak and tell me, is it to thy influence that the change is owing?"

The White Lady replied,—

"A mightier wizard far than I
Wields o'er the universe his power;
Him owns the eagle in the sky,
The turtle in the bower.
Changeful in shape, yet mightiest still,
He wields the heart of man at will,
From ill to good, from good to ill,
In cot and castle-tower."

"Speak not thus darkly," said the youth, colouring so deeply, that face, neck, and hands, were in a sanguine glow; "make me sensible of thy purpose."

The spirit answered,—

"Ask thy heart, whose secret cell
Is fill'd with Mary Avenel!
Ask thy pride, why scornful look
In Mary's view it will not brook?
Ask it, why thou seek'st to rise
Among the mighty and the wise?—
Why thou spurn'st thy lowly lot?—
Why thy pastimes are forgot?—
Why thou wouldst in bloody strife
Mend thy luck or lose thy life?
Ask thy heart, and it shall tell,
Sighing from its secret cell,
'Tis for Mary Avenel."

"Tell me, then," said Halbert, his cheek still deeply crimsoned, "thou who hast said to me that which I dared not say to myself, by what means shall I urge my passion — by what means make it known?"

The White Lady replied,—

"Do not ask me;
On doubts like these thou canst not task me.
We only see the passing show
Of human passions' ebb and flow;
And view the pageant's idle glance
As mortals eye the northern dance,
When thousand streamers, flashing bright,
Career it o'er the brow of night,
And gazers mark their changeful gleams,
But feel no influence from their beams."

"Yet thine own fate," replied Halbert, "unless men greatly err, is linked with that of mortals?"

The phantom answered,—

"By ties mysterious link'd, our fated race
Holds strange connection with the sons of men.
The star that rose upon the House of Avenel,
When Norman Ulric first assumed the name,
That star, when culminating in its orbit,
Shot from its sphere a drop of diamond dew,
And this bright font received it—and a Spirit
Rose from the fountain, and her date of life
Hath co-existence with the House of Avenel,
And with the star that rules it."

"Speak yet more plainly," answered young Glendinning; "of this I can understand nothing. Say, what hath forged thy wierded[1] link of destiny with the House of Avenel? Say, especially, what fate now overhangs that house?"

The White Lady replied,—

"Look on my girdle—on this thread of gold—
'Tis fine as web of lightest gossamer,
And, but there is a spell on't, would not bind,
Light as they are, the folds of my thin robe.
But when 'twas donn'd, it was a massive chain,
Such as might bind the champion of the Jews,
Even when his locks were longest—it hath dwindled,
Hath minish'd in its substance and its strength,
As sunk the greatness of the House of Avenel.
When this frail thread gives way, I to the elements
Resign the principles of life they lent me
Ask me no more of this!—the stars forbid it."

"Then canst thou read the stars," answered the youth, "and mayest tell me the fate of my passion, if thou canst not aid it?"

The White Lady again replied,—

"Dim burns the once bright star of Avenel,
Dim as the beacon when the morn is nigh,
And the o'er-wearied warder leaves the light-house;
There is an influence sorrowful and fearful,
That dogs its downward course. Disastrous passion,
Fierce hate and rivalry, are in the aspect
That lowers upon its fortunes."

"And rivalry?" repeated Glendinning; "it is then as I feared!—But shall that English silkworm presume to beard me in my father's house, and in the presence of Mary Avenel?—Give me to meet him, spirit,—give me to do away the vain distinction of rank on which he refuses me the combat. Place us on equal terms, and gleam the stars with what aspect they will, the sword of my father shall control their influences."

She answered as promptly as before,—

"Complain not of me, child of clay,
If to thy harm I yield the way.
We, who soar thy sphere above,
Know not aught of hate or love;
As will or wisdom rules thy mood,
My gifts to evil turn, or good."

"Give me to redeem my honour," said Halbert Glendinning—"give me to retort on my proud rival the insults he has thrown on me, and let the rest fare as it will. If I cannot revenge my wrong, I shall sleep quiet, and know nought of my disgrace."

The phantom failed not to reply,—

"When Piercie Shafton boasteth high,
Let this token meet his eye.
The sun is westering from the dell,
Thy wish is granted—fare thee well!"

As the White Lady spoke or chanted these last words, she undid from her locks a silver bodkin

[1] *Wierded*—fated.

around which they were twisted, and gave it to Halbert Glendinning; then shaking her dishevelled hair till it fell like a veil around her, the outlines of her form gradually became as diffuse as her flowing tresses, her countenance grew pale as the moon in her first quarter, her features became indistinguishable, and she melted into the air.

Habit inures us to wonders; but the youth did not find himself alone by the fountain without experiencing, though in a much less degree, the revulsion of spirits which he had felt upon the phantom's former disappearance. A doubt strongly pressed upon his mind, whether it were safe to avail himself of the gifts of a spirit which did not even pretend to belong to the class of angels, and might, for aught he knew, have a much worse lineage than that which she was pleased to avow. "I will speak of it," he said, "to Edward, who is clerkly learned, and will tell me what I should do. And yet, no — Edward is scrupulous and wary. — I will prove the effect of her gift on Sir Piercie Shafton if he again braves me, and by the issue, I will be myself a sufficient judge whether there is danger in resorting to her counsel. Home, then, home — and we shall soon learn whether that home shall longer hold me; for not again will I brook insult, with my father's sword by my side, and Mary for the spectator of my disgrace."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I give thee eighteenpence a-day,
And my bow shalt thou bear,
And over all the north country,
I make thee the chief rydere.
And I thirteenpence a-day, quoth the queen,
By God and by my faye,
Come fetch thy payment when thou wilt,
No man shall say thee nay.
William of Cloudesley.

The manners of the age did not permit the inhabitants of Glendearg to partake of the collation which was placed in the spence of that ancient tower, before the Lord Abbot and his attendants, and Sir Piercie Shafton. Dame Glendinning was excluded, both by inferiority of rank and by sex, for (though it was a rule often neglected) the Superior of Saint Mary's was debarred from taking his meals in female society. To Mary Avenel the latter, and to Edward Glendinning the former, incapacity attached; but it pleased his lordship to require their presence in the apartment, and to say sundry kind words to them upon the ready and hospitable reception which they had afforded him.

The smoking haunch now stood upon the table; a napkin, white as snow, was, with due reverence, tucked under the chin of the Abbot by the Refectioner; and nought was wanting to commence the repast, save the presence of Sir Piercie Shafton, who at length appeared, glittering like the sun, in a carnation-velvet doublet, slashed and puffed out with cloth of silver, his hat of the newest block, surrounded by a hatband of goldsmith's work, while around his neck he wore a collar of gold, set with rubies and topazes so rich, that it vindicated his anxiety for the safety of his baggage from being founded upon his love of mere finery. This gorgeous collar or chain, resembling those worn by the knights of the highest orders of chivalry, fell down on his breast, and terminated in a medallion.

"We waited for Sir Piercie Shafton," said the Abbot, hastily assuming his place in the great chair which the Kitchener advanced to the table with ready hand.

"I pray your pardon, reverend father, and my good lord," replied that pink of courtesy; "I did but wait to cast my riding slough, and to transmew myself into some civil form meeter for this worshipful company."

"I cannot but praise your gallantry, Sir Knight, said the Abbot, "and your prudence also, for choosing the fitting time to appear thus adorned. Certes, had that goodly chain been visible in some part of your late progress, there was risk that the lawful owner might have parted company therewith."

"This chain, said your reverence?" answered Sir Piercie; "surely it is but a toy, a trifle, a slight thing which shews but poorly with this doublet — marry, when I wear that of the murrey-coloured double-piled Genoa velvet, puffed out with ciprus, the gems, being relieved and set off by the darker and more grave ground of the stuff, shew like stars giving a lustre through dark clouds."

"I nothing doubt it," said the Abbot, "but I pray you to sit down at the board."

But Sir Piercie had now got into his element, and was not easily interrupted — "I own," he continued, "that slight as the toy is, it might perchance have had some captivation for Julian — Santa Maria!" said he, interrupting himself; "what was I about to say, and my fair and beauteous Protection, or shall I rather term her my Discretion, here in presence!—Indiscreet hath it been in your Affability, O most lovely Discretion, to suffer a stray word to have broke out of the pen-fold of his mouth, that might overleap the fence of civility, and trespass on the manor of decorum."

"Marry!" said the Abbot, somewhat impatiently, "the greatest discretion that I can see in the matter is, to eat our victuals being hot — Father Eustace, say the Benedicite, and cut up the haunch."

The Sub-Prior readily obeyed the first part of the Abbot's injunction, but paused upon the second — "It is Friday, most reverend," he said in Latin, desirous that the hint should escape, if possible, the ears of the stranger.

"We are travellers," said the Abbot, in reply, "and *viatoribus licitum est* — You know the canon — a traveller must eat what food his hard fate sets before him. — I grant you all a dispensation to eat flesh this day, conditionally that you, brethren, say the Confiteor at curfew time, that the knight give alms to his ability, and that all and each of you fast from flesh on such day within the next month that shall seem most convenient; wherefore fall to and eat your food with cheerful countenances, and you, Father Refectioner, *da mixtus*."

While the Abbot was thus stating the conditions on which his indulgence was granted, he had already half finished a slice of the noble haunch, and now washed it down with a flagon of rhenish, modestly tempered with water.

"Well is it said," he observed, as he required from the Refectioner another slice, "that virtue is its own reward; for though this is but humble fare, and hastily prepared, and eaten in a poor chamber, I do not remember me of having had such an

appetite since I was a simple brother in the Abbey of Dundrennan, and was wont to labour in the garden from morning until nones, when our Abbot struck the *Cymbalum*. Then would I enter keen with hunger, parched with thirst, (*da mihi vinum quæso, et merum sit,*) and partake with appetite of whatever was set before us, according to our rule; feast or fast-day, *caritas* or *penitentia*, was the same to me. I had no stomach complaints then, which now crave both the aid of wine and choice cookery, to render my food acceptable to my palate, and easy of digestion."

"It may be, holy father," said the Sub-Prior, "an occasional ride to the extremity of Saint Mary's patrimony, may have the same happy effect on your health as the air of the garden at Dundrennan."

"Perchance, with our patroness's blessing, such progresses may advantage us," said the Abbot; "having an especial eye that our venison is carefully killed by some woodsman that is master of his craft."

"If the Lord Abbot will permit me," said the Kitchener, "I think the best way to assure his lordship on that important point, would be to retain as a yeoman-pricker, or deputy-ranger, the eldest son of this good woman, Dame Glendinning, who is here to wait upon us. I should know by mine office what belongs to killing of game, and I can safely pronounce, that never saw I, or any other *coquinarius*, a bolt so justly shot. It has cloven the very heart of the buck."

"What speak you to us of one good shot, father?" said Sir Piercie; "I would advise you that such no more maketh a shooter, than doth one swallow make a summer—I have seen this springald of whom you speak, and if his hand can send forth his shafts as boldly as his tongue doth utter presumptuous speeches, I will own him as good an archer as Robin Hood."

"Marry," said the Abbot, "and it is fitting we know the truth of this matter from the dame herself; for ill advised were we to give way to any rashness in this matter, whereby the bounties which Heaven and our patroness provide might be unskilfully mangled, and rendered unfit for worthy men's use.—Stand forth, therefore, Dame Glendinning, and tell to us, as thy liege lord and spiritual Superior, using plainness and truth, without either fear or favour, as being a matter wherein we are deeply interested, Doth this son of thine use his bow as well as the Father Kitchener avers to us?"

"So please your noble fatherhood," answered Dame Glendinning, with a deep curtsy, "I should know somewhat of archery to my cost, seeing my husband—God assoilzie him!—was slain in the field of Pinkie with an arrow-shot, while he was fighting under the Kirk's banner, as became a liege vassal of the Halidome. He was a valiant man, please your reverence, and an honest; and saving that he loved a bit of venison, and shifted for his living at a time as Border-men will sometimes do, I wot not of sin that he did. And yet, though I have paid for mass after mass to the matter of a forty shilling, besides a quarter of wheat and four firlots of rye, I can have no assurance yet that he has been delivered from purgatory."

"Dame," said the Lord Abbot, "this shall be looked into heedfully; and since thy husband fell, as thou sayest, in the Kirk's quarrel, and under her banner, rely upon it that we will have him out of purgatory forthwith—that is, always provided he be there.—But it is not of thy husband whom we now devise to speak, but of thy son; not of a shot Scotsman, but of a shot deer—Wherefore I say, answer me to the point, is thy son a practised archer, ay or no?"

"Alack! my reverend lord," replied the widow, "and my croft would be better tilled, if I could answer your reverence that he is not.—Practised archer!—marry, holy sir, I would he would practise something else—cross-bow and long-bow, handgun and hackbut, falconet and saker, he can shoot with them all. And if it would please this right honourable gentleman, our guest, to hold out his hat at the distance of a hundred yards, our Halbert shall send shaft, bolt, or bullet through it, (so that right honourable gentleman swerve not, but hold out steady,) and I will forfeit a quarter of barley if he touch but a knot of his ribands. I have seen our old Martin do as much, and so has our right reverend the Sub-Prior, if he be pleased to remember it."

"I am not like to forget it, dame," said Father Eustace; "for I knew not which most to admire, the composure of the young marksman, or the steadiness of the old mark. Yet I presume not to advise Sir Piercie Shafton to subject his valuable beaver, and yet more valuable person, to such a risk, unless it should be his own special pleasure."

"Be assured it is not," said Sir Piercie Shafton, something hastily; "be well assured, holy father, that it is not. I dispute not the lad's qualities, for which your reverence vouches. But bows are but wood, strings are but flax, or the silk-worm's excrement at best; archers are but men, fingers may slip, eyes may dazzle, the blindest may hit the butt, the best marker may shoot a bow's length beside. Therefore will we try no perilous experiments."

"Be that as you will, Sir Piercie," said the Abbot; "meantime we will name this youth bow-bearer in the forest granted to us by good King David, that the chase might recreate our wearied spirits, the flesh of the deer improve our poor commons, and the hides cover the books of our library; thus tending at once to the sustenance of body and soul."

"Kneel down, woman, kneel down," said the Refectioner and the Kitchener, with one voice, to Dame Glendinning, "and kiss his lordship's hand, for the grace which he has granted to thy son."

They then, as if they had been chanting the service and the responses, set off in a sort of duetto, enumerating the advantages of the situation.

"A green gown and a pair of leathern galligaskins every Pentecost," said the Kitchener.

"Four marks by the year at Candlemas," answered the Refectioner.

"An hogshead of ale at Martlemas, of the double strike, and single ale at pleasure, as he shall agree with the Cellarer——"

"Who is a reasonable man," said the Abbot, "and will encourage an active servant of the convent."

"A mess of broth and a dole of mutton or beef, at the Kitchener's, on each high holiday," resumed the Kitchener.

"The gang of two cows and a palfrey on our Lady's meadow," answered his brother officer.

"An ox-hide to make buskins of yearly, because of the brambles," echoed the Kitchener.

"And various other perquisites, *quæ nunc præscribere longum*," said the Abbot, summing, with his own lordly voice, the advantages attached to the office of conventual bow-bearer.

Dame Glendinning was all this while on her knees, her head mechanically turning from the one church-officer to the other, which, as they stood one on each side of her, had much the appearance of a figure moved by clock-work, and so soon as they were silent, most devoutly did she kiss the munificent hand of the Abbot. Conscious, however, of Halbert's intractability in some points, she could not help qualifying her grateful and reiterated thanks for the Abbot's bountiful proffer, with a hope that Halbert would see his wisdom, and accept of it.

"How," said the Abbot, bending his brows, "accept of it?—Woman, is thy son in his right wits?"

Elspeth, stunned by the tone in which this question was asked, was altogether unable to reply to it. Indeed, any answer she might have made could hardly have been heard, as it pleased the two office-bearers of the Abbot's table again to recommence their alternate dialogue.

"Refuse!" said the Kitchener.

"Refuse!" answered the Refectioner, echoing the other's word in a tone of still louder astonishment.

"Refuse four marks by the year!" said the one.

"Ale and beer—broth and mutton—cow's-grass and palfrey's!" shouted the Kitchener.

"Gown and galligaskins!" responded the Refectioner.

"A moment's patience, my brethren," answered the Sub-Prior, "and let us not be thus astonished before cause is afforded of our amazement. This good dame best knoweth the temper and spirit of her son — this much I can say, that it lieth not towards letters or learning, of which I have in vain endeavoured to instil into him some tincture. Nevertheless, he is a youth of no common spirit, but much like those (in my weak judgment) whom God raises up among a people when he meaneth that their deliverance shall be wrought out with strength of hand and valour of heart. Such men we have seen marked by a waywardness, and even an obstinacy of character, which hath appeared intractability and stupidity to those among whom they walked and were conversant, until the very opportunity hath arrived in which it was the will of Providence that they should be the fitting instrument of great things."

"Now, in good time hast thou spoken, Father Eustace," said the Abbot; "and we will see this swankie before we decide upon the means of employing him.—How say you, Sir Piercie Shafton, is it not the court fashion to suit the man to the office, and not the office to the man?"

"So please your reverence and lordship," answered the Northumbrian knight, "I do partly, that is, in some sort, subscribe to what your wisdom hath delivered — Nevertheless, under reverence of the Sub-Prior, we do not look for gallant leaders and national deliverers in the hovels of the mean common people. Credit me, that if there be some flashes of martial spirit about this young person, which I am not called upon to dispute, (though I have seldom seen that presumption and arrogance were made good upon the upshot by deed and action,) yet still these will prove insufficient to distinguish him, save in his own limited and lowly sphere — even as the glowworm, which makes a goodly show among the grass of the field, would be of little avail if deposited in a beacon-grate."

"Now, in good time," said the Sub-Prior, "and here comes the young huntsman to speak for himself;" for, being placed opposite to the window, he could observe Halbert as he ascended the little mound on which the tower was situated.

"Summon him to our presence," said the Lord Abbot; and with an obedient start the two attendant monks went off with emulous alertness. Dame Glendinning sprung away at the same moment, partly to gain an instant to recommend obedience to her son, partly to prevail with him to change his apparel before coming in presence of the Abbot. But the Kitchener and Refectioner, both speaking at once, had already seized each an arm, and were leading Halbert in triumph into the apartment, so that she could only ejaculate, "His will be done; but an he had but had on him his Sunday's hose!"

Limited and humble as this desire was, the fates did not grant it, for Halbert Glendinning was hurried into the presence of the Lord Abbot and his party without a word of explanation, and without a moment's time being allowed to assume his holiday hose, which, in the language of the time, implied both breeches and stockings.

Yet though thus suddenly presented amid the centre of all eyes, there was something in Halbert's appearance which commanded a certain degree of respect from the company into which he was so unceremoniously intruded, and the greater part of whom were disposed to consider him with hauteur if not with absolute contempt. But his appearance and reception we must devote to another chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

> Now choose thee, gallant, betwixt wealth and honour;
> There lies the pelf, in sum to bear thee through
> The dance of youth, and the turmoil of manhood,
> Yet leave enough for age's chimney-corner;
> But an thou grasp to it, farewell ambition,
> Farewell each hope of bettering thy condition,
> And raising thy low rank above the churls
> That till the earth for bread.
>
> *Old Play.*

It is necessary to dwell for some brief space on the appearance and demeanour of young Glendinning, ere we proceed to describe his interview with the Abbot of Saint Mary's, at this momentous crisis of his life.

Halbert was now about nineteen years old, tall and active rather than strong, yet of that hardy conformation of limb and sinew, which promises great strength when the growth shall be complete, and the system confirmed. He was perfectly well made, and like most men who have that advantage, possessed a grace and natural ease of manner and carriage, which prevented his height from being the distinguished part of his external appearance. It was not until you had compared his stature with that of those amongst or near to whom

he stood, that you became sensible that the young Glendinning was upwards of six feet high. In the combination of unusual height with perfect symmetry, ease, and grace of carriage, the young heir of Glendearg, notwithstanding his rustic birth and education, had greatly the advantage even of Sir Piercie Shafton himself, whose stature was lower, and his limbs, though there was no particular point to object to, were on the whole less exactly proportioned. On the other hand, Sir Piercie's very handsome countenance afforded him as decided an advantage over the Scotsman, as regularity of features and brilliance of complexion could give over traits which were rather strongly marked than beautiful, and upon whose complexion the "skyey influences," to which he was constantly exposed, had blended the red and white into the purely nut-brown hue, which coloured alike cheeks, neck, and forehead, and blushed only in a darker glow upon the former. — Halbert's eyes supplied a marked and distinguished part of his physiognomy. They were large and of a hazel colour, and sparkled in moments of animation with such uncommon brilliancy, that it seemed as if they actually emitted light. Nature had closely curled the locks of dark-brown hair, which relieved and set off the features, such as we have described them, displaying a bold and animated disposition, much more than might have been expected from his situation, or from his previous manners, which hitherto had seemed bashful, homely, and awkward.

Halbert's dress was certainly not of that description which sets off to the best advantage a presence of itself prepossessing. His jerkin and hose were of coarse rustic cloth, and his cap of the same. A belt round his waist served at once to sustain the broad-sword which we have already mentioned, and to hold five or six arrows and bird-bolts, which were stuck into it on the right side, along with a large knife hilted with buck-horn, or, as it was then called, a dudgeon-dagger. To complete his dress, we must notice his loose buskins of deer's-hide, formed so as to draw up on the leg as high as the knee, or at pleasure to be thrust down lower than the calves. These were generally used at the period by such as either had their principal occupation, or their chief pleasure, in silvan sports, as they served to protect the legs against the rough and tangled thickets into which the pursuit of game frequently led them. — And these trifling particulars complete his external appearance.

It is not so easy to do justice to the manner in which young Glendinning's soul spoke through his eyes when ushered so suddenly into the company of those whom his earliest education had taught him to treat with awe and reverence. The degree of embarrassment, which his demeanour evinced, had nothing in it either meanly servile, or utterly disconcerted. It was no more than became a generous and ingenuous youth of a bold spirit, but totally inexperienced, who should for the first time be called upon to think and act for himself in such society and under such disadvantageous circumstances. There was not in his carriage a grain either of forwardness or of timidity, which a friend could have wished away.

He kneeled and kissed the Abbot's hand, then rose, and retiring two paces, bowed respectfully to the circle around, smiling gently as he received an encouraging nod from the Sub-Prior, to whom alone he was personally known, and blushing as he encountered the anxious look of Mary Avenel, who beheld with painful interest the sort of ordeal to which her foster-brother was about to be subjected. Recovering from the transient flurry of spirits into which the encounter of her glance had thrown him, he stood composedly awaiting till the Abbot should express his pleasure.

The ingenuous expression of countenance, noble form, and graceful attitude of the young man, failed not to prepossess in his favour the churchmen in whose presence he stood. The Abbot looked round, and exchanged a gracious and approving glance with his counsellor Father Eustace, although probably the appointment of a ranger, or bow-bearer, was one in which he might have been disposed to proceed without the Sub-Prior's advice, were it but to shew his own free agency. But the good mien of the young man now in nomination was such, that he rather hastened to exchange congratulation on meeting with so proper a subject of promotion, than to indulge any other feeling. Father Eustace enjoyed the pleasure which a well-constituted mind derives from seeing a benefit light on a deserving object; for as he had not seen Halbert since circumstances had made so material a change in his manner and feelings, he scarce doubted that the proferred appointment would, notwithstanding his mother's uncertainty, suit the disposition of a youth who had appeared devoted to woodland sports, and a foe alike to sedentary or settled occupation of any kind. The Refectioner and Kitchener were so well pleased with Halbert's prepossessing appearance, that they seemed to think that the salary, emoluments, and perquisites, the dole, the grazing, the gown, and the galligaskins, could scarce be better bestowed than on the active and graceful figure before them.

Sir Piercie Shafton, whether from being more deeply engaged in his own cogitations, or that the subject was unworthy of his notice, did not seem to partake of the general feeling of approbation excited by the young man's presence. He sate with his eyes half shut, and his arms folded, appearing to be wrapped in contemplations of a nature deeper than those arising out of the scene before him. But, notwithstanding his seeming abstraction and absence of mind, there was a flutter of vanity in Sir Piercie's very handsome countenance, an occasional change of posture from one striking attitude (or what he conceived to be such) to another, and an occasional stolen glance at the female part of the company, to spy how far he succeeded in riveting their attention, which gave a marked advantage, in comparison, to the less regular and more harsh features of Halbert Glendinning, with their composed, manly, and deliberate expression of mental fortitude.

Of the females belonging to the family of Glendearg, the Miller's daughter alone had her mind sufficiently at leisure to admire, from time to time, the graceful attitudes of Sir Piercie Shafton; for both Mary Avenel and Dame Glendinning were waiting in anxiety and apprehension the answer which Halbert was to return to the Abbot's proposal, and fearfully anticipating the consequences of his probable refusal. The conduct of his brother Edward, for a lad constitutionally shy, respectful, and even timid, was at once affectionate and noble. This younger son

of Dame Elspeth had stood unnoticed in a corner, after the Abbot, at the request of the Sub-Prior, had honoured him with some passing notice, and asked him a few commonplace questions about his progress in Donatus, and in the *Promptuarium Parvulorum*, without waiting for the answers. From his corner he now glided round to his brother's side, and keeping a little behind him, slid his right hand into the huntsman's left, and by a gentle pressure, which Halbert instantly and ardently returned, expressed at once his interest in his situation, and his resolution to share his fate.

The group was thus arranged, when, after the pause of two or three minutes, which he employed in slowly sipping his cup of wine, in order that he might enter on his proposal with due and deliberate dignity, the Abbot at length expressed himself thus: —

"My son — we your lawful Superior, and the Abbot, under God's favour, of the community of Saint Mary's, have heard of your manifold good gifts — a-hem — especially touching wood-craft — and the huntsman-like fashion in which you strike your game, truly and as a yeoman should, not abusing Heaven's good benefits by spoiling the flesh, as is too often seen in careless rangers — a-hem." He made here a pause, but observing that Glendinning only replied to his compliment by a bow, he proceeded, — "My son, we commend your modesty; nevertheless, we will that thou shouldst speak freely to us touching that which we have premeditated for thine advancement, meaning to confer on thee the office of bow-bearer and ranger, as well over the chases and forests wherein our house hath privilege by the gifts of pious kings and nobles, whose souls now enjoy the fruits of their bounties to the church, as to those which belong to us in exclusive right of property and perpetuity. Thy knee, my son — that we may, with our own hand, and without loss of time, induct thee into office."

"Kneel down," said the Kitchener on the one side; and "Kneel down," said the Refectioner on the other.

But Halbert Glendinning remained standing.

"Were it to shew gratitude and good-will for your reverend lordship's noble offer, I could not," he said, "kneel low enough, or remain long enough kneeling. But I may not kneel to take investiture of your noble gift, my lord Abbot, being a man determined to seek my fortune otherwise."

"How is that, sir?" said the Abbot, knitting his brows; "do I hear you speak aright? and do you, a born vassal of the Halidome, at the moment when I am destining to you such a noble expresson of my good-will, propose exchanging my service for that of any other?"

"My lord," said Halbert Glendinning, "it grieves me to think you hold me capable of undervaluing your gracious offer, or of exchanging your service for another. But your noble proffer doth but hasten the execution of a determination which I have long since formed."

"Ay, my son," said the Abbot, "is it indeed so? — right early have you learned to form resolutions without consulting those on whom you naturally depend. But what may it be, this sagacious resolution, if I may so far pray you?"

"To yield up to my brother and mother," answered Halbert, "mine interest in the fief of Glendearg, lately possessed by my father, Simon Glendinning: and having prayed your lordship to be the same kind and generous master to them, that your predecessors, the venerable Abbots of Saint Mary's, have been to my fathers in time past; for myself, I am determined to seek my fortune where I may best find it."

Dame Glendinning here ventured, imboldened by maternal anxiety, to break silence with an exclamation of "O my son!" Edward, clinging to his brother's side, half spoke, half whispered, a similar ejaculation, of "Brother! brother!"

The Sub-Prior took up the matter in a tone of grave reprehension, which, as he conceived, the interest he had always taken in the family of Glendearg required at his hand.

"Wilful young man," he said, "what folly can urge thee to push back the hand that is stretched out to aid thee? What visionary aim hast thou before thee, that can compensate for the decent and sufficient independence which thou art now rejecting with scorn?"

"Four marks by the year, duly and truly," said the Kitchener.

"Cow's-grass, doublet, and galligaskins," responded the Refectioner.

"Peace, my brethren," said the Sub-Prior; "and may it please your lordship, venerable father, upon my petition, to allow this headstrong youth a day for consideration, and it shall be my part so to indoctrinate him, as to convince him what is due on this occasion to your lordship, and to his family, and to himself."

"Your kindness, reverend father," said the youth, "craves my dearest thanks — it is the continuance of a long train of benevolence towards me, for which I give you my gratitude, for I have nothing else to offer. It is my mishap, not your fault, that your intentions have been frustrated. But my present resolution is fixed and unalterable. I cannot accept the generous offer of the Lord Abbot; my fate calls me elsewhere, to scenes where I shall end it or mend it."

"By our Lady," said the Abbot, "I think the youth be mad indeed — or that you, Sir Piercie, judged of him most truly, when you prophesied that he would prove unfit for the promotion we designed him — it may be you knew something of this wayward humour before?"

"By the mass, not I," answered Sir Piercie Shafton, with his usual indifference. "I but judged of him by his birth and breeding; for seldom doth a good hawk come out of a kite's egg."

"Thou art thyself a kite, and kestrel to boot," replied Halbert Glendinning, without a moment's hesitation.

"This in our presence, and to a man of worship?" said the Abbot, the blood rushing to his face.

"Yes, my lord," answered the youth; "even in your presence I return to this gay man's face, the causeless dishonour which he has flung on my name. My brave father, who fell in the cause of his country, demands that justice at the hands of his son!"

"Unmannered boy!" said the Abbot.

"Nay, my good lord," said the knight, "praying pardon for the coarse interruption, let me entreat you not to be wroth with this rustical — Credit me, the north wind shall as soon puff one of your rocks from its basis, as aught which I hold so slight

and inconsiderate as the churlish speech of an untaught churl, shall move the spleen of Piercie Shafton."

"Proud as you are, Sir Knight," said Halbert, "in your imagined superiority, be not too confident that you cannot be moved."

"Faith, by nothing that thou canst urge," said Sir Piercie.

"Knowest thou then this token?" said young Glendinning, offering to him the silver bodkin which he had received from the White Lady.

Never was such an instant change, from the most contemptuous serenity, to the most furious state of passion, as that which Sir Piercie Shafton exhibited. It was the difference between a cannon lying quiet in its embrasure, and the same gun when touched by the linstock. He started up, every limb quivering with rage, and his features so inflamed and agitated by passion, that he more resembled a demoniac, than a man under the regulation of reason. He clenched both his fists, and thrusting them forward, offered them furiously at the face of Glendinning, who was even himself startled at the frantic state of excitation which his action had occasioned. The next moment he withdrew them, struck his open palm against his own forehead, and rushed out of the room in a state of indescribable agitation. The whole matter had been so sudden, that no person present had time to interfere.

When Sir Piercie Shafton had left the apartment, there was a moment's pause of astonishment; and then a general demand that Halbert Glendinning should instantly explain by what means he had produced such a violent change in the deportment of the English cavalier.

"I did nought to him," answered Halbert Glendinning, "but what you all saw—am I to answer for his fantastic freaks of humour?"

"Boy," said the Abbot, in his most authoritative manner, "these subterfuges shall not avail thee. This is not a man to be driven from his temperament without some sufficient cause. That cause was given by thee, and must have been known to thee. I command thee, as thou wilt save thyself from worse measure, to explain to me by what means thou hast moved our friend thus—We choose not that our vassals shall drive our guests mad in our very presence, and we remain ignorant of the means whereby that purpose is effected."

"So may it please your reverence, I did but shew him this token," said Halbert Glendinning, delivering it at the same time to the Abbot, who looked at it with much attention, and then, shaking his head, gravely delivered it to the Sub-Prior, without speaking a word.

Father Eustace looked at the mysterious token with some attention; and then addressing Halbert in a stern and severe voice, said, "Young man, if thou wouldst not have us suspect thee of some strange double-dealing in this matter, let us instantly know whence thou hadst this token, and how it possesses an influence on Sir Piercie Shafton?"—It would have been extremely difficult for Halbert, thus hard pressed, to have either evaded or answered so puzzling a question. To have avowed the truth might, in those times, have occasioned his being burnt at a stake, although, in ours, his confession would have only gained for him the credit of a liar beyond all rational credibility. He was fortunately relieved by the return of Sir Piercie Shafton himself, whose ear caught, as he entered, the sound of the Sub-Prior's question.

Without waiting until Halbert Glendinning replied, he came forward, whispering to him as he passed, "Be secret—thou shalt have the satisfaction thou hast dared to seek for."

When he returned to his place, there were still marks of discomposure on his brow; but, becoming apparently collected and calm, he looked around him, and apologized for the indecorum of which he had been guilty, which he ascribed to sudden and severe indisposition. All were silent, and looked on each other with some surprise.

The Lord Abbot gave orders for all to retire from the apartment, save himself, Sir Piercie Shafton, and the Sub-Prior. "And have an eye," he added, "on that bold youth, that he escape not; for if he hath practised by charm, or otherwise, on the health of our worshipful guest, I swear by the alb and mitre which I wear, that his punishment shall be most exemplary."

"My lord and venerable father," said Halbert, bowing respectfully, "fear not but that I will abide my doom. I think you will best learn from the worshipful knight himself, what is the cause of his distemperature, and how slight my share in it has been."

"Be assured," said the knight, without looking up, however, while he spoke, "I will satisfy the Lord Abbot."

With these words the company retired, and with them young Glendinning.

When the Abbot, the Sub-Prior, and the English knight were left alone, Father Eustace, contrary to his custom, could not help speaking the first. "Expound unto us, noble sir," he said, "by what mysterious means the production of this simple toy could so far move your spirit, and overcome your patience, after you had shewn yourself proof to all the provocation offered by this self-sufficient and singular youth?"

The knight took the silver bodkin from the good father's hand, looked at it with great composure, and, having examined it all over, returned it to the Sub-Prior, saying at the same time, "In truth, venerable father, I cannot but marvel, that the wisdom implied alike in your silver hairs, and in your eminent rank, should, like a babbling hound, (excuse the similitude,) open thus loudly on a false scent. I were, indeed, more slight to be moved than the leaves of the aspen-tree, which wag at the least breath of heaven, could I be touched by such a trifle as this, which in no way concerns me more than if the same quantity of silver were stricken into so many groats. Truth is, that from my youth upward, I have been subjected to such a malady as you saw me visited with even now—a cruel and searching pain, which goeth through nerve and bone, even as a good brand in the hands of a brave soldier sheers through limb and sinew—but it passes away speedily, as you yourselves may judge."

"Still," said the Sub-Prior, "this will not account for the youth offering to you this piece of silver, as a token by which you were to understand something, and, as we must needs conjecture, something disagreeable."

"Your reverence is to conjecture what you will," said Sir Piercie; "but I cannot pretend to lay your judgment on the right scent when I see it at fault

I hope I am not liable to be called upon to account for the foolish actions of a malapert boy ?"

"Assuredly," said the Sub-Prior, "we shall prosecute no inquiry which is disagreeable to our guest. Nevertheless," said he, looking to his Superior, "this chance may, in some sort, alter the plan your lordship had formed for your worshipful guest's residence for a brief term in this tower, as a place alike of secrecy and of security ; both of which, in the terms which we now stand on with England, are circumstances to be desired."

"In truth," said the Abbot, "and the doubt is well thought on, were it as well removed ; for I scarce know in the Halidome so fitting a place of refuge, yet see I not how to recommend it to our worshipful guest, considering the unrestrained petulance of this headstrong youth."

"Tush ! reverend sirs,—what would you make of me ?" said Sir Piercie Shafton. "I protest, by mine honour, I would abide in this house were I to choose. What ! I take no exceptions at the youth for shewing a flash of spirit, though the spark may light on mine own head. I honour the lad for it. I protest I will abide here, and he shall aid me in striking down a deer. I must needs be friends with him, an he be such a shot : and we will speedily send down to my lord Abbot a buck of the first head, killed so artificially as shall satisfy even the reverend Kitchener."

This was said with such apparent ease and good-humour, that the Abbot made no farther observation on what had passed, but proceeded to acquaint his guest with the details of furniture, hangings, provisions, and so forth, which he proposed to send up to the Tower of Glendearg for his accommodation. This discourse, seasoned with a cup or two of wine, served to prolong the time until the reverend Abbot ordered his cavalcade to prepare for their return to the Monastery.

"As we have," he said, "in the course of this our toilsome journey, lost our meridian,[1] indulgence shall be given to those of our attendants who shall, from very weariness, be unable to attend the duty at prime,[2] and this by way of misericord or *indulgentia*."[3]

Having benevolently intimated a boon to his faithful followers, which he probably judged would be far from unacceptable, the good Abbot, seeing all ready for his journey, bestowed his blessing on the assembled household—gave his hand to be kissed by Dame Glendinning—himself kissed the cheek of Mary Avenel, and even of the Miller's maiden, when they approached to render him the same homage—commanded Halbert to rule his temper, and to be aiding and obedient in all things to the English Knight—admonished Edward to be *discipulus impiger atque strenuus*—then took a courteous farewell of Sir Piercie Shafton, advising him to lie close, for fear of the English borderers, who might be employed to kidnap him ; and having discharged these various offices of courtesy, moved forth to the court-yard, followed by the whole establishment. Here, with a heavy sigh approaching to a groan, the venerable father heaved himself upon his palfrey, whose dark purple housings swept the ground ; and, greatly comforted that the discretion of the animal's pace would be no longer disturbed by the gambadoes of Sir Piercie and his prancing war-horse, he set forth at a sober and steady trot upon his return to the Monastery.

When the Sub-Prior had mounted to accompany his principal, his eye sought out Halbert, who, partly hidden by a projection of the outward wall of the court, stood apart from, and gazing upon the departing cavalcade, and the group which assembled around them. Unsatisfied with the explanation he had received concerning the mysterious transaction of the silver bodkin, yet interesting himself in the youth, of whose character he had formed a favourable idea, the worthy monk resolved to take an early opportunity of investigating that matter. In the meanwhile, he looked upon Halbert with a serious and warning aspect, and held up his finger to him as he signed farewell. He then joined the rest of the churchmen, and followed his Superior down the valley.

[1] The hour of repose at noon, which, in the middle ages, was employed in slumber, and which the monastic rules of nocturnal vigils rendered necessary.

[2] *Prime* was the midnight service of the monks.

[3] *Misericord*, according to the learned work of Fosbrooke on British Monachism, meant not only an indulgence, or exoneration from particular duties, but also a particular apartment in a convent, where the monks assembled to enjoy such indulgences or allowances as were granted beyond the rule.

CHAPTER XX.

> I hope you 'll give me cause to think you noble,
> And do me right with your sword, sir, as becomes
> One gentleman of honour to another;
> All this is fair, sir—let us make no days on't,
> I'll lead your way.
>
> *Love's Pilgrimage.*

The look and sign of warning which the Sub-Prior gave to Halbert Glendinning as they parted, went to his heart ; for although he had profited much less than Edward by the good man's instructions, he had a sincere reverence for his person ; and even the short time he had for deliberation tended to shew him he was embarked in a perilous adventure. The nature of the provocation which he had given to Sir Piercie Shafton he could not even conjecture ; but he saw that it was of a mortal quality, and he was now to abide the consequences.

That he might not force these consequences forward by any premature renewal of their quarrel, he resolved to walk apart for an hour, and consider on what terms he was to meet this haughty foreigner. The time seemed propitious for his doing so without having the appearance of wilfully shunning the stranger, as all the members of the little household were dispersing either to perform such tasks as had been interrupted by the arrival of the dignitaries, or to put in order what had been deranged by their visit.

Leaving the tower, therefore, and descending, unobserved as he thought, the knoll on which it stood, Halbert gained the little piece of level ground which extended betwixt the descent of the hill, and the first sweep made by the brook after washing the foot of the eminence on which the tower was situated, where a few straggling birch and oak-trees served to secure him from observation. But scarcely had he reached the spot, when he was surprised to feel a smart tap upon the shoulder, and, turning around, he perceived he had been closely followed by Sir Piercie Shafton.

When, whether from our state of animal spirits, want of confidence in the justice of our cause, or any other motive, our own courage happens to be in a wavering condition, nothing tends so much altogether to disconcert us, as a great appearance of promptitude on the part of our antagonist. Halbert Glendinning, both morally and constitutionally intrepid, was nevertheless somewhat troubled at seeing the stranger, whose resentment he had provoked, appear at once before him, and with an aspect which boded hostility. But though his heart might beat somewhat thicker, he was too high-spirited to exhibit any external signs of emotion.—"What is your pleasure, Sir Piercie?" he said to the English knight, enduring without apparent discomposure all the terrors which his antagonist had summoned into his aspect.

"What is my pleasure?" answered Sir Piercie; "a goodly question after the part you have acted towards me!—Young man, I know not what infatuation has led thee to place thyself in direct and insolent opposition to one who is a guest of thy liege-lord the Abbot, and who, even from the courtesy due to thy mother's roof, had a right to remain there without meeting insult. Neither do I ask, or care, by what means thou hast become possessed of the fatal secret by which thou hast dared to offer me open shame. But I must now tell thee, that the possession of it hath cost thee thy life."

"Not, I trust, if my hand and sword can defend it," replied Halbert, boldly.

"True," said the Englishman, "I mean not to deprive thee of thy fair chance of self-defence. I am only sorry to think, that, young and country-bred as thou art, it can but little avail thee. But thou must be well aware, that in this quarrel I shall use no terms of quarter."

"Rely on it, proud man," answered the youth, "that I shall ask none; and although thou speakest as if I lay already at thy feet, trust me, that as I am determined never to ask thy mercy, so I am not fearful of needing it."

"Thou wilt, then," said the knight, "do nothing to avert the certain fate which thou hast provoked with such wantonness?"

"And how were that to be purchased?" replied Halbert Glendinning, more with the wish of obtaining some farther insight into the terms on which he stood with this stranger, than to make him the submission which he might require.

"Explain to me instantly," said Sir Piercie, "without equivocation or delay, by what means thou wert enabled to wound my honour so deeply—and shouldst thou point out to me by so doing an enemy more worthy of my resentment, I will permit thine own obscure insignificance to draw a veil over thine insolence."

"This is too high a flight," said Glendinning, fiercely, "for thine own presumption to soar without being checked. Thou hast come to my father's house, as well as I can guess, a fugitive and an exile, and thy first greeting to its inhabitants has been that of contempt and injury. By what means I have been able to retort that contempt, let thine own conscience tell thee. Enough for me that I stand on the privilege of a free Scotchman, and will brook no insult unreturned, and no injury unrequited."

"It is well, then," said Sir Piercie Shafton; "we will dispute this matter to-morrow morning with our swords. Let the time be daybreak, and do thou assign the place. We will go forth as if to strike a deer."

"Content," replied Halbert Glendinning: "I will guide thee to a spot where an hundred men might fight and fall without any chance of interruption."

"It is well," answered Sir Piercie Shafton. "Here then we part.—Many will say, that in thus indulging the right of a gentleman to the son of a clod-breaking peasant, I derogate from my sphere, even as the blessed sun would derogate should he condescend to compare and match his golden beams with the twinkle of a pale, blinking, expiring, gross-fed taper. But no consideration of rank shall prevent my avenging the insult thou hast offered me. We bear a smooth face, observe me, Sir Villagio, before the worshipful inmates of yonder cabin, and to-morrow we try conclusions with our swords." So saying, he turned away towards the tower.

It may not be unworthy of notice, that in the last speech only, had Sir Piercie used some of those flowers of rhetoric which characterized the usual style of his conversation. Apparently, a sense of wounded honour, and the deep desire of vindicating his injured feelings, had proved too strong for the fantastic affectation of his acquired habits. Indeed, such is usually the influence of energy of mind, when called forth and exerted, that Sir Piercie Shafton had never appeared in the eyes of his youthful antagonist half so much deserving of esteem and respect as in this brief dialogue, by which they exchanged mutual defiance. As he followed him slowly to the tower, he could not help thinking to himself, that, had the English knight always displayed this superior tone of bearing and feeling, he would not probably have felt so earnestly disposed to take offence at his hand. Mortal offence, however, had been exchanged, and the matter was to be put to mortal arbitrement.

The family met at the evening meal, when Sir Piercie Shafton extended the benignity of his countenance and the graces of his conversation far more generally over the party than he had hitherto condescended to do. The greater part of his attention was, of course, still engrossed by his divine and inimitable Discretion, as he chose to term Mary Avenel; but, nevertheless, there were interjectional flourishes to the Maid of the Mill, under the title of Comely Damsel, and to the Dame, under that of Worthy Matron. Nay, lest he should fail to excite their admiration by the graces of his rhetoric, he generously, and without solicitation, added those of his voice; and after regretting bitterly the absence of his viol-de-gamba, he regaled them with a song, "which," said he, "the inimitable Astrophel, whom mortals call Philip Sidney, composed in the nonage of his muse, to shew the world what they are to expect from his riper years, and which will one day see the light in that not-to-be-paralleled perfection of human wit, which he has addressed to his sister, the matchless Parthenope, whom men call Countess of Pembroke; a work," he continued, "whereof his friendship hath permitted me, though unworthy, to be an occasional partaker, and whereof I may well say, that the deep afflictive tale which awakeneth our sorrows, is so relieved with brilliant simili-

tudes, dulcet descriptions, pleasant poems, and engaging interludes, that they seem as the stars of the firmament, beautifying the dusky robe of night. And though I wot well how much the lovely and quaint language will suffer by my widowed voice, widowed in that it is no longer matched by my beloved viol-de-gamba, I will essay to give you a taste of the ravishing sweetness of the poesy of the un-to-be-imitated Astrophel."

So saying, he sung without mercy or remorse about five hundred verses, of which the two first and the four last may suffice for a specimen —

> What tongue can her perfections tell,
> On whose each part all pens may dwell.
> * * * *
> Of whose high praise and praiseful bliss,
> Goodness the pen, Heaven paper is;
> The ink immortal fame doth send,
> As I began so I must end.

As Sir Piercie Shafton always sung with his eyes half shut, it was not until, agreeably to the promise of poetry, he had fairly made an end, that looking round, he discovered that the greater part of his audience had, in the meanwhile, yielded to the charms of repose. Mary Avenel, indeed, from a natural sense of politeness, had contrived to keep awake through all the prolixities of the divine Astrophel; but Mysie was transported in dreams back to the dusty atmosphere of her father's mill. Edward himself, who had given his attention for some time, had at length fallen fast asleep; and the good dame's nose, could its tones have been put under regulation, might have supplied the bass of the lamented viol-de-gamba. Halbert, however, who had no temptation to give way to the charms of slumber, remained awake with his eyes fixed on the songster; not that he was better entertained with the words, or more ravished with the execution, than the rest of the company, but rather because he admired, or perhaps envied, the composure, which could thus spend the evening in interminable madrigals, when the next morning was to be devoted to deadly combat. Yet it struck his natural acuteness of observation, that the eye of the gallant cavalier did now and then, furtively as it were, seek a glance of his countenance, as to discover how he was taking the exhibition of his antagonist's composure and serenity of mind.

He shall read nothing in my countenance, thought Halbert, proudly, that can make him think my indifference less than his own.

And taking from the shelf a bag full of miscellaneous matters collected for the purpose, he began with great industry to dress hooks, and had finished half-a-dozen of flies (we are enabled, for the benefit of those who admire the antiquities of the gentle art of angling, to state that they were brown hackles) by the time that Sir Piercie had arrived at the conclusion of his long-winded strophes of the divine Astrophel. So that he also testified a magnanimous contempt of that which to-morrow should bring forth.

As it now waxed late, the family of Glendearg separated for the evening; Sir Piercie first saying to the dame that "her son Albert ——"

"Halbert," said Elspeth, with emphasis, "Halbert, after his goodsire, Halbert Brydone."

"Well, then, I have prayed your son, Halbert, that we may strive to-morrow, with the sun's earliness, to wake a stag from his lair, that I may see whether he be as prompt at that sport as fame bespeaks him."

"Alas! sir," answered Dame Elspeth, "he is but too prompt, an you talk of promptitude, at any thing that has steel at one end of it, and mischief at the other. But he is at your honourable disposal, and I trust you will teach him how obedience is due to our venerable father and lord, the Abbot, and prevail with him to take the bow-bearer's place in fee; for, as the two worthy monks said, it will be a great help to a widow-woman."

"Trust me, good dame," replied Sir Piercie, "it is my purpose so to indoctrinate him, touching his conduct and bearing towards his betters, that he shall not lightly depart from the reverence due to them. — We meet, then, beneath the birch-trees in the plain," he said, looking to Halbert, "so soon as the eye of day hath opened its lids." — Halbert answered with a sign of acquiescence, and the knight proceeded, "And now, having wished to my fairest Discretion those pleasant dreams which wave their pinions around the couch of sleeping beauty, and to this comely damsel the bounties of Morpheus, and to all others the common good-night, I will crave you leave to depart to my place of rest, though I may say with the poet,

> 'Ah rest! — no rest but change of place and posture:
> Ah sleep! — no sleep but worn-out Nature's swooning;
> Ah bed! — no bed but cushion fill'd with stones:
> Rest, sleep, nor bed, await not on an exile.'"

With a delicate obeisance he left the room, evading Dame Glendinning, who hastened to assure him he would find his accommodations for repose much more agreeable than they had been the night before, there having been store of warm coverlets, and a soft feather-bed, sent up from the Abbey. But the good knight probably thought that the grace and effect of his exit would be diminished, if he were recalled from his heroics to discuss such sublunary and domestic topics, and therefore hastened away without waiting to hear her out.

"A pleasant gentleman," said Dame Glendinning; "but I will warrant him an humorous[1] — And sings a sweet song, though it is somewhat of the longest. — Well, I make mine avow he is goodly company — I wonder when he will go away."

Having thus expressed her respect for her guest, not without intimation that she was heartily tired of his company, the good dame gave the signal for the family to disperse, and laid her injunctions on Halbert to attend Sir Piercie Shafton at daybreak, as he required.

When stretched on his pallet by his brother's side, Halbert had no small cause to envy the sound sleep which instantly settled on the eyes of Edward, but refused him any share of its influence. He saw now too well what the spirit had darkly indicated, that, in granting the boon which he had asked so unadvisedly, she had contributed more to his harm than his good. He was now sensible, too late, of the various dangers and inconveniences with which his dearest friends were threatened, alike by his discomfiture or his success in the

[1] *Humorous* — full of whims — thus Shakspeare, "Humorous as winter." — The vulgar word humorsome comes nearest to the meaning.

approaching duel. If he fell, he might say personally, "good-night all." But it was not the less certain that he should leave a dreadful legacy of distress and embarrassment to his mother and family,—an anticipation which by no means tended to render the front of death, in itself a grisly object, more agreeable to his imagination. The vengeance of the Abbot, his conscience told him, was sure to descend on his mother and brother, or could only be averted by the generosity of the victor — And Mary Avenel — he should have shewn himself, if he succumbed in the present combat, as inefficient in protecting her, as he had been unnecessarily active in bringing disaster on her, and on the house in which she had been protected from infancy. And to this view of the case were to be added all those imbittered and anxious feelings with which the bravest men, even in a better or less doubtful quarrel, regard the issue of a dubious conflict, the first time when it has been their fate to engage in an affair of that nature.

But however disconsolate the prospect seemed in the event of his being conquered, Halbert could expect from victory little more than the safety of his own life, and the gratification of his wounded pride. To his friends — to his mother and brother — especially to Mary Avenel — the consequences of his triumph would be more certain destruction than the contingency of his defeat and death. If the English knight survived, he might in courtesy extend his protection to them; but if he fell, nothing was likely to screen them from the vindictive measures which the Abbot and convent would surely adopt against the violation of the peace of the Halidome, and the slaughter of a protected guest by one of their own vassals, within whose house they had lodged him for shelter. These thoughts, in which neither view of the case augured aught short of ruin to his family, and that ruin entirely brought on by his own rashness, were thorns in Halbert Glendinning's pillow, and deprived his soul of peace and his eyes of slumber.

There appeared no middle course, saving one which was marked by degradation, and which, even if he stooped to it, was by no means free of danger. He might indeed confess to the English knight the strange circumstances which led to his presenting him with that token which the White Lady (in her displeasure as it now seemed) had given him, that he might offer it to Sir Piercie Shafton. But to this avowal his pride could not stoop, and reason, who is wonderfully ready to be of counsel with pride on such occasions, offered many arguments to shew it would be useless as well as mean so far to degrade himself. "If I tell a tale so wonderful," thought he, "shall I not either be stigmatized as a liar, or punished as a wizard? — Were Sir Piercie Shafton generous, noble, and benevolent, as the champions of whom we hear in romance, I might indeed gain his ear, and, without demeaning myself, escape from the situation in which I am placed. But as he is, or at least seems to be, self-conceited, arrogant, vain, and presumptuous — I should but humble myself in vain — and I will not humble myself!" he said, starting out of bed, grasping to his broadsword, and brandishing it in the light of the moon, which streamed through the deep niche that served them as a window; when, to his extreme surprise and terror, an airy form stood in the moonlight, but intercepted not the reflection on the floor. Dimly as it was expressed, the sound of the voice soon made him sensible he saw the White Lady.

At no time had her presence seemed so terrific to him; for when he had invoked her, it was with the expectation of the apparition, and the determination to abide the issue. But now she had come uncalled, and her presence impressed him with a sense of approaching misfortune, and with the hideous apprehension that he had associated himself with a demon, over whose motions he had no control, and of whose powers and quality he had no certain knowledge. He remained, therefore, in mere terror, gazing on the apparition, which chanted or recited in cadence the following lines —

> "He whose heart for vengeance sued,
> Must not shrink from shedding blood;
> The knot that thou hast tied with word,
> Thou must loose by edge of sword."

"Avaunt thee, false Spirit!" said Halbert Glendinning; "I have bought thy advice too dearly already — Begone in the name of God!"

The Spirit laughed; and the cold unnatural sound of her laughter had something in it more fearful than the usual melancholy tones of her voice. She then replied, —

> "You have summon'd me once—you have summon'd me twice,
> And without e'er a summons I come to you thrice;
> Unask'd for, unsued for, you came to my glen;
> Unsued and unask'd I am with you again."

Halbert Glendinning gave way for a moment to terror, and called on his brother, "Edward! waken, waken, for Our Lady's sake!"

Edward awaked accordingly, and asked what he wanted.

"Look out," said Halbert, "look up! seest thou no one in the room?"

"No, upon my good word," said Edward, looking out.

"What! seest thou nothing in the moonshine upon the floor there?"

"No, nothing," answered Edward, "save thyself resting on thy naked sword. I tell thee, Halbert, thou shouldst trust more to thy spiritual arms, and less to those of steel and iron. For this many a night hast thou started and moaned, and cried out of fighting, and of spectres, and of goblins — thy sleep hath not refreshed thee — thy waking hath been a dream. — Credit me, dear Halbert, say the *Pater* and *Credo*, resign thyself to the protection of God, and thou wilt sleep sound and wake in comfort."

"It may be," said Halbert slowly, and having his eye still bent on the female form which to him seemed distinctly visible, — "it may be — But tell me, dear Edward, seest thou no one on the chamber floor but me?"

"No one," answered Edward, raising himself on his elbow; "dear brother, lay aside thy weapon, say thy prayers, and lay thee down to rest."

While he thus spoke, the Spirit smiled at Halbert as if in scorn; her wan cheek faded in the wan moonlight even before the smile had passed away, and Halbert himself no longer beheld the vision to which he had so anxiously solicited his brother's attention. "May God preserve my wits!" he said, as, laying aside his weapon, he again threw himself on his bed.

"Amen! my dearest brother," answered Edward; "but we must not provoke that Heaven in our wantonness which we invoke in our misery. — Be

not angry with me, my dear brother — I know not why you have totally of late estranged yourself from me — It is true, I am neither so athletic in body, nor so alert in courage, as you have been from your infancy ; yet, till lately, you have not absolutely cast off my society — Believe me, I have wept in secret, though I forbore to intrude myself on your privacy. The time has been when you held me not so cheap ; and when, if I could not follow the game so closely, or mark it so truly as you, I could fill up our intervals of pastime with pleasant tales of the olden times, which I had read or heard, and which excited even your attention as we sate and eat our provision by some pleasant spring — but now I have, though I know not why, lost thy regard and affection. — Nay, toss not thy arms about thee thus wildly," said the younger brother ; " from thy strange dreams, I fear some touch of fever hath affected thy blood — let me draw closer around thee thy mantle."

" Forbear," said Halbert — " your care is needless — your complaints are without reason — your fears on my account are in vain."

" Nay, but hear me, brother," said Edward. " Your speech in sleep, and now even your waking dreams, are of beings which belong not to this world, or to our race — Our good Father Eustace says, that howbeit we may not do well to receive all idle tales of goblins and spectres, yet there is warrant from holy Scripture to believe, that the fiends haunt waste and solitary places ; and that those who frequent such wildernesses alone, are the prey, or the sport, of these wandering demons. And therefore, I pray thee, brother, let me go with you when you go next up the glen, where, as you well know, there be places of evil reputation — Thou carest not for my escort ; but, Halbert, such dangers are more safely encountered by the wise in judgment, than by the bold in bosom ; and though I have small cause to boast of my own wisdom, yet I have that which ariseth from the written knowledge of elder times."

There was a moment during this discourse, when Halbert had well-nigh come to the resolution of disburdening his own breast, by intrusting Edward with all that weighed upon it. But when his brother reminded him that this was the morning of a high holiday, and that, setting aside all other business or pleasure, he ought to go to the Monastery and shrive himself before Father Eustace, who would that day occupy the confessional, pride stepped in and confirmed his wavering resolution. " I will not avow," he thought, " a tale so extraordinary, that I may be considered as an impostor or something worse — I will not fly from this Englishman, whose arm and sword may be no better than my own. My fathers have faced his betters, were he as much distinguished in battle as he is by his quaint discourse."

Pride, which has been said to save man, and woman too, from falling, has yet a stronger influence on the mind when it embraces the cause of passion, and seldom fails to render it victorious over conscience and reason. Halbert, once determined, though not to the better course, at length slept soundly, and was only awakened by the dawn of day.

CHAPTER XXI.

> Indifferent, but indifferent — pshaw, he doth it not
> Like one who is his craft's master — ne'er the less
> I have seen a clown confer a bloody coxcomb
> On one who was a master of defence.
>
> *Old Play*

With the first gray peep of dawn, Halbert Glendinning arose and hastened to dress himself, girded on his weapon, and took a cross-bow in his hand, as if his usual sport had been his sole object. He groped his way down the dark and winding staircase, and undid, with as little noise as possible, the fastenings of the inner door, and of the exterior iron grate. At length he stood free in the courtyard, and looking up to the tower, saw a signal made with a handkerchief from the window. Nothing doubting that it was his antagonist, he paused expecting him. But it was Mary Avenel, who glided like a spirit from under the low and rugged portal.

Halbert was much surprised, and felt, he knew not why, like one caught in the act of a meditated trespass. The presence of Mary Avenel had till that moment never given him pain. She spoke, too, in a tone where sorrow seemed to mingle with reproach, while she asked him with emphasis, " What he was about to do ?"

He shewed his cross-bow, and was about to express the pretext he had meditated, when Mary interrupted him.

" Not so, Halbert — that evasion were unworthy of one whose word has hitherto been truth. You meditate not the destruction of the deer — your hand and your heart are aimed at other game — you seek to do battle with this stranger."

" And wherefore should I quarrel with our guest ?" answered Halbert, blushing deeply.

" There are, indeed, many reasons why you should not," replied the maiden, " nor is there one of avail wherefore you should — yet nevertheless, such a quarrel you are now searching after."

" Why should you suppose so, Mary ?" said Halbert, endeavouring to hide his conscious purpose — " he is my mother's guest — he is protected by the Abbot and the community, who are our masters — he is of high degree also, — and wherefore should you think that I can, or dare, resent a hasty word, which he has perchance thrown out against me more from the wantonness of his wit, than the purpose of his heart ?"

" Alas !" answered the maiden, " the very asking that question puts your resolution beyond a doubt. Since your childhood you were ever daring, seeking danger rather than avoiding it — delighting in whatever had the air of adventure and of courage : and it is not from fear that you will now blench from your purpose — Oh, let it then be from pity ! — from pity, Halbert, to your aged mother, whom your death or victory will alike deprive of the comfort and stay of her age."

" She has my brother Edward," said Halbert turning suddenly from her.

" She has indeed," said Mary Avenel, " the calm, the noble-minded, the considerate Edward, who has thy courage, Halbert, without thy fiery rashness, — thy generous spirit, with more of reason to guide it. He would not have heard his mother, would not have heard his adopted sister, beseech

him in vain not to ruin himself, and tear up their future hopes of happiness and protection."

Halbert's heart swelled as he replied to this reproach. "Well — what avails it speaking? — you have him that is better than me — wiser, more considerate — braver, for aught I know — you are provided with a protector, and need care no more for me."

Again he turned to depart, but Mary Avenel laid her hand on his arm so gently that he scarce felt her hold, yet felt that it was impossible for him to strike it off. There he stood, one foot advanced to leave the court-yard, but so little determined on departure, that he resembled a traveller arrested by the spell of a magician, and unable either to quit the attitude of motion, or to proceed on his course.

Mary Avenel availed herself of his state of suspense. "Hear me," she said, "hear me, Halbert! — I am an orphan, and even Heaven hears the orphan — I have been the companion of your infancy, and if *you* will not hear me for an instant, from whom may Mary Avenel claim so poor a boon?"

"I hear you," said Halbert Glendinning, "but be brief, dear Mary — you mistake the nature of my business — it is but a morning of summer sport which we propose."

"Say not thus," said the maiden, interrupting him, "say not thus to me — others thou mayst deceive, but me thou canst not — There has been that in me from the earliest youth, which fraud flies from, and which imposture cannot deceive. For what fate has given me such a power I know not; but bred an ignorant maiden, in this sequestered valley, mine eyes can too often see what man would most willingly hide — I can judge of the dark purpose, though it is hid under the smiling brow, and a glance of the eye says more to me than oaths and protestations do to others."

"Then," said Halbert, "if thou canst so read the human heart, — say, dear Mary — what dost thou see in mine? — tell me that — say that what thou seest — what thou readest in this bosom, does not offend thee — say but *that*, and thou shalt be the guide of my actions, and mould me now and henceforward to honour or to dishonour at thy own free will!"

Mary Avenel became first red, and then deadly pale, as Halbert Glendinning spoke. But when, turning round at the close of his address, he took her hand, she gently withdrew it, and replied, "I cannot read the heart, Halbert, and I would not of my will know aught of yours, save what beseems us both — I only can judge of signs, words, and actions of little outward import, more truly than those around me, as my eyes, thou knowest, have seen objects not presented to those of others."

"Let them gaze then on one whom they shall never see more," said Halbert, once more turning from her, and rushing out of the court-yard without again looking back.

Mary Avenel gave a faint scream, and clasped both her hands firmly on her forehead and eyes. She had been a minute in this attitude, when she was thus greeted by a voice from behind: "Generously done, my most clement Discretion, to hide those brilliant eyes from the far inferior beams which even now begin to gild the eastern horizon — Certes, peril there were that Phœbus, outshone in splendour, might in very shamefacedness turn back his car, and rather leave the world in darkness, than incur the disgrace of such an encounter — Credit me, lovely Discretion ——"

But as Sir Piercie Shafton (the reader will readily set down these flowers of eloquence to the proper owner) attempted to take Mary Avenel's hand, in order to proceed in his speech, she shook him abruptly off, and regarding him with an eye which evinced terror and agitation, rushed past him into the tower.

The knight stood looking after her with a countenance in which contempt was strongly mingled with mortification. "By my knighthood!" he ejaculated, "I have thrown away upon this rude rustic Phidelé a speech, which the proudest beauty at the court of Felicia (so let me call the Elysium from which I am banished!) might have termed the very matins of Cupid. Hard and inexorable was the fate that sent thee thither, Piercie Shafton, to waste thy wit upon country wenches, and thy valour upon hob-nailed clowns! But that insult — that affront — had it been offered to me by the lowest plebeian, he must have died for it by my hand, in respect the enormity of the offence doth countervail the inequality of him by whom it is given. I trust I shall find this clownish roisterer not less willing to deal in blows than in taunts."

While he held this conversation with himself, Sir Piercie Shafton was hastening to the little tuft of birch-trees which had been assigned as the place of meeting. He greeted his antagonist with a courtly salutation, followed by this commentry: "I pray you to observe, that I doff my hat to you, though so much my inferior in rank, without derogation on my part, inasmuch as my having so far honoured you in receiving and admitting your defiance, doth, in the judgment of the best martialists, in some sort and for the time, raise you to a level with me — an honour which you may and ought to account cheaply purchased, even with the loss of your life, if such should chance to be the issue of this duello."

"For which condescension," said Halbert, "I have to thank the token which I presented to you."

The knight changed colour, and grinded his teeth with rage — "Draw your weapon!" said he to Glendinning.

"Not in this spot," answered the youth; "we should be liable to interruption — Follow me, and I will bring you to a place where we shall encounter no such risk."

He proceeded to walk up the glen, resolving that their place of combat should be in the entrance of the Corri-nan-shian; both because the spot, lying under the reputation of being haunted, was very little frequented, and also because he regarded it as a place which to him might be termed fated, and which he therefore resolved should witness his death or victory.

They walked up the glen for some time in silence, like honourable enemies who did not wish to contend with words, and who had nothing friendly to exchange with each other. Silence, however, was always an irksome state with Sir Piercie, and, moreover, his anger was usually a hasty and short-lived passion. As, therefore, he went forth, in his own idea, in all love and honour towards his antagonist, he saw not any cause for submitting longer to the painful restraint of positive silence.

He began by complimenting Halbert on the alert activity with which he surmounted the obstacles and impediments of the way.

"Trust me," said he, "worthy rustic, we have not a lighter or a firmer step in our courtlike revels, and if duly set forth by a silk hose, and trained unto that stately exercise, your leg would make an indifferent good show in a pavin or a galliard. And I doubt nothing," he added, "that you have availed yourself of some opportunity to improve yourself in the art of fence, which is more akin than dancing to our present purpose?"

"I know nothing more of fencing," said Halbert, "than hath been taught me by an old shepherd of ours, called Martin, and at whiles a lesson from Christie of the Clinthill — for the rest, I must trust to good sword, strong arm, and sound heart."

"Marry and I am glad of it, young Audacity, (I will call you my Audacity, and you will call me your Condescension, while we are on these terms of unnatural equality,) I am glad of your ignorance with all my heart. For we martialists proportion the punishments which we inflict upon our opposites, to the length and hazard of the efforts wherewith they oppose themselves to us. And I see not why you, being but a tyro, may not be held sufficiently punished for your outrecuidance, and orgillous presumption, by the loss of an ear, an eye, or even a finger, accompanied by some flesh-wound of depth and severity, suited to your error — whereas, had you been able to stand more effectually on your defence, I see not how less than your life could have atoned sufficiently for your presumption."

"Now, by God and Our Lady," said Halbert, unable any longer to restrain himself, "thou art thyself over presumptuous, who speakest thus daringly of the issue of a combat which is not yet even begun — Are you a god, that you already dispose of my life and limbs? or are you a judge in the justice-air, telling at your ease and without risk, how the head and quarters of a condemned criminal are to be disposed of?"

"Not so, O thou, whom I have well permitted to call thyself my Audacity? I, thy Condescension, am neither a god to judge the issue of the combat before it is fought, nor a judge to dispose at my ease and in safety of the limbs and head of a condemned criminal; but I am an indifferent good master of fence, being the first pupil of the first master of the first school of fence that our royal England affords, the said master being no other than the truly noble, and all-unutterably-skilful Vincentio Saviola, from whom I learned the firm step, quick eye, and nimble hand — of which qualities thou, O my most rustical Audacity, art full like to reap the fruits so soon as we shall find a piece of ground fitting for such experiments."

They had now reached the gorge of the ravine, where Halbert had at first intended to stop; but when he observed the narrowness of the level ground, he began to consider that it was only by superior agility that he could expect to make up his deficiency in the science, as it was called, of defence. He found no spot which afforded sufficient room to traverse for this purpose, until he gained the well-known fountain, by whose margin, and in front of the huge rock from which it sprung, was an amphitheatre of level turf, of small space indeed, compared with the great height of the cliffs with which it was surrounded on every point save that from which the rivulet issued forth, yet large enough for their present purpose.

When they had reached this spot of ground, fitted well by its gloom and sequestered situation to be a scene of mortal strife, both were surprised to observe that a grave was dug close by the foot of the rock with great neatness and regularity, the green turf being laid down upon the one side, and the earth thrown out in a heap upon the other. A mattock and shovel lay by the verge of the grave.

Sir Piercie Shafton bent his eye with unusual seriousness upon Halbert Glendinning, as he asked him sternly, "Does this bode treason, young man? And have you purpose to set upon me here as in an emboscata or place of vantage?"

"Not on my part, by Heaven!" answered the youth: "I told no one of our purpose, nor would I for the throne of Scotland take odds against a single arm."

"I believe thou wouldst not, mine Audacity," said the knight, resuming the affected manner which was become a second nature to him; "nevertheless this fosse is curiously well shaped, and might be the masterpiece of Nature's last bedmaker, I would say the sexton — Wherefore, let us be thankful to chance or some unknown friend, who hath thus provided for one of us the decencies of sepulture, and let us proceed to determine which shall have the advantage of enjoying this place of undisturbed slumber."

So saying, he stripped off his doublet and cloak, which he folded up with great care, and deposited upon a large stone, while Halbert Glendinning, not without some emotion, followed his example. Their vicinity to the favourite haunt of the White Lady led him to form conjectures concerning the incident of the grave — "It must have been her work!" he thought: "the Spirit foresaw and has provided for the fatal event of the combat — I must return from this place a homicide, or I must remain here for ever!"

The bridge seemed now broken down behind him, and the chance of coming off honourably without killing or being killed, (the hope of which issue has cheered the sinking heart of many a duellist,) seemed now altogether to be removed. Yet the very desperation of his situation gave him, on an instant's reflection, both firmness and courage, and presented to him one sole alternative, conquest, namely, or death.

"As we are here," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "unaccompanied by any patrons or seconds, it were well you should pass your hands over my side, as I shall over yours; not that I suspect you to use any quaint device of privy armour, but in order to comply with the ancient and laudable custom practised on all such occasions."

While, complying with his antagonist's humour, Halbert Glendinning went through this ceremony, Sir Piercie Shafton did not fail to solicit his attention to the quality and fineness of his wrought and embroidered shirt — "In this very shirt," said he, "O mine Audacity! — I say in this very garment, in which I am now to combat a Scottish rustic like thyself, it was my envied lot to lead the winning party at that wondrous match at ballon, made betwixt the divine Astrophel, (our matchless Sidney,) and the right honourable my very good lord of Oxford. All the beauties of Felicia (by which

name I distinguish our beloved England) stood in the gallery, waving their kerchiefs at each turn of the game, and cheering the winners by their plaudits. After which noble sport we were refreshed by a suitable banquet, whereat it pleased the noble Urania (being the unmatched Countess of Pembroke) to accommodate me with her fan for the cooling my somewhat too much inflamed visage, to requite which courtesy, I said, casting my features into a smiling yet melancholy fashion, O divinest Urania ! receive again that too fatal gift, which not like the Zephyr cooleth, but like the hot breath of the Sirocco, heateth yet more that which is already inflamed. Whereupon, looking upon me somewhat scornfully, yet not so but what the experienced courtier might perceive a certain cast of approbative affection ——"

Here the knight was interrupted by Halbert, who had waited with courteous patience for some little time, till he found, that far from drawing to a close, Sir Piercie seemed rather inclined to wax prolix in his reminiscences.

"Sir Knight," said the youth, "if this matter be not very much to the purpose, we will, if you object not, proceed to that which we have in hand. You should have abidden in England had you desired to waste time in words, for here we spend it in blows."

"I crave your pardon, most rusticated Audacity," answered Sir Piercie; "truly I become oblivous of every thing beside, when the recollections of the divine court of Felicia press upon my wakened memory, even as a saint is dazzled when he bethinks him of the beatific vision. Ah, felicitous Feliciana ! delicate nurse of the fair, chosen abode of the wise, the birth-place and cradle of nobility, the temple of courtesy, the fane of sprightly chivalry —Ah heavenly court, or rather courtly heaven ! cheered with dances, lulled asleep with harmony, wakened with sprightly sports and tourneys, decored with silks and tissues, glittering with diamonds and jewels, standing on end with double piled velvets, satins, and satinettas !"

"The token, Sir Knight, the token !" exclaimed Halbert Glendinning, who, impatient of Sir Piercie's interminable oratory, reminded him of the ground of their quarrel, as the best way to compel him to the purpose of their meeting.

And he judged right; for Sir Piercie Shafton no sooner heard him speak, than he exclaimed, "Thy death-hour has struck — betake thee to thy sword — Via !"

Both swords were unsheathed, and the combatants commenced their engagement. Halbert became immediately aware, that, as he had expected, he was far inferior to his adversary in the use of his weapon. Sir Piercie Shafton had taken no more than his own share of real merit, when he termed himself an absolutely good fencer; and Glendinning soon found that he should have great difficulty in escaping with life and honour from such a master of the sword. The English knight was master of all the mystery of the *stoccata*, *imbrocata*, *punto-reverso*, *incartata*, and so forth, which the Italian masters of defence had lately introduced into general practice. But Glendinning, on his part, was no novice in the principles of the art, according to the old Scottish fashion, and possessed the first of all qualities, a steady and collected mind. At first, being desirous to try the skill, and become acquainted with the play of his enemy, he stood on his defence, keeping his foot, hand, eye, and body, in perfect unison, and holding his sword short, and with the point towards his antagonist's face, so that Sir Piercie, in order to assail him, was obliged to make actual passes, and could not avail himself of his skill in making feints; while, on the other hand, Halbert was prompt to parry these attacks, either by shifting his ground, or with the sword. The consequence was, that after two or three sharp attempts on the part of Sir Piercie, which were evaded or disconcerted by the address of his opponent, he began to assume the defensive in his turn, fearful of giving some advantage by being repeatedly the assailant. But Halbert was too cautious to press on a swordsman whose dexterity had already more than once placed him within a hair's-breadth of death, which he had only escaped by uncommon watchfulness and agility.

When each had made a feint or two, there was a pause in the conflict, both as if by one assent dropping their swords' point, and looking on each other for a moment without speaking. At length Halbert Glendinning, who felt perhaps more uneasy on account of his family than he had done before he had displayed his own courage, and proved the strength of his antagonist, could not help saying, "Is the subject of our quarrel, Sir Knight, so mortal, that one of our two bodies must needs fill up that grave ? or may we with honour, having proved ourselves against each other, sheathe our swords and depart friends ?"

"Valiant and most rustical Audacity," said the Southron knight, "to no man on earth could you have put a question on the code of honour, who was more capable of rendering you a reason. Let us pause for the space of one venue, until I give you my opinion on this dependence;[1] for certain it is, that brave men should not run upon their fate like brute and furious wild beasts, but should slay each other deliberately, decently, and with reason. Therefore, if we coolly examine the state of our dependence, we may the better apprehend whether the sisters three have doomed one of us to expiate the same with his blood — Dost thou understand me ?"

"I have heard Father Eustace," said Halbert, after a moment's recollection, "speak of the three furies, with their thread and their shears."

"Enough — enough," — interrupted Sir Piercie Shafton, crimsoning with a new fit of rage, "the thread of thy life is spun !"

And with these words he attacked with the utmost ferocity the Scottish youth, who had but just time to throw himself into a posture of defence. But the rash fury of the assailant, as frequently happens, disappointed its own purpose; for, as he made a desperate thrust, Halbert Glendinning avoided it, and ere the knight could recover his weapon, requited him (to use his own language) with a resolute stoccata, which passed through his body, and Sir Piercie Shafton fell to the ground.

[1] *Dependence* — A phrase among the brethren of the sword for an existing quarrel.

CHAPTER XXII.

Yes, life hath left him — every busy thought,
Each fiery passion, every strong affection,
All sense of outward ill and inward sorrow,
Are fled at once from the pale trunk before me;
And I have given that which spoke and moved,
Thought, acted, suffer'd as a living man,
To be a ghastly form of bloody clay,
Soon the foul food for reptiles.

Old Play.

I BELIEVE few successful duellists (if the word successful can be applied to a superiority so fatal) have beheld their dead antagonist stretched on the earth at their feet, without wishing they could redeem with their own blood that which it has been their fate to spill. Least of all could such indifference be the lot of so young a man as Halbert Glendinning, who, unused to the sight of human blood, was not only struck with sorrow, but with terror, when he beheld Sir Piercie Shafton lie stretched on the green-sward before him, vomiting gore as if impelled by the strokes of a pump. He threw his bloody sword on the ground, and hastened to kneel down and support him, vainly striving, at the same time, to stanch his wound, which seemed rather to bleed inwardly than externally.

The unfortunate knight spoke at intervals, when the syncope would permit him, and his words, so far as intelligible, partook of his affected and conceited, yet not ungenerous character.

"Most rustical youth," he said, "thy fortune hath prevailed over knightly skill — and Audacity hath overcome Condescension, even as the kite hath sometimes hawked at and struck down the falcon-gentle. — Fly and save thyself! — Take my purse — it is in the nether pocket of my carnation-coloured hose — and is worth a clown's acceptance. See that my mails, with my vestments, be sent to the Monastery of St Mary's" — (here his voice grew weak, and his mind and recollection seemed to waver) — "I bestow the cut velvet jerkin, with close breeches conforming — for — oh! — the good of my soul."

"Be of good comfort, sir," said Halbert, half distracted with his agony of pity and remorse. "I trust you shall yet do well — Oh for a leech!"

"Were there twenty physicians, O most generous Audacity, and that were a grave spectacle — I might not survive, my life is ebbing fast. — Commend me to the rustical nymph whom I called my Discretion — O Claridiana! — true empress of this bleeding heart — which now bleedeth in sad earnest! — Place me on the ground at my length, most rustical victor, born to quench the pride of the burning light of the most felicitous court of Feliciana — O saints and angels — knights and ladies — masques and theatres — quaint devices — chain-work and broidery — love, honour, and beauty! ——"

While muttering these last words, which slid from him, as it were unawares, while doubtless he was recalling to mind the glories of the English court, the gallant Sir Piercie Shafton stretched out his limbs — groaned deeply, shut his eyes, and became motionless.

The victor tore his hair for very sorrow, as he looked on the pale countenance of his victim. Life, he thought, had not utterly fled, but without better aid than his own, he saw not how it could be preserved.

"Why," he exclaimed, in vain penitence, "why did I provoke him to an issue so fatal! Would to God I had submitted to the worst insult man could receive from man, rather than be the bloody instrument of this bloody deed — and doubly cursed be this evil-boding spot, which, haunted as I knew it to be by a witch or a devil, I yet chose for the place of combat! In any other place, save this, there had been help to be gotten by speed of foot, or by uplifting of voice — but here there is no one to be found by search, no one to hear my shouts, save the evil spirit who has counselled this mischief. It is not her hour — I will essay the spell howsoever; and if she can give me aid, she *shall* do it, or know of what a madman is capable even against those of another world!"

He spurned his bloody shoe from his foot, and repeated the spell with which the reader is well acquainted; but there was neither voice, apparition, nor signal of answer. The youth, in the impatience of his despair, and with the rash hardihood which formed the basis of his character, shouted aloud "Witch — Sorceress — Fiend! — art thou deaf to my cries of help, and so ready to appear and answer those of vengeance? Arise and speak to me, or I will choke up thy fountain, tear down thy hollybush, and leave thy haunt as waste and bare as thy fatal assistance has made me waste of comfort and bare of counsel!" — This furious and raving invocation was suddenly interrupted by a distant sound, resembling a hollo, from the gorge of the ravine. "Now may Saint Mary be praised," said the youth, hastily fastening his sandal, "I hear the voice of some living man, who may give me counsel and help in this fearful extremity."

Having donned his sandal, Halbert Glendinning, hallooing at intervals, in answer to the sound which he had heard, ran with the speed of a hunted buck down the rugged defile, as if paradise had been before him, hell and all her furies behind, and his eternal happiness or misery had depended upon the speed which he exerted. In a space incredibly short for any one but a Scottish mountaineer having his nerves strung by the deepest and most passionate interest, the youth reached the entrance of the ravine, through which the rill that flows down Corri-nan-shian discharges itself, and unites with the brook that waters the little valley of Glendearg.

Here he paused, and looked around him upwards and downwards through the glen, without perceiving a human form. His heart sank within him. But the windings of the glen intercepted his prospect, and the person, whose voice he had heard, might therefore, be at no great distance, though not obvious to his sight. The branches of an oak-tree, which shot straight out from the face of a tall cliff, proffered to his bold spirit, steady head, and active limbs, the means of ascending it as a place of out-look, although the enterprise was what most men would have shrunk from. But by one bound from the earth, the active youth caught hold of the lower branch, and swung himself up into the tree, and in a minute more gained the top of the cliff, from which he could easily descry a human figure descending the valley. It was not that of a shepherd, or of a hunter, and scarcely any others used to traverse this deserted solitude,

especially coming from the north, since the reader may remember that the brook took its rise from an extensive and dangerous morass which lay in that direction.

But Halbert Glendinning did not pause to consider who the traveller might be, or what might be the purpose of his journey. To know that he saw a human being, and might receive, in the extremity of his distress, the countenance and advice of a fellow-creature, was enough for him at the moment. He threw himself from the pinnacle of the cliff once more into the arms of the projecting oak-tree, whose boughs waved in middle air, anchored by the roots in a huge rift, or chasm of the rock. Catching at the branch which was nearest to him, he dropped himself from that height upon the ground; and such was the athletic springiness of his youthful sinews, that he pitched there as lightly, and with as little injury, as the falcon stooping from her wheel.

To resume his race at full speed up the glen, was the work of an instant; and as he turned angle after angle of the indented banks of the valley, without meeting that which he sought, he became half afraid that the form which he had seen at such a distance had already melted into thin air, and was either a deception of his own imagination, or of the elementary spirits by which the valley was supposed to be haunted.

But, to his inexpressible joy, as he turned round the base of a huge and distinguished crag, he saw, straight before and very near to him, a person, whose dress, as he viewed it hastily, resembled that of a pilgrim.

He was a man in advanced life, and wearing a long beard, having on his head a large slouched hat, without either band or brooch. His dress was a tunic of black serge, which like those commonly called hussar-cloaks, had an upper part, which covered the arms and fell down on the lower; a small scrip and bottle, which hung at his back, with a stout staff in his hand, completed his equipage. His step was feeble, like that of one exhausted by a toilsome journey.

"Save ye, good father!" said the youth. "God and Our Lady have sent you to my assistance."

"And in what, my son, can so frail a creature as I am, be of service to you?" said the old man, not a little surprised at being thus accosted by so handsome a youth, his features discomposed by anxiety, his face flushed with exertion, his hands and much of his dress stained with blood.

"A man bleeds to death in the valley here, hard by. Come with me—come with me! You are aged—you have experience— you have at least your senses—and mine have well-nigh left me."

"A man—and bleeding to death—and here in this desolate spot!" said the stranger.

"Stay not to question it, father," said the youth, but come instantly to his rescue. Follow me—follow me, without an instant's delay."

"Nay, but, my son," said the old man, "we do not lightly follow the guides who present themselves thus suddenly in the bosom of a howling wilderness. Ere I follow thee, thou must expound to me thy name, thy purpose, and thy cause."

"There is no time to expound any thing," said Halbert; "I tell thee a man's life is at stake, and thou must come to aid him, or I will carry thee thither by force!"

"Nay, thou shalt not need," said the traveller; "if it indeed be as thou sayest, I will follow thee of free-will—the rather that I am not wholly unskilled in leech-craft, and have in my scrip that which may do thy friend a service—Yet walk more slowly, I pray thee, for I am already well-nigh forespent with travel."

With the indignant impatience of the fiery steed when compelled by his rider to keep pace with some slow drudge upon the highway, Halbert accompanied the wayfarer, burning with anxiety which he endeavoured to subdue, that he might not alarm his companion, who was obviously afraid to trust him. When they reached the place where they were to turn off the wider glen into the Corri, the traveller made a doubtful pause, as if unwilling to leave the broader path—"Young man," he said, "if thou meanest aught but good to these gray hairs, thou wilt gain little by thy cruelty—I have no earthly treasure to tempt either robber or murderer."

"And I," said the youth, "am neither—and yet—God of Heaven!—I *may* be a murderer, unless your aid comes in time to this wounded wretch!"

"Is it even so," said the traveller; "and do human passions disturb the breast of nature even in her deepest solitude?—Yet why should I marvel that where darkness abides the works of darkness should abound?—By its fruits is the tree known—Lead on, unhappy youth—I follow thee!"

And with better will to the journey than he had evinced hitherto, the stranger exerted himself to the uttermost, and seemed to forget his own fatigue in his efforts to keep pace with his impatient guide.

What was the surprise of Halbert Glendinning, when, upon arriving at the fatal spot, he saw no appearance of the body of Sir Piercie Shafton! The traces of the fray were otherwise sufficiently visible. The knight's cloak had indeed vanished as well as his body, but his doublet remained where he had laid it down, and the turf on which he had been stretched was stained with blood in many a dark crimson spot.

As he gazed round him in terror and astonishment, Halbert's eyes fell upon the place of sepulture which had so lately appeared to gape for a victim. It was no longer open, and it seemed that earth had received the expected tenant; for the usual narrow hillock was piled over what had lately been an open grave, and the green sod was adjusted over all with the accuracy of an experienced sexton. Halbert stood aghast. The idea rushed on his mind irresistibly, that the earth-heap before him enclosed what had lately been a living, moving, and sentient fellow-creature, whom, on little provocation, his fell act had reduced to a clod of the valley, as senseless and as cold as the turf under which he rested. The hand that scooped the grave had completed its work; and whose hand could it be save that of the mysterious being of doubtful quality, whom his rashness had invoked, and whom he had suffered to intermingle in his destinies?

As he stood with clasped hands and uplifted eyes, bitterly rueing his rashness, he was roused by the voice of the stranger, whose suspicions of his guide had again been awakened by finding the scene so different from what Halbert had led him to expect.—"Young man," he said, "hast thou baited thy tongue with falsehood to cut perhaps

only a few days from the life of one whom Nature will soon call home, without guilt on thy part to hasten his journey?"

"By the blessed Heaven!—by our dear Lady!" ejaculated Halbert——

"Swear not at all!" said the stranger, interrupting him, "neither by Heaven, for it is God's throne, nor by earth, for it is his footstool—nor by the creatures whom he hath made, for they are but earth and clay as we are. Let thy yea be yea, and thy nay nay. Tell me in a word, why and for what purpose thou hast feigned a tale, to lead a bewildered traveller yet farther astray?"

"As I am a Christian man," said Glendinning, "I left him here bleeding to death—and now I no where spy him, and much I doubt that the tomb that thou seest has closed on his mortal remains!"

"And who is he for whose fate thou art so anxious?" said the stranger; "or how is it possible that this wounded man could have been either removed from, or interred in, a place so solitary?"

"His name," said Halbert, after a moment's pause, "is Piercie Shafton—there, on that very spot, I left him bleeding; and what power has conveyed him hence, I know no more than thou dost."

"Piercie Shafton?" said the stranger; "Sir Piercie Shafton of Wilverton, a kinsman, as it is said, of the great Piercie of Northumberland? If thou hast slain him, to return to the territories of the proud Abbot is to give thy neck to the gallows. He is well known that Piercie Shafton; the meddling tool of wiser plotters—a harebrained trafficker in treason—a champion of the Pope, employed as a forlorn hope by those more politic heads, who have more will to work mischief, than valour to encounter danger.—Come with me, youth, and save thyself from the evil consequences of this deed—Guide me to the Castle of Avenel, and thy reward shall be protection and safety."

Again Halbert paused, and summoned his mind to a hasty council. The vengeance with which the Abbot was likely to visit the slaughter of Shafton, his friend, and in some measure his guest, was likely to be severe; yet, in the various contingencies which he had considered previous to their duel, he had unaccountably omitted to reflect what was to be his line of conduct in case of Sir Piercie falling by his hand. If he returned to Glendearg, he was sure to draw on his whole family, including Mary Avenel, the resentment of the Abbot and community, whereas it was possible that flight might make him be regarded as the sole author of the deed, and might avert the indignation of the monks from the rest of the inhabitants of his paternal tower. Halbert recollected also the favour expressed for the household, and especially for Edward, by the Sub-Prior; and he conceived that he could, by communicating his own guilt to that worthy ecclesiastic, when at a distance from Glendearg, secure his powerful interposition in favour of his family. These thoughts rapidly passed through his mind, and he determined on flight. The stranger's company and his promised protection came in aid of that resolution; but he was unable to reconcile the invitation which the old man gave him to accompany him for safety to the Castle of Avenel, with the connections of Julian, the present usurper of that inheritance. "Good father," he said, "I fear that you mistake the man with whom you wish me to harbour. Avenel guided Piercie Shafton into Scotland, and his henchman, Christie of the Clinthill, brought the Southron hither."

"Of that," said the old man, "I am well aware. Yet if thou wilt trust to me, as I have shewn no reluctance to confide in thee, thou shalt find with Julian Avenel welcome, or at least safety."

"Father," replied Halbert, "though I can ill reconcile what thou sayest with what Julian Avenel hath done, yet caring little about the safety of a creature so lost as myself, and as thy words seem those of truth and honesty, and finally, as thou didst render thyself frankly up to my conduct I will return the confidence thou hast shewn, and accompany thee to the Castle of Avenel by a road which thou thyself couldst never have discovered." He led the way, and the old man followed for some time in silence.

CHAPTER XXIII.

'Tis when the wound is stiffening with the cold,
The warrior first feels pain—'tis when the heat
And fiery fever of his soul is pass'd,
The sinner feels remorse.

Old Play.

The feelings of compunction with which Halbert Glendinning was visited upon this painful occasion, were deeper than belonged to an age and country in which human life was held so cheap. They fell far short certainly of those which might have afflicted a mind regulated by better religious precepts, and more strictly trained under social laws; but still they were deep and severely felt, and divided in Halbert's heart even the regret with which he parted from Mary Avenel and the tower of his fathers.

The old traveller walked silently by his side for some time, and then addressed him.—"My son, it has been said that sorrow must speak or die—Why art thou so much cast down?—Tell me thy unhappy tale, and it may be that my gray head may devise counsel and aid for your young life."

"Alas!" said Halbert Glendinning, "can you wonder why I am cast down?—I am at this instant a fugitive from my father's house, from my mother, and from my friends, and I bear on my head the blood of a man who injured me but in idle words, which I have thus bloodily requited. My heart now tells me I have done evil—it were harder than these rocks if it could bear unmoved the thought, that I have sent this man to a long account, unhouseled and unshrieved!"

"Pause there, my son," said the traveller. "That thou hast defaced God's image in thy neighbour's person—that thou hast sent dust to dust in idle wrath or idler pride, is indeed a sin of the deepest dye—that thou hast cut short the space which Heaven might have allowed him for repentance, makes it yet more deadly—but for all this there is balm in Gilead."

"I understand you not, father," said Halbert, struck by the solemn tone which was assumed by his companion.

The old man proceeded. "Thou hast slain thine enemy—it was a cruel deed: thou hast cut him off perchance in his sins—it is a fearful aggravation

Do yet by my counsel, and in lieu of him whom thou hast perchance consigned to the kingdom of Satan, let thine efforts wrest another subject from the reign of the Evil One."

"I understand you, father," said Halbert; "thou wouldst have me atone for my rashness by doing service to the soul of my adversary — But how may this be? I have no money to purchase masses, and gladly would I go barefoot to the Holy Land to free his spirit from purgatory, only that——"

"My son," said the old man, interrupting him, "the sinner for whose redemption I entreat you to labour, is not the dead but the living. It is not for the soul of thine enemy I would exhort thee to pray — that has already had its final doom from a Judge as merciful as he is just; nor, wert thou to coin that rock into ducats, and obtain a mass for each one, would it avail the departed spirit. Where the tree hath fallen, it must lie. But the sapling, which hath in it yet the vigour and juice of life, may be bended to the point to which it ought to incline."

"Art thou a priest, father?" said the young man, "or by what commission dost thou talk of such high matters?"

"By that of my Almighty Master," said the traveller, "under whose banner I am an enlisted soldier."

Halbert's acquaintance with religious matters was no deeper than could be derived from the Archbishop of Saint Andrew's Catechism, and the pamphlet called the Twa-pennie Faith, both which were industriously circulated and recommended by the monks of Saint Mary's. Yet, however indifferent and superficial a theologian, he began to suspect that he was now in company with one of the gospellers, or heretics, before whose influence the ancient system of religion now tottered to the very foundation. Bred up, as may well be presumed, in a holy horror against these formidable sectaries, the youth's first feelings were those of a loyal and devoted church vassal. "Old man," he said, "wert thou able to make good with thy hand the words that thy tongue hath spoken against our Holy Mother Church, we should have tried upon this moor which of our creeds hath the better champion."

"Nay," said the stranger, "if thou art a true soldier of Rome, thou wilt not pause from thy purpose because thou hast the odds of years and of strength on thy side. Hearken to me, my son. I have shewed thee how to make thy peace with Heaven, and thou hast rejected my proffer. I will now shew thee how thou shalt make thy reconciliation with the powers of this world. Take this gray head from the frail body which supports it, and carry it to the chair of proud Abbot Boniface; and when thou tellest him thou hast slain Piercie Shafton, and his ire rises at the deed, lay the head of Henry Warden at his foot, and thou shalt have praise instead of censure."

Halbert Glendinning stepped back in surprise. "What! are you that Henry Warden so famous among the heretics, that even Knox's name is scarce more frequently in their mouths? Art thou he, and darest thou to approach the Halidome of Saint Mary's?"

"I am Henry Warden of a surety," said the old man, "far unworthy to be named in the same breath with Knox, but yet willing to venture on whatever dangers my master's service may call me to."

"Hearken to me, then," said Halbert; "to slay thee, I have no heart — to make thee prisoner, were equally to bring thy blood on my head — to leave thee in this wild without a guide, were little better. I will conduct thee, as I promised, in safety to the Castle of Avenel; but breathe not, while we are on the journey, a word against the doctrines of the holy church of which I am an unworthy — but though an ignorant, a zealous member. — When thou art there arrived, beware of thyself — there is a high price upon thy head, and Julian Avenel loves the glance of gold bonnet-pieces."[1]

"Yet thou sayest not," answered the Protestant preacher, for such he was, "that for lucre he would sell the blood of his guest?"

"Not if thou comest an invited stranger, relying on his faith," said the youth; "evil as Julian may be, he dare not break the rites of hospitality; for, loose as we on these marches may be in all other ties, these are respected amongst us even to idolatry, and his nearest relations would think it incumbent on them to spill his blood themselves, to efface the disgrace such treason would bring upon their name and lineage. But if thou goest self-invited, and without assurance of safety, I promise thee thy risk is great."

"I am in God's hand," answered the preacher; "it is on His errand that I traverse these wilds amidst dangers of every kind; while I am useful for my master's service, they shall not prevail against me, and when, like the barren-fig-tree, I can no longer produce fruit, what imports it when or by whom the axe is laid to the root?"

"Your courage and devotion," said Glendinning, "are worthy of a better cause."

"That," said Warden, "cannot be — mine is the very best."

They continued their journey in silence, Halbert Glendinning tracing with the utmost accuracy the mazes of the dangerous and intricate morasses and hills which divided the Halidome from the barony of Avenel. From time to time he was obliged to stop, in order to assist his companion to cross the black intervals of quaking bog, called in the Scottish dialect *hags*, by which the firmer parts of the morass were intersected.

"Courage, old man," said Halbert, as he saw his companion almost exhausted with fatigue, "we shall soon be upon hard ground. And yet soft as this moss is, I have seen the merry falconers go through it as light as deer when the quarry was upon the flight."

"True, my son," answered Warden, "for so I will still call you, though you term me no longer father; and even so doth headlong youth pursue its pleasures, without regard to the mire and the peril of the paths through which they are hurried."

"I have already told thee," answered Halbert Glendinning, sternly, "that I will hear nothing from thee that savours of doctrine."

"Nay, but, my son," answered Warden, "thy spiritual father himself would surely not dispute

[1] A gold coin of James V., the most beautiful of the Scottish series; so called because the effigies of the sovereign is represented wearing a bonnet.

the truth of what I have now spoken for your edification !"

Glendinning stoutly replied, "I know not how that may be — but I wot well it is the fashion of your brotherhood to bait your hook with fair discourse, and to hold yourselves up as angels of light, that you may the better extend the kingdom of darkness."

"May God," replied the preacher, "pardon those who have thus reported of his servants ! I will not offend thee, my son, by being instant out of season — thou speakest but as thou art taught — yet sure I trust that so goodly a youth will be still rescued, like a brand from the burning."

While he thus spoke, the verge of the morass was attained, and their path lay on the declivity. Green-sward it was, and, viewed from a distance, chequered with its narrow and verdant line the dark-brown heath which it traversed, though the distinction was not so easily traced when they were walking on it.[1] The old man pursued his journey with comparative ease; and, unwilling again to awaken the jealous zeal of his young companion for the Roman faith, he discoursed on other matters. The tone of his conversation was still grave, moral, and instructive. He had travelled much, and knew both the language and manners of other countries, concerning which Halbert Glendinning, already anticipating the possibility of being obliged to quit Scotland for the deed he had done, was naturally and anxiously desirous of information. By degrees he was more attracted by the charms of the stranger's conversation than repelled by the dread of his dangerous character as a heretic, and Halbert had called him father more than once, ere the turrets of Avenel Castle came in view.

The situation of this ancient fortress was remarkable. It occupied a small rocky islet in a mountain lake, or *tarn*, as such a piece of water is called in Westmoreland. The lake might be about a mile in circumference, surrounded by hills of considerable height, which, except where old trees and brushwood occupied the ravines that divided them from each other, were bare and heathy. The surprise of the spectator was chiefly excited by finding a piece of water situated in that high and mountainous region, and the landscape around had features which might rather be termed wild, than either romantic or sublime; yet the scene was not without its charms. Under the burning sun of summer, the clear azure of the deep unruffled lake refreshed the eye, and impressed the mind with a pleasing feeling of deep solitude. In winter, when the snow lay on the mountains around, these dazzling masses appeared to ascend far beyond their wonted and natural height, while the lake, which stretched beneath, and filled their bosom with all its frozen waves, lay like the surface of a darkened and broken mirror around the black and rocky islet, and the walls of the gray castle with which it was crowned.

As the castle occupied, either with its principal buildings, or with its flanking and outward walls, every projecting point of rock, which served as its site, it seemed as completely surrounded by water as the nest of a wild swan, save where a narrow causeway extended betwixt the islet and the shore. But the fortress was larger in appearance than in reality; and of the buildings which it actually contained, many had become ruinous and uninhabitable. In the times of the grandeur of the Avenel family, these had been occupied by a considerable garrison of followers and retainers, but they were now in a great measure deserted; and Julian Avenel would probably have fixed his habitation in a residence better suited to his diminished fortunes, had it not been for the great security which the situation of the old castle afforded to a man of his precarious and perilous mode of life. Indeed, in this respect, the spot could scarce have been more happily chosen, for it could be rendered almost completely inaccessible at the pleasure of the inhabitant. The distance betwixt the nearest shore and the islet was not indeed above an hundred yards; but then the causeway which connected them was extremely narrow, and completely divided by two cuts, one in the mid-way between the islet and shore, and another close under the outward gate of the castle. These formed a formidable, and almost insurmountable interruption to any hostile approach. Each was defended by a drawbridge, one of which, being that nearest to the castle, was regularly raised at all times during the day, and both were lifted at night.[2]

The situation of Julian Avenel, engaged in a variety of feuds, and a party to almost every dark and mysterious transaction which was on foot in that wild and military frontier, required all these precautions for his security. His own ambiguous and doubtful course of policy had increased these dangers; for as he made professions to both parties in the state, and occasionally united more actively with either the one or the other, as chanced best to serve his immediate purpose, he could not be said to have either firm allies and protectors, or determined enemies. His life was a life of expedients and of peril; and while, in pursuit of his interest, he made all the doubles which he thought necessary to attain his object, he often overran his prey, and missed that which he might have gained by observing a straighter course.

CHAPTER XXIV.

I'll walk on tiptoe; arm my eye with caution,
My heart with courage, and my hand with weapon,
Like him who ventures on a lion's den.

Old Play.

When, issuing from the gorge of a pass which terminated upon the lake, the travellers came in sight of the ancient castle of Avenel, the old man paused, and, resting upon his pilgrim staff, looked with earnest attention upon the scene before him. The castle was, as we have said, in many places ruinous, as was evident, even at this distance, by the broken, rugged, and irregular outline of the walls and of the towers. In others it seemed more entire, and a pillar of dark smoke, which ascended from the chimneys of the donjon, and spread its long dusky pennon through the clear ether, indicated that it was inhabited. But no

[1] This sort of path, visible when looked at from a distance, but not to be seen when you are upon it, is called on the Border by the significant name of a Blind-road.

[2] See Note H. *Avenel Castle.*

corn-fields or enclosed pasture-grounds on the side of the lake shewed that provident attention to comfort and subsistence which usually appeared near the houses of the greater, and even of the lesser barons. There were no cottages with their patches of infield, and their crofts and gardens, surrounded by rows of massive sycamores; no church with its simple tower in the valley; no herds of sheep among the hills; no cattle on the lower ground; nothing which intimated the occasional prosecution of the arts of peace and of industry. It was plain that the inhabitants, whether few or numerous, must be considered as the garrison of the castle, living within its defended precincts, and subsisting by means which were other than peaceful.

Probably it was with this conviction that the old man, gazing on the castle, muttered to himself, "*Lapis offensionis et petra scandali!*" and then, turning to Halbert Glendinning, he added, "We may say of yonder fort as King James did of another fastness in this province, that he who built it was a thief in his heart."[1]

"But it was not so," answered Glendinning; "yonder castle was built by the old lords of Avenel, men as much beloved in peace as they were respected in war. They were the bulwark of the frontiers against foreigners, and the protectors of the natives from domestic oppression. The present usurper of their inheritance no more resembles them, than the night-prowling owl resembles a falcon, because she builds on the same rock."

"This Julian Avenel, then, holds no high place in the love and regard of his neighbours?" said Warden.

"So little," answered Halbert, "that besides the jack-men and riders with whom he has associated himself, and of whom he has many at his disposal, I know of few who voluntarily associate with him. He has been more than once outlawed both by England and Scotland, his lands declared forfeited, and his head set at a price. But in these unquiet times, a man so daring as Julian Avenel has ever found some friends willing to protect him against the penalties of the law, on condition of his secret services."

"You describe a dangerous man," replied Warden.

"You may have experience of that," replied the youth, "if you deal not the more warily;—though it may be that he also has forsaken the community of the church, and gone astray in the path of heresy."

"What your blindness terms the path of heresy," answered the reformer, "is indeed the straight and narrow way, wherein he who walks turns not aside, whether for worldly wealth or for worldly passions. Would to God this man were moved by no other and no worse spirit than that which prompts my poor endeavours to extend the kingdom of Heaven! This Baron of Avenel is personally unknown to me, is not of our congregation or of our counsel; yet I bear to him charges touching my safety, from those whom he must fear if he does not respect them, and upon that assurance I will venture upon his hold—I am now sufficiently refreshed by these few minutes of repose."

"Take then this advice for your safety," said Halbert, "and believe that it is founded upon the usage of this country and its inhabitants. If you can better shift for yourself, go not to the Castle of Avenel—if you do risk going thither, obtain from him, if possible, his safe-conduct, and beware that he swears it by the Black Rood—And lastly, observe whether he eats with you at the board, or pledges you in the cup; for if he gives you not these signs of welcome, his thoughts are evil towards you."

"Alas!" said the preacher, "I have no better earthly refuge for the present than these frowning towers, but I go thither trusting to aid which is not of this earth—But thou, good youth, needest thou trust thyself in this dangerous den?"

"I," answered Halbert, "am in no danger. I am well known to Christie of the Clinthill, the henchman of this Julian Avenel; and, what is a yet better protection, I have nothing either to provoke malice or to tempt plunder."

The tramp of a steed, which clattered along the shingly banks of the loch, was now heard behind them; and, when they looked back, a rider was visible, his steel cap and the point of his long lance glancing in the setting sun, as he rode rapidly towards them.

Halbert Glendinning soon recognized Christie of the Clinthill, and made his companion aware that the henchman of Julian Avenel was approaching.

"Ha, youngling!" said Christie to Halbert, as he came up to them, "thou hast made good my word at last, and come to take service with my noble master, hast thou not? Thou shalt find a good friend and a true; and ere Saint Barnaby come round again, thou shalt know every pass betwixt Millburn Plain and Netherby, as if thou hadst been born with a jack on thy back, and a lance in thy hand.—What old carle hast thou with thee?—He is not of the brotherhood of Saint Mary's—at least he has not the buist[2] of these black cattle."

"He is a wayfaring man," said Halbert, "who has concerns with Julian of Avenel. For myself, I intend to go to Edinburgh to see the court and the Queen, and when I return hither we will talk of your proffer. Meantime, as thou hast often invited me to the castle, I crave hospitality there to-night for myself and my companion."

"For thyself and welcome, young comrade," replied Christie; "but we harbour no pilgrims, nor aught that looks like a pilgrim."

"So please you," said Warden, "I have letters of commendation to thy master from a sure friend, whom he will right willingly oblige in higher matters than in affording me a brief protection.—And I am no pilgrim, but renounce the same, with all its superstitious observances."

He offered his letters to the horseman, who shook his head.

"These," he said, "are matters for my master, and it will be well if he can read them himself; for me, sword and lance are my book and psalter, and have been since I was twelve years old. But I will guide you to the castle, and the Baron of Avenel will himself judge of your errand."

By this time the party had reached the causeway, along which Christie advanced at a trot, intimating

[1] It was of Lochwood, the hereditary fortress of the Johnstones of Annandale, a strong castle situated in the centre of a quaking bog, that James VI. made this remark.

[2] *Buist*—The brand, or mark, set upon sheep or cattle by their owners.

his presence to the warders within the castle by a shrill and peculiar whistle. At this signal the farther drawbridge was lowered. The horseman passed it, and disappeared under the gloomy portal which was beyond it.

Glendinning and his companion advancing more leisurely along the rugged causeway, stood at length under the same gateway, over which frowned, in dark red freestone, the ancient armorial bearings of the house of Avenel, which represented a female figure shrouded and muffled, which occupied the whole field. The cause of their assuming so singular a device was uncertain, but the figure was generally supposed to represent the mysterious being called the White Lady of Avenel.[1] The sight of this mouldering shield awakened in the mind of Halbert the strange circumstances which had connected his fate with that of Mary Avenel, and with the doings of the spiritual being who was attached to her house, and whom he saw here represented in stone, as he had before seen her effigy upon the seal ring of Walter Avenel, which, with other trinkets formerly mentioned, had been saved from pillage, and brought to Glendearg, when Mary's mother was driven from her habitation.

"You sigh, my son," said the old man, observing the impression made on his youthful companion's countenance, but mistaking the cause; "if you fear to enter, we may yet return."

"That can ye not," said Christie of the Clinthill, who emerged at that instant from the side-door under the archway. "Look yonder, and choose whether you will return skimming the water like a wild-duck, or winging the air like a plover."

They looked, and saw that the drawbridge which they had just crossed was again raised, and now interposed its planks betwixt the setting sun and the portal of the castle, deepening the gloom of the arch under which they stood. Christie laughed and bid them follow him, saying, by way of encouragement, in Halbert's ear, "Answer boldly and readily to whatever the Baron asks you. Never stop to pick your words, and above all shew no fear of him — the devil is not so black as he is painted."

As he spoke thus, he introduced them into the large stone hall, at the upper end of which blazed a huge fire of wood. The long oaken table, which, as usual, occupied the midst of the apartment, was covered with rude preparations for the evening meal of the Baron and his chief domestics, five or six of whom, strong, athletic, savage-looking men, paced up and down the lower end of the hall, which rang to the jarring clang of their long swords that clashed as they moved, and to the heavy tramp of their high-heeled jack-boots. Iron jacks, or coats of buff, formed the principal part of their dress, and steel-bonnets, or large slouched hats with Spanish plumes drooping backwards, were their head attire.

The Baron of Avenel was one of those tall, muscular, martial figures, which are the favourite subjects of Salvator Rosa. He wore a cloak which had been once gaily trimmed, but which, by long wear and frequent exposure to the weather, was now faded in its colours. Thrown negligently about his tall person, it partly hid, and partly shewed, a short doublet of buff, under which was in some places visible that light shirt of mail which was called a *secret*, because worn instead of more ostensible armour, to protect against private assassination. A leathern belt sustained a large and heavy sword on one side, and on the other that gay poniard which had once called Sir Piercie Shafton master, of which the hatchments and gildings were already much defaced, either by rough usage or neglect.

Notwithstanding the rudeness of his apparel, Julian Avenel's manner and countenance had far more elevation than those of the attendants who surrounded him. He might be fifty or upwards, for his dark hair was mingled with gray, but age had neither tamed the fire of his eye nor the enterprise of his disposition. His countenance had been handsome, for beauty was an attribute of the family; but the lines were roughened by fatigue and exposure to the weather, and rendered coarse by the habitual indulgence of violent passions.

He seemed in deep and moody reflection, and was pacing at a distance from his dependents along the upper end of the hall, sometimes stopping from time to time to caress and feed a gos-hawk, which sat upon his wrist, with its jesses (*i. e.* the leathern straps fixed to its legs) wrapt around his hand. The bird, which seemed not insensible to its master's attention, answered his caresses by ruffling forward its feathers, and pecking playfully at his finger. At such intervals the Baron smiled, but instantly resumed the darksome air of sullen meditation. He did not even deign to look upon an object, which few could have passed and repassed so often without bestowing on it a transient glance.

This was a woman of exceeding beauty, rather gaily than richly attired, who sat on a low seat close by the huge hall chimney. The gold chains round her neck and arms, — the gay gown of green which swept the floor, — the silver-embroidered girdle, with its bunch of keys, depending in housewifely pride by a silver chain, — the yellow silken *couvrechef* (Scotticè, *curch*) which was disposed around her head, and partly concealed her dark profusion of hair, — above all, the circumstance so delicately touched in the old ballad, that "the girdle was too short," the "gown of green all too strait," for the wearer's present shape, would have intimated the Baron's Lady. But then the lowly seat, — the expression of deep melancholy, which was changed into a timid smile whenever she saw the least chance of catching the eye of Julian Avenel, — the subdued look of grief, and the starting tear for which that constrained smile was again exchanged when she saw herself entirely disregarded, — these were not the attributes of a wife or they were those of a dejected and afflicted female, who had yielded her love on less than legitimate terms.

Julian Avenel, as we have said, continued to pace the hall without paying any of that mute attention which is rendered to almost every female either by affection or courtesy. He seemed totally unconscious of her presence, or of that of his attendants, and was only roused from his own dark reflections by the notice he paid to the falcon, to which, however, the lady seemed to attend, as if studying to find either an opportunity of speaking to the Baron, or of finding something enigmatical in the expressions which he used to the bird. All

[1] There is an ancient English family, I believe, which bears, or did bear, a ghost or spirit passant sable in a field argent. This seems to have been a device of a punning or *canting* herald.

this the strangers had time enough to remark; for no sooner had they entered the apartment than their usher, Christie of the Clinthill, after exchanging a significant glance with the menials or troopers at the lower end of the apartment, signed to Halbert Glendinning and to his companion to stand still near the door, while he himself, advancing nearer the table, placed himself in such a situation as to catch the Baron's observation when he should be disposed to look around, but without presuming to intrude himself on his master's notice. Indeed, the look of this man, naturally bold, hardy, and audacious, seemed totally changed when he was in presence of his master, and resembled the dejected and cowering manner of a quarrelsome dog when rebuked by his owner, or when he finds himself obliged to deprecate the violence of a superior adversary of his own species.

In spite of the novelty of his own situation, and every painful feeling connected with it, Halbert felt his curiosity interested in the female, who sate by the chimney unnoticed and unregarded. He marked with what keen and trembling solicitude she watched the broken words of Julian, and how her glance stole towards him, ready to be averted upon the slightest chance of his perceiving himself to be watched.

Meantime he went on with his dalliance with his feathered favourite, now giving, now withholding, the morsel with which he was about to feed the bird, and so exciting its appetite and gratifying it by turns. "What! more yet?—thou foul kite, thou wouldst never have done—give thee part thou wilt have all—Ay, prune thy feathers, and prink thyself gay—much thou wilt make of it now—dost think I know thee not?—dost think I see not that all that ruffling and pluming of wing and feathers is not for thy master, but to try what thou canst make of him, thou greedy gled?—well—there—take it then, and rejoice thyself—little boon goes far with thee, and with all thy sex—and so it should."

He ceased to look on the bird, and again traversed the apartment. Then taking another small piece of raw meat from the trencher, on which it was placed ready cut for his use, he began once again to tempt and tease the bird, by offering and withdrawing it, until he awakened its wild and bold disposition. "What! struggling, fluttering, aiming at me with beak and single?[1] So la! So la! wouldst mount? wouldst fly? the jesses are round thy clutches, fool—thou canst neither stir nor soar, but by my will—Beware thou come to reclaim, wench, else I will wring thy head off one of these days—Well, have it then, and well fare thou with it.—So ho, Jenkin!" One of the attendants stepped forward—"Take the foul gled hence to the mew—or, stay; leave her, but look well to her casting and to her bathing—we will see her fly to-morrow.—How now, Christie, so soon returned!"

Christie advanced to his master, and gave an account of himself and his journey, in the way in which a police-officer holds communication with his magistrate, that is, as much by signs as by words.

"Noble sir," said that worthy satelite, "the Laird of ——," he named no place, but pointed with his finger in a south-western direction,—"may not ride with you the day he purposed, because the Lord Warden has threatened that he will ——"

Here another blank, intelligibly enough made up by the speaker touching his own neck with his left fore-finger, and leaning his head a little to one side.

"Cowardly caitiff!" said Julian; "by Heaven! the whole world turns sheer naught—it is not worth a brave man's living in—ye may ride a day and night, and never see a feather wave or hear a horse prance—the spirit of our fathers is dead amongst us—the very brutes are degenerated—the cattle we bring home at our life's risk are mere carrion—our hawks are riflers[2]—our hounds are turnspits and trindle-tails—our men are women—and our women are ——"

He looked at the female for the first time, and stopped short in the midst of what he was about to say, though there was something so contemptuous in the glance, that the blank might have been thus filled up—"Our women are such as she is."

He said it not, however, and, as if desirous of attracting his attention at all risks, and in whatever manner, she rose and came forward to him, but with a timorousness ill-disguised by affected gaiety.—"Our women, Julian—what would you say of the women?"

"Nothing," answered Julian Avenel, "at least nothing but that they are kind-hearted wenches like thyself, Kate." The female coloured deeply, and returned to her seat.—"And what strangers hast thou brought with thee, Christie, that stand yonder like two stone statues?" said the Baron.

"The taller," answered Christie, "is, so please you, a young fellow called Halbert Glendinning, the eldest son of the old widow at Glendearg."

"What brings him here?" said the Baron; "hath he any message from Mary Avenel?"

"Not as I think," said Christie; "the youth is roving the country—he was always a wild slip, for I have known him since he was the height of my sword."

"What qualities hath he?" said the Baron.

"All manner of qualities," answered his follower—"he can strike a buck, track a deer, fly a hawk, haloo to a hound—he shoots in the long and cross-bow to a hair's-breadth—wields a lance or sword like myself nearly—backs a horse manfully and fairly—I wot not what more a man need to do to make him a gallant companion."

"And who," said the Baron, "is the old miser[3] who stands beside him?"

"Some cast of a priest as I fancy—he says he is charged with letters to you."

"Bid them come forward," said the Baron; and no sooner had they approached him more nearly, than, struck by the fine form and strength displayed by Halbert Glendinning, he addressed him thus: "I am told, young swankie, that you are roaming the world to seek your fortune—if you will serve Julian Avenel, you may find it without going farther."

"So please you," answered Glendinning, "something has chanced to me that makes it better I

[1] In the *kindly* language of hawking, as Lady Juliana Berners terms it, hawks' talons are called their *singles*.

[2] So termed when they only caught their prey by the feathers.

[3] Miser, used in the sense in which it often occurs in Spenser, and which is indeed its literal import,—"wretched old man."

should leave this land, and I am bound for Edinburgh."

"What!— thou hast stricken some of the king's deer, I warrant,—or lightened the meadows of Saint Mary's of some of their beeves—or thou hast taken a moonlight leap over the border?"

"No, sir," said Halbert, "my case is entirely different."

"Then I warrant thee," said the Baron, "thou hast stabbed some brother churl in a fray about a wench—thou art a likely lad to wrangle in such a cause."

Ineffably disgusted at his tone and manner, Halbert Glendinning remained silent, while the thought darted across his mind, what would Julian Avenel have said, had he known the quarrel, of which he spoke so lightly, had arisen on account of his own brother's daughter!—"But be thy cause of flight what it will," said Julian, in continuation, "dost thou think the law or its emissaries can follow thee into this island, or arrest thee under the standard of Avenel?—Look at the depth of the lake, the strength of the walls, the length of the causeway—look at my men, and think if they are likely to see a comrade injured, or if I, their master, am a man to desert a faithful follower, in good or evil. I tell thee, it shall be an eternal day of truce betwixt thee and justice, as they call it, from the instant thou hast put my colours into thy cap—thou shalt ride by the Warden's nose as thou wouldst pass an old market-woman, and ne'er a cur which follows him shall dare to bay at thee!"

"I thank you for your offers, noble sir," replied Halbert, "but I must answer in brief, that I cannot profit by them—my fortunes lead me elsewhere."

"Thou art a self-willed fool for thy pains," said Julian, turning from him; and signing Christie to approach, he whispered in his ear, "There is promise in that young fellow's looks, Christie, and we want men of limbs and sinews so compacted—those thou hast brought to me of late are the mere refuse of mankind, wretches scarce worth the arrow that ends them: this youngster is limbed like Saint George. Ply him with wine and wassail—let the wenches weave their meshes about him like spiders—thou understandest?" Christie gave a sagacious nod of intelligence, and fell back to a respectful distance from his master.—"And thou, old man," said the Baron, turning to the elder traveller, "hast thou been roaming the world after fortune too?—it seems not she has fallen into thy way."

"So please you," replied Warden, "I were perhaps more to be pitied than I am now, had I indeed met with that fortune, which, like others, I have sought in my greener days."

"Nay, understand me, friend," said the Baron; "if thou art satisfied with thy buckram gown and long staff, I also am well content thou shouldst be as poor and contemptible as is good for the health of thy body and soul—All I care to know of thee is, the cause which hath brought thee to my castle, where few crows of thy kind care to settle. Thou art, I warrant thee, some ejected monk of a suppressed convent, paying in his old days the price of the luxurious idleness in which he spent his youth.—Ay, or it may be some pilgrim with a budget of lies from Saint James of Compostella, or Our Lady of Loretto; or thou mayest be some pardoner with his budget of relics from Rome, forgiving sins at a penny a-dozen, and one to the tale—Ay, I guess why I find thee in this boy's company, and doubtless thou wouldst have such a strapping lad as he to carry thy wallet, and relieve thy lazy shoulders; but, by the mass, I will cross thy cunning. I make my vow to sun and moon, I will not see a proper lad so misleard as to run the country with an old knave, like Simmie and his brother.[1] Away with thee!" he added, rising in wrath, and speaking so fast as to give no opportunity of answer, being probably determined to terrify the elder guest into an abrupt flight—"Away with thee, with thy clouted coat, scrip, and scallop-shell, or, by the name of Avenel, I will have them loose the hounds on thee!"

Warden waited with the greatest patience until Julian Avenel, astonished that the threats and violence of his language made no impression on him, paused in a sort of wonder, and said in a less imperious tone, "Why the fiend dost thou not answer me?"

"When you have done speaking," said Warden, in the same composed manner, "it will be full time to reply."

"Say on man, in the devil's name—but take heed—beg not here—were it but for the rinds of cheese, the refuse of the rats, or a morsel that my dogs would turn from—neither a grain of meal, nor the nineteenth part of a gray groat, will I give to any feigned limmar of thy coat."

"It may be," answered Warden, "that you would have less quarrel with my coat if you knew what it covers. I am neither a friar nor mendicant, and would be right glad to hear thy testimony against these foul deceivers of God's church, and usurpers of his rights over the Christian flock, were it given in Christian charity."

"And who or what art thou, then," said Avenel, "that thou comest to this Border land, and art neither monk, nor soldier, nor broken man!"

"I am an humble teacher of the holy word," answered Warden, "This letter from a most noble person will speak why I am here at this present time."

He delivered the letter to the Baron, who regarded the seal with some surprise, and then looked on the letter itself, which seemed to excite still more. He then fixed his eyes on the stranger, and said, in a menacing tone, "I think thou darest not betray me, or deceive me?"

"I am not the man to attempt either," was the concise reply.

Julian Avenel carried the letter to the window where he perused, or at least attempted to peruse it more than once, often looking from the paper and gazing on the stranger who had delivered it, as if he meant to read the purport of the missive in the face of the messenger. Julian at length called to the female,—"Catherine, bestir thee, and fetch me presently that letter which I bade thee keep ready at hand in thy casket, having no sure lock-fast place of my own."

Catherine went with the readiness of one willing to be employed; and as she walked, the situation which requires a wider gown and a longer girdle, and in which woman claims from man a double portion of the most anxious care, was still more visible than before. She soon returned with the

[1] Two *quæstionarii*, or begging friars, whose accoutrements and roguery make the subject of an old Scottish satirical poem.

paper, and was rewarded with a cold—"I thank thee, wench; thou art a careful secretary."

This second paper he also perused and reperused more than once, and still, as he read it, bent from time to time a wary and observant eye upon Henry Warden. This examination and re-examination, though both the man and the place were dangerous, the preacher endured with the most composed and steady countenance, seeming, under the eagle, or rather the vulture eye of the Baron, as unmoved as under the gaze of an ordinary and peaceful peasant. At length Julian Avenel folded both papers, and having put them into the pocket of his cloak, cleared his brow, and, coming forward, addressed his female companion. "Catherine," said he, "I have done this good man injustice, when I mistook him for one of the drones of Rome. He is a preacher, Catherine—a preacher of the—the new doctrine of the Lords of the Congregation."

"The doctrine of the blessed Scriptures," said the preacher, "purified from the devices of men."

"Sayest thou?" said Julian Avenel—"Well, thou mayst call it what thou lists; but to me it is recommended, because it flings off all those sottish dreams about saints and angels and devils, and unhorses the lazy monks that have ridden us so long, and spur-galled us so hard. No more masses and corpse-gifts—no more tithes and offerings to make men poor—no more prayers or psalms to make men cowards—no more christenings and penances, and confessions and marriages."

"So please you," said Henry Warden, "it is against the corruptions, not against the fundamental doctrines, of the church, which we desire to renovate, and not to abolish."

"Prithee, peace, man," said the Baron; "we of the laity care not what you set up, so you pull merrily down what stands in our way. Specially it suits well with us of the Southland fells; for it is our profession to turn the world upside down, and we live ever the blithest life when the downer side is uppermost."

Warden would have replied; but the Baron allowed him not time, striking the table with the hilt of his dagger, and crying out,—"Ha! you loitering knaves, bring our supper-meal quickly. See you not this holy man is exhausted for lack of food! Heard ye ever of priest or preacher that devoured not his five meals a-day?"

The attendants bustled to and fro, and speedily brought in several large smoking platters, filled with huge pieces of beef, boiled and roasted, but without any variety whatsoever; without vegetables, and almost without bread, though there was at the upper end a few oat-cakes in a basket. Julian Avenel made a sort of apology to Warden.

"You have been commended to our care, Sir Preacher, since that is your style, by a person whom we highly honour."

"I am assured," said Warden, "that the most noble Lord——"

"Prithee, peace, man," said Avenel; "what need of naming names, so we understand each other? I meant but to speak in reference to your safety and comfort, of which he desires us to be chary. Now, for your safety, look at my walls and water. But touching your comfort, we have no corn of our own, and the meal-girnels of the south are less easily transported than their beeves, seeing they have no legs to walk upon. But what though? a stoup of wine thou shalt have, and of the best—thou shalt sit betwixt Catherine and me at the board-end.—And, Christie, do thou look to the young springald, and call to the cellarer for a flagon of the best."

The Baron took his wonted place at the upper end of the board; his Catherine sate down, and courteously pointed to a seat betwixt them for their reverend guest. But notwithstauding the influence both of hunger and fatigue, Henry Warden retained his standing posture.

CHAPTER XXV.

When lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray——
* * * * *

Julian Avenel saw with surprise the demeanour of the reverend stranger. "Beshrew me," he said, "these new-fashioned religioners have fast-days, I warrant me—the old ones used to confer these blessings chiefly on the laity."

"We acknowledge no such rule," said the preacher—"We hold that our faith consists not in using or abstaining from special meats on special days; and in fasting we rend our hearts, and not our garments."

"The better—the better for yourselves, and the worse for Tom Tailor," said the Baron; "but come, sit down, or, if thou needs must e'en give us a cast of thy office, mutter thy charm."

"Sir Baron," said the preacher, "I am in a strange land, where neither mine office nor my doctrine are known, and where, it would seem, both are greatly misunderstood. It is my duty so to bear me, that in my person, however unworthy, my Master's dignity may be respected, and that sin may take no confidence from relaxation of the bonds of discipline."

"Ho la! halt there," said the Baron; "thou wert sent hither for thy safety, but not, I think, to preach to, or control me. What is it thou wouldst have, Sir Preacher? Remember thou speakest to one somewhat short of patience, who loves a short health and a long draught."

"In a word, then," said Henry Warden, "that lady——"

"How?" said the Baron, starting—"what of her?—what hast thou to say of that dame?"

"Is she thy house-dame?" said the preacher, after a moment's pause, in which he seemed to seek for the best mode of expressing what he had to say—"Is she, in brief, thy wife?"

The unfortunate young woman pressed both her hands on her face, as if to hide it, but the deep blush which crimsoned her brow and neck, shewed that her cheeks were also glowing; and the bursting tears, which found their way betwixt her slender fingers, bore witness to her sorrow, as well as to her shame.

"Now, by my father's ashes!" said the Baron, rising and spurning from him his footstool with such violence, that it hit the wall on the opposite side of the apartment—then instantly constraining himself, he muttered, "What need to run myself into trouble for a fool's word?"—then resuming his seat, he answered coldly and scornfully—"No, Sir Priest or Sir Preacher, Catherine is not my

wife—Cease thy whimpering, thou foolish wench—she is not my wife, but she is handfasted with me, and that makes her as honest a woman."

"Handfasted?"—repeated Warden.

"Knowest thou not that rite, holy man?" said Avenel, in the same tone of derision; "then I will tell thee. We Border-men are more wary than your inland clowns of Fife and Lothian—no jump in the dark for us—no clenching the fetters around our wrists till we know how they will wear with us—we take our wives, like our horses, upon trial. When we are handfasted, as we term it, we are man and wife for a year and day—that space gone by, each may choose another mate, or, at their pleasure, may call the priest to marry them for life—and this we call handfasting."[1]

"Then," said the preacher, "I tell thee, noble Baron, in brotherly love to thy soul, it is a custom licentious, gross, and corrupted, and if persisted in, dangerous, yea, damnable. It bind thee to the frailer being while she is the object of desire—it relieves thee when she is most the subject of pity—it gives all to brutal sense, and nothing to generous and gentle affection. I say to thee, that he who can meditate the breach of such an engagement, abandoning the deluded woman and the helpless offspring, is worse than the birds of prey; for of them the males remain with their mates until the nestlings can take wing. Above all, I say it is contrary to the pure Christian doctrine, which assigns woman to man as the partner of his labour, the soother of his evil, his helpmate in peril, his friend in affliction; not as the toy of his looser hours, or as a flower, which, once cropped, he may throw aside at pleasure."

"Now, by the Saints, a most virtuous homily!" said the Baron; "quaintly conceived and curiously pronounced, and to a well-chosen congregation. Hark ye, Sir Gospeller! trow ye to have a fool in hand? Know I not that your sect rose by bluff Harry Tudor, merely because ye aided him to change *his* Kate; and wherefore should I not use the same Christian liberty with *mine?* Tush, man! bless the good food, and meddle not with what concerns thee not—thou hast no gull in Julian Avenel."

"He hath gulled and cheated himself," said the preacher, "should he even incline to do that poor sharer of his domestic cares the imperfect justice that remains to him. Can he now raise her to the rank of a pure and uncontaminated matron?—Can he deprive his child of the misery of owing birth to a mother who has erred? He can indeed give them both the rank, the state of married wife and of lawful son; but, in public opinion, their names will be smirched and sullied with a stain which his tardy efforts cannot entirely efface. Yet render it to them, Baron of Avenel, render to them this late and imperfect justice. Bid me bind you together for ever, and celebrate the day of your bridal, not with feasting or wassail, but with sorrow for past sin, and the resolution to commence a better life. Happy then will have the chance been that has drawn me to this castle, though I come driven by calamity, and unknowing where my course is bound, like a leaf travelling on the north wind."

The plain, and even coarse features, of the zealous speaker, were warmed at once and ennobled by the dignity of his enthusiasm; and the wild Baron, lawless as he was, and accustomed to spurn at the control whether of religious or moral law, felt, for the first time perhaps in his life, that he was under subjection to a mind superior to his own. He sat mute and suspended in his deliberations, hesitating betwixt anger and shame, yet borne down by the weight of the just rebuke thus boldly fulminated against him.

The unfortunate young woman, conceiving hopes from her tyrant's silence and apparent indecision, forgot both her fear and shame in her timid expectation that Avenel would relent; and fixing upon him her anxious and beseeching eyes, gradually drew near and nearer to his seat, till at length, laying a trembling hand on his cloak, she ventured to utter, "O noble Julian, listen to the good man!"

The speech and the motion were ill-timed, and wrought on that proud and wayward spirit the reverse of her wishes.

The fierce Baron started up in fury, exclaiming, "What! thou foolish callet, art thou confederate with this strolling vagabond, whom thou hast seen beard me in mine own hall! Hence with thee, and think that I am proof both to male and female hypocrisy!"

The poor girl started back, astounded at his voice of thunder and looks of fury, and, turning pale as death, endeavoured to obey his orders, and tottered towards the door. Her limbs failed in the attempt, and she fell on the stone floor in a manner which her situation might have rendered fatal—The blood gushed from her face.—Halbert Glendinning brooked not a sight so brutal, but, uttering a deep imprecation, started from his seat, and laid his hand on his sword, under the strong impulse of passing it through the body of the cruel and hard-hearted ruffian. But Christie of the Clinthill, guessing his intention, threw his arms around him, and prevented him from stirring to execute his purpose.

The impulse to such a dangerous act of violence was indeed but momentary, as it instantly appeared that Avenel himself, shocked at the effects of his violence, was lifting up and endeavouring to soothe in his own way the terrified Catherine.

"Peace," he said, "prithee, peace, thou silly minion—why, Kate, though I listen not to this tramping preacher, I said not what might happen an thou dost bear me a stout boy. There—there—dry thy tears—call thy women.—So ho!—where be these queans?—Christie—Rowley—Hutcheon—drag them hither by the hair of the head!"

A half dozen of startled wild-looking females rushed into the room, and bore out her who might be either termed their mistress or their companion. She shewed little sign of life, except by groaning faintly and keeping her hand on her side.

No sooner had this luckless female been conveyed from the apartment, than the Baron, advancing to the table, filled and drank a deep goblet of wine; then, putting an obvious restraint on his passions, turned to the preacher, who stood horror-struck at the scene he had witnessed, and said,

[1] This custom of handfasting actually prevailed in the upland days. It arose partly from the want of priests. While the convents subsisted, monks were detached on regular circuits through the wilder districts, to marry those who had lived in this species of connection. A practice of the same kind existed in the Isle of Portland

"You have borne too hard on us, Sir Preacher—but coming with the commendations which you have brought me, I doubt not but your meaning was good. But we are a wilder folk than you inland men of Fife and Lothian. Be advised, therefore, by me—Spur not an unbroken horse—put not your ploughshare too deep into new land—Preach to us spiritual liberty, and we will hearken to you.—But we will give no way to spiritual bondage.—Sit, therefore, down, and pledge me in old sack, and we will talk over other matters."

"It is *from* spiritual bondage," said the preacher, in the same tone of admonitory reproof, "that I came to deliver you—it is from a bondage more fearful than that of the heaviest earthly gyves—it is from your own evil passions."

"Sit down," said Avenel, fiercely; "sit down while the play is good—else by my father's crest and my mother's honour!——"

"Now," whispered Christie of the Clinthill to Halbert, "if he refuse to sit down, I would not give a gray groat for his head."

"Lord Baron," said Warden, "thou hast placed me in extremity. But if the question be, whether I am to hide the light which I am commanded to shew forth, or to lose the light of this world, my choice is made. I say to thee, like the Holy Baptist to Herod, it is not lawful for thee to have this woman; and I say it, though bonds and death be the consequence, counting my life as nothing in comparison of the ministry to which I am called."

Julian Avenel, enraged at the firmness of this reply, flung from his right hand the cup in which he was about to drink to his guest, and from the other cast off the hawk, which flew wildly through the apartment. His first motion was to lay hand upon his dagger. But, changing his resolution, he exclaimed, "To the dungeon with this insolent stroller!—I will hear no man speak a word for him.—Look to the falcon, Christie, thou fool—an she escape, I will despatch you after her every man—Away with that hypocritical dreamer—drag him hence if he resist!"

He was obeyed in both points. Christie of the Clinthill arrested the hawk's flight, by putting his foot on her jesses, and so holding her fast, while Henry Warden was led off, without having shewn the slightest symptoms of terror, by two of the Baron's satellites. Julian Avenel walked the apartment for a short time in sullen silence, and despatching one of his attendants with a whispered message, which probably related to the health of the unfortunate Catherine, he said aloud, "These rash and meddling priests—By Heaven! they make us worse than we would be without them."[1]

The answer which he presently received seemed somewhat to pacify his angry mood, and he took his place at the board, commanding his retinue to do the like. All sat down in silence, and began the repast.

During the meal Christie in vain attempted to engage his youthful companion in carousal, or, at least, in conversation. Halbert Glendinning pleaded fatigue, and expressed himself unwilling to take any liquor stronger than the heather ale, which was at that time frequently used at meals. Thus every effort at jovialty died away, until the Baron, striking his hand against the table, as if impatient of the long unbroken silence, cried out aloud, "What, ho! my masters—are ye Border-riders, and sit as mute over your meal as a mess of monks and friars?—Some one sing, if no one list to speak. Meat eaten without either mirth or music is ill of digestion.—Louis," he added, speaking to one of the youngest of his followers, "thou art ready enough to sing when no one bids thee."

The young man looked first at his master, then up to the arched roof of the hall, then drank off the horn of ale, or wine, which stood beside him, and with a rough, yet not unmelodious voice, sung the following ditty to the ancient air of "Blue Bonnets over the Border."

I.

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story,
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and the old Scottish glory!

II.

Come from the hills where the hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding;
Stand to your arms then, and march in good order,
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray,
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border!

The song, rude as it was, had in it that warlike character which at any other time would have roused Halbert's spirit; but at present the charm of minstrelsy had no effect upon him. He made it his request to Christie to suffer him to retire to rest, a request with which that worthy person, seeing no chance of making a favourable impression on his intended proselyte in his present humour, was at length pleased to comply. But no Sergeant Kite, who ever practised the profession of recruiting, was more attentive that his object should not escape him, than was Christie of the Clinthill. He indeed conducted Halbert Glendinning to a small apartment overlooking the lake, which was accommodated with a truckle bed. But before quitting him, Christie took special care to give a look to the bars which crossed the outside of the window, and when he left the apartment, he failed not to give the key a double turn; circumstances which convinced young Glendinning that there was no intention of suffering him to depart from the Castle of Avenel at his own time and pleasure. He judged it, however, most prudent to let these alarming symptoms pass without observation.

No sooner did he find himself in undisturbed solitude, than he ran rapidly over the events of the day in his recollection, and to his surprise found that his own precarious fate, and even the death of Piercie Shafton, made less impression on him than the singularly bold and determined conduct of his companion, Henry Warden. Providence, which suits its instruments to the end they are to achieve, had awakened in the cause of Reformation in Scotland, a body of preachers of more energy than refinement, bold in spirit, and strong in faith, contemners of whatever stood betwixt them and their principal object, and seeking the

[1] See Note I. *Julian Avenel.*

advancement of the great cause in which they laboured by the roughest road, provided it were the shortest. The soft breeze may wave the willow, but it requires the voice of the tempest to agitate the boughs of the oak; and, accordingly, to milder hearers, and in a less rude age, their manners would have been ill adapted, but they were singularly successful in their mission to the rude people to whom it was addressed.

Owing to these reasons, Halbert Glendinning, who had resisted and repelled the arguments of the preacher, was forcibly struck by the firmness of his demeanour in the dispute with Julian Avenel. It might be discourteous, and most certainly it was incautious, to choose such a place and such an audience, for upbraiding with his transgressions a baron, whom both manners and situation placed in full possession of independent power. But the conduct of the preacher was uncompromising, firm, manly, and obviously grounded upon the deepest conviction which duty and principle could afford; and Glendinning, who had viewed the conduct of Avenel with the deepest abhorrence, was proportionally interested in the brave old man, who had ventured life rather than withhold the censure due to guilt. This pitch of virtue seemed to him to be in religion what was demanded by chivalry of her votaries in war; an absolute surrender of all selfish feelings, and a combination of every energy proper to the human mind, to discharge the task which duty demanded.

Halbert was at the period when youth was most open to generous emotions, and knows best how to appreciate them in others, and he felt, although he hardly knew why, that, whether catholic or heretic, the safety of this man deeply interested him. Curiosity mingled with the feeling, and led him to wonder what the nature of those doctrines could be, which stole their votary so completely from himself, and devoted him to chains or to death as their sworn champion. He had indeed been told of saints and martyrs of former days, who had braved for their religious faith the extremity of death and torture. But their spirit of enthusiastic devotion had long slept in the ease and indolent habits of their successors, and their adventures, like those of knights-errant, were rather read for amusement than for edification. A new impulse had been necessary to rekindle the energies of religious zeal, and that impulse was now operating in favour of a purer religion, with one of whose steadiest votaries the youth had now met for the first time.

The sense that he himself was a prisoner, under the power of this savage chieftain, by no means diminished Halbert's interest in the fate of his fellow-sufferer, while he determined at the same time so far to emulate his fortitude, that neither threats nor suffering should compel him to enter into the service of such a master. The possibility of escape next occurred to him, and though with little hope of effecting it in that way, Glendinning proceeded to examine more particularly the window of the apartment. The apartment was situated in the first story of the castle; and was not so far from the rock on which it was founded, but that an active and bold man might with little assistance descend to a shelf of the rock which was immediately below the window, and from thence either leap or drop himself down into the lake which lay before his eye, clear and blue in the placid light of a full summer's moon. — "Were I once placed on that ledge," thought Glendinning, "Julian Avenel and Christie had seen the last of me." The size of the window favoured such an attempt, but the stanchions or iron bars seemed to form an insurmountable obstacle.

While Halbert Glendinning gazed from the window with that eagerness of hope which was prompted by the energy of his character and his determination not to yield to circumstances, his ear caught some sounds from below, and listening with more attention, he could distinguish the voice of the preacher engaged in his solitary devotions. To open a correspondence with him became immediately his object, and failing to do so by less marked sounds, he at length ventured to speak, and was answered from beneath — "Is it thou, my son?" The voice of the prisoner now sounded more distinctly than when it was first heard, for Warden had approached the small aperture, which, serving his prison for a window, opened just betwixt the wall and the rock, and admitted a scanty portion of light through a wall of immense thickness. This *soupirail* being placed exactly under Halbert's window, the contiguity permitted the prisoners to converse in a low tone, when Halbert declared his intention to escape, and the possibility he saw of achieving his purpose, but for the iron stanchions of the window — "Prove thy strength, my son, in the name of God!" said the preacher. Halbert obeyed him more in despair than hope, but to his great astonishment, and somewhat to his terror, the bar parted asunder near the bottom, and the longer part being easily bent outwards, and not secured with lead in the upper socket, dropt out into Halbert's hand. He immediately whispered, but as energetically as a whisper could be expressed — "By Heaven, the bar has given way in my hand!"

"Thank Heaven, my son, instead of swearing by it," answered Warden from his dungeon.

With little effort Halbert Glendinning forced himself through the opening thus wonderfully effected, and using his leathern sword-belt as a rope to assist him, let himself safely drop on the shelf of rock upon which the preacher's window opened. But through this no passage could be effected, being scarce larger than a loophole for musketry, and apparently constructed for that purpose.

"Are there no means by which I can assist your escape, my father?" said Halbert.

"There are none, my son," answered the preacher; "but if thou wilt ensure my safety, that may be in thy power."

"I will labour earnestly for it," said the youth.

"Take then a letter which I will presently write, for I have the means of light and writing materials in my scrip — Hasten towards Edinburgh, and on the way thou wilt meet a body of horse marching southwards—Give this to their leader, and acquaint him of the state in which thou hast left me. It may hap that thy doing so will advantage thyself."

In a minute or two the light of a taper gleamed through the shot-hole, and very shortly after, the preacher, with the assistance of his staff, pushed a billet to Glendinning through the window.

"God bless thee, my son," said the old man, "and complete the marvellous work which he has begun."

"Amen!" answered Halbert, with solemnity, and proceeded on his enterprise.

He hesitated a moment whether he should attempt to descend to the edge of the water; but the steepness of the rock, and darkness of the night, rendered the enterprise too dangerous. He clasped his hands above his head and boldly sprung from the precipice, shooting himself forward into the air as far as he could for fear of sunken rocks, and alighted on the lake, head foremost, with such force as sunk him for a minute below the surface. But strong, long-breathed, and accustomed to such exercise, Halbert, even though encumbered with his sword, dived and rose like a sea-fowl, and swam across the lake in the northern direction. When he landed and looked back on the castle, he could observe that the alarm had been given, for lights glanced from window to window, and he heard the drawbridge lowered, and the tread of horses' feet upon the causeway. But, little alarmed for the consequence of a pursuit during the darkness, he wrung the water from his dress, and, plunging into the moors, directed his course to the north-east by the assistance of the polar star.

CHAPTER XXVI.

> Why, what an intricate impeach is this!
> I think you all have drank of Circe's cup.
> If here you housed him, here he would have been;
> If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly.
> *Comedy of Errors.*

THE course of our story, leaving for the present Halbert Glendinning to the guidance of his courage and his fortune, returns to the Tower of Glendearg, where matters in the meanwhile fell out, with which it is most fitting that the reader should be acquainted.

The meal was prepared at noontide with all the care which Elspeth and Tibb, assisted by the various accommodations which had been supplied from the Monastery, could bestow on it. Their dialogue ran on as usual in the intervals of their labour, partly as between mistress and servant, partly as maintained by gossips of nearly equal quality.

"Look to the minced meat, Tibb," said Elspeth; "and turn the broach even, thou good-for-nothing Simmie, — thy wits are harrying birds' nests, child. — Weel, Tibb, this is a fasheous job, this Sir Piercie lying leaguer with us up here, and wha kens for how lang?"

"A fasheous job indeed," answered her faithful attendant, "and little good did the name ever bring to fair Scotland. Ye may have your hands fuller of them than they are yet — Mony a sair heart have the Piercies given to Scots wife and bairns with their pricking on the Borders. There was Hotspur, and many more of that bloody kindred, have sate in our skirts since Malcolm's time, as Martin says!"

"Martin should keep a weel-scrapit tongue in his head," said Elspeth, "and not slander the kin of any body that quarters at Glendearg; forby, that Sir Piercie Shafton is much respected with the holy fathers of the community, and they will make up to us ony fasherie that we may have with him, either by good word or good deed, I'se warrant them. He is a considerate lord the Lord Abbot."

"And weel he likes a saft seat to his hinder end," said Tibb; "I have seen a belted baron sit on a bare bench, and find nae fault. But an ye are pleased, mistress, I am pleased."

"Now, in good time, here comes Mysie of the Mill. — And whare hae ye been, lass, for a' s gane wrang without you?" said Elspeth.

"I just gaed a blink up the burn," said Mysie, "for the young lady has been down on her bed, and is no just that weel — So I gaed a gliff up the burn."

"To see the young lads come hame frae the sport, I will warrant you," said Elspeth. "Ay, ay, Tibb, that's the way the young folk guide us, Tibbie — leave us to do the wark, and out to the play themsells."

"Ne'er a bit of that, mistress," said the Maid of the Mill, stripping her round pretty arms, and looking actively and good-humouredly round for some duty that she could discharge, "but just — I thought ye might like to ken if they were coming back, just to get the dinner forward."

"And saw ye ought of them then?" demanded Elspeth.

"Not the least tokening," said Mysie, "though I got to the head of a knowe, and though the English knight's beautiful white feather could have been seen over all the bushes in the Shaw."

"The knight's white feather!" said Dame Glendinning; "ye are a silly hempie — my Halbert's high head will be seen farther than his feather, let it be as white as it like, I trow."

Mysie made no answer, but began to knead dough for wastel-cake with all despatch, observing that Sir Piercie had partaken of that dainty, and commended it upon the preceding day. And presently, in order to place on the fire the *girdle*, or iron plate on which these cates were to be baked, she displaced a stew-pan in which some of Tibb's delicacies were submitted to the action of the kitchen fire. Tibb muttered betwixt her teeth — "And it is the broth for my sick bairn, that maun make room for the dainty Southron's wastel-bread. It was a blithe time in Wight Wallace's day, or good King Robert's, when the pock-puddings gat naething here but hard straiks and bloody crowns. But we will see how it will a' end."

Elspeth did not think it proper to notice these discontented expressions of Tibbie, but they sunk into her mind; for she was apt to consider her as a sort of authority in matters of war and policy, with which her former experience as bower-woman at Avenel Castle made her better acquainted than were the peaceful inhabitants of the Halidome. She only spoke, however, to express her surprise that the hunters did not return.

"An they come not back the sooner," said Tibb, "they will fare the waur, for the meat will be roasted to a cinder — and there is poor Simmie that can turn the spit nae langer: the bairn is melting like an icicle in warm water — Gang awa, bairn, and take a mouthful of the caller air, and I will turn the broach till ye come back."

"Rin up to the bartizan at the tower-head, callant," said Dame Glendinning, "the air will be callerer there than ony gate else, and bring us word if our Halbert and the gentleman are coming down the glen."

The boy lingered long enough to allow his substitute, Tibb Tacket, heartily to tire of her own generosity, and of his cricket-stool by the side of a huge fire. He at length returned with the news that he had seen nobody

The matter was not remarkable so far as Halbert Glendinning was concerned, for, patient alike of want and of fatigue, it was no uncommon circumstance for him to remain in the wilds till curfew time. But nobody had given Sir Piercie Shafton credit for being so keen a sportsman, and the idea of an Englishman preferring the chase to his dinner was altogether inconsistent with their preconceptions of the national character. Amidst wondering and conjecturing, the usual dinner-hour passed long away; and the inmates of the tower, taking a hasty meal themselves, adjourned their more solemn preparations until the hunters' return at night, since it seemed now certain that their sport had either carried them to a greater distance, or engaged them for a longer time than had been expected.

About four hours after noon, arrived, not the expected sportsmen, but an unlooked for visitant, the Sub-Prior from the Monastery. The scene of the preceding day had dwelt on the mind of Father Eustace, who was of that keen and penetrating cast of mind which loves not to leave unascertained whatever of mysterious is subjected to its inquiry. His kindness was interested in the family of Glendearg, which he had now known for a long time; and besides, the community was interested in the preservation of the peace betwixt Sir Piercie Shafton and his youthful host, since whatever might draw public attention on the former, could not fail to be prejudicial to the Monastery, which was already threatened by the hand of power. He found the family assembled all but Mary Avenel, and was informed that Halbert Glendinning had accompanied the stranger on a day's sport. So far was well. They had not returned; but when did youth and sport conceive themselves bound by set hours? and the circumstance excited no alarm in his mind.

While he was conversing with Edward Glendinning touching his progress in the studies he had pointed out to him, they were startled by a shriek from Mary Avenel's apartment, which drew the whole family thither in headlong haste. They found her in a swoon in the arms of old Martin, who was bitterly accusing himself of having killed her; so indeed it seemed, for her pale features and closed eyes argued rather a dead corpse than a living person. The whole family were instantly in tumult Snatching her from Martin's arms with the eagerness of affectionate terror, Edward bore her to the casement, that she might receive the influence of the open air; the Sub-Prior, who, like many of his profession, had some knowledge of medicine, hastened to prescribe the readiest remedies which occurred to him, and the terrified females contended with, and impeded each other, in their rival efforts to be useful.

"It has been ane of her weary ghaists," said Dame Glendinning.

"It 's just a trembling on her spirits, as her blessed mother used to have. said Tibb.

"It 's some ill news has come ower her," said the miller's maiden; while burnt feathers, cold water, and all the usual means of restoring suspended animation, were employed alternately, and with little effect.

At length a new assistant, who had joined the group unobserved, tendered his aid in the following terms: — "How is this, my most fair Discretion? What cause hath moved the ruby current of life to rush back to the citadel of the heart, leaving pale those features in which it should have delighted to meander for ever? — Let me approach her," he said, "with this sovereign essence, distilled by the fair hands of the divine Urania, and powerful to recall fugitive life, even if it were trembling on the verge of departure."

Thus speaking, Sir Piercie Shafton knelt down, and most gracefully presented to the nostrils of Mary Avenel a silver pouncet-box, exquisitely chased, containing a sponge dipt in the essence which he recommended so highly. Yes, gentle reader, it was Sir Piercie Shafton himself who thus unexpectedly proffered his good offices! his cheeks, indeed, very pale, and some part of his dress stained with blood, but not otherwise appearing different from what he was on the preceding evening. But no sooner had Mary Avenel opened her eyes, and fixed them on the figure of the officious courtier, than she screamed faintly, and exclaimed, — "Secure the murderer!"

Those present stood aghast with astonishment, and none more so than the Euphuist, who found himself so suddenly and so strangely accused by the patient whom he was endeavouring to succour, and who repelled his attempts to yield her assistance with all the energy of abhorrence.

"Take him away!" she exclaimed—"take away the murderer!"

"Now, by my knighthood," answered Sir Piercie, "your lovely faculties either of mind or body are, O my most fair Discretion, obnubilated by some strange hallucination. For either your eyes do not discern that it is Piercie Shafton, your most devoted Affability, who now stands before you, or else, your eyes discerning truly, your mind hath most erroneously concluded that he hath been guilty of some delict or violence to which his hand is a stranger. No murder, O most scornful Discretion, hath been this day done, saving but that which your angry glances are now performing on your most devoted captive."

He was here interrupted by the Sub-Prior, who had, in the meantime, been speaking with Martin apart, and had received from him an account of the circumstances, which, suddenly communicated to Mary Avenel, had thrown her into this state. "Sir Knight," said the Sub-Prior, in a very solemn tone, yet with some hesitation, "circumstances have been communicated to us of a nature so extraordinary, that, reluctant as I am to exercise such authority over a guest of our venerable community, I am constrained to request from you an explanation of them. You left this tower early in the morning, accompanied by a youth, Halbert Glendinning, the eldest son of this good dame, and you return hither without him. Where, and at what hour, did you part company from him?"

The English knight paused for a moment, and then replied, —"I marvel that your reverence employs so grave a tone to enforce so light a question. I parted with the villagio whom you call Halbert Glendinning some hour or twain after sunrise."

"And at what place, I pray you?" said the monk.

"In a deep ravine, where a fountain rises at the base of a huge rock; an earth-born Titan, which heaveth up its gray head, even as ——"

"Spare us farther description," said the Sub-Prior; "we know the spot. But that youth hath not since been heard of, and it will fall on you to account for him."

"My bairn! my bairn!" exclaimed Dame Glendinning. "Yes, holy father, make the villain account for my bairn!"

"I swear, good woman, by bread and by water, which are the props of our life ——"

"Swear by wine and wastel-bread, for these are the props of *thy* life, thou greedy Southron!" said Dame Glendinning;—"a base belly-god, to come here to eat the best, and practise on our lives that give it to him!"

"I tell thee, woman," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "I did but go with thy son to the hunting."

"A black hunting it has been to him, poor bairn," replied Tibb; "and sae I said it wad prove since I first saw the false Southron snout of thee. Little good comes of a Piercie's hunting, from Chevy Chase till now."

"Be silent, woman," said the Sub-Prior, "and rail not upon the English knight; we do not yet know of any thing beyond suspicion."

"We will have his heart's blood!" said Dame Glendinning; and, seconded by the faithful Tibbie, she made such a sudden onslaught on the unlucky Euphuist, as must have terminated in something serious, had not the monk, aided by Mysie Happer, interposed to protect him from their fury. Edward had left the apartment the instant the disturbance broke out, and now entered, sword in hand, followed by Martin and Jasper, the one having a hunting spear in his hand, the other a cross-bow.

"Keep the door," he said to his two attendants; "shoot him or stab him without mercy, should he attempt to break forth; if he offers an escape, by Heaven he shall die!"

"How now, Edward," said the Sub-Prior; "how is this that you so far forget yourself? meditating violence to a guest, and in my presence, who represent your liege lord?"

Edward stepped forward with his drawn sword in his hand. "Pardon me, reverend father," he said, "but in this matter the voice of nature speaks louder and stronger than yours. I turn my sword's point against this proud man, and I demand of him the blood of my brother — the blood of my father's son — of the heir of our name! If he denies to give me a true account of him, he shall not deny me vengeance."

Embarrassed as he was, Sir Piercie Shafton shewed no personal fear. "Put up thy sword," he said, "young man; not in the same day does Piercie Shafton contend with two peasants."

"Hear him! he confesses the deed, holy father," said Edward.

"Be patient, my son," said the Sub-Prior, endeavouring to soothe the feelings which he could not otherwise control, "be patient — thou wilt attain the ends of justice better through my means than thine own violence — And you, women, be silent — Tibb, remove your mistress and Mary Avenel."

While Tibb, with the assistance of the other females of the household, bore the poor mother and Mary Avenel into separate apartments, and while Edward, still keeping his sword in his hand, hastily traversed the room, as if to prevent the possibility of Sir Piercie Shafton's escape, the Sub-Prior insisted upon knowing from the perplexed knight the particulars which he knew respecting Halbert Glendinning. His situation became extremely embarrassing, for what he might with safety have told of the issue of their combat was so revolting to his pride, that he could not bring himself to enter into the detail; and of Halbert's actual fate he knew, as the reader is well aware, absolutely nothing.

The father in the meanwhile pressed him with remonstrances, and prayed him to observe, he would greatly prejudice himself by declining to give a full account of the transactions of the day. "You cannot deny," he said, "that yesterday you seemed to take the most violent offence at this unfortunate youth; and that you suppressed your resentment so suddenly as to impress us all with surprise. Last night you proposed to him this day's hunting party, and you set out together by break of day. You parted, you said, at the fountain near the rock, about an hour or twain after sunrise, and it appears that before you parted you had been at strife together."

"I said not so," replied the knight. "Here is a coil indeed about the absence of a rustical bondsman, who, I dare say, hath gone off (if he be gone) to join the next rascally band of freebooters! Ye ask me, a knight of the Piercie's lineage, to account for such an insignificant fugitive, and I answer, — let me know the price of his head, and I will pay it to your convent treasurer."

"You admit, then, that you have slain my brother?" said Edward, interfering once more; "I will presently shew you at what price we Scots rate the lives of our friends."

"Peace, Edward, peace — I entreat — I command thee," said the Sub-Prior. "And you, Sir Knight, think better of us than to suppose you may spend Scottish blood, and reckon for it as for wine spilt in a drunken revel. This youth was no bondsman — thou well knowest, that in thine own land thou hadst not dared to lift thy sword against the meanest subject of England, but her laws would have called thee to answer for the deed. Do not hope it will be otherwise here, for you will but deceive yourself."

"You drive me beyond my patience," said the Euphuist, "even as the over-driven ox is urged into madness! — What can I tell you of a young fellow whom I have not seen since the second hour after sunrise?"

"But can you explain in what circumstances you parted with him?" said the monk.

"What *are* the circumstances, in the devil's name, which you desire should be explained? — for although I protest against this constraint as alike unworthy and inhospitable, yet would I willingly end this fray, provided that by words it may be ended," said the knight.

"If these end it not," said Edward, "blows shall, and that full speedily."

"Peace, impatient boy!" said the Sub-Prior; "and do you, Sir Percie Shafton, acquaint me why the ground is bloody by the verge of the fountain in Corri-nan-shian, where, as you say yourself, you parted from Halbert Glendinning?"

Resolute not to avow his defeat if possibly he could avoid it, the knight answered in a haughty tone, that he supposed it was no unusual thing to find the turf bloody where hunters had slain a deer.

"And did you bury your game as well as kill it?" said the monk. "We must know from you who is the tenant of that grave, that newly-made grave, beside the very fountain whose margin is so deeply crimsoned with blood?—Thou seest thou canst not evade me; therefore be ingenuous, and tell us the fate of this unhappy youth, whose body is doubtless lying under that bloody turf."

"If it be," said Sir Piercie, "they must have buried him alive; for I swear to thee, reverend father, that this rustic juvenal parted from me in perfect health. Let the grave be searched, and if his body be found, then deal with me as ye list."

"It is not my sphere to determine thy fate, Sir Knight, but that of the Lord Abbot, and the right reverend Chapter. It is but my duty to collect such information as may best possess their wisdom with the matters which have chanced."

"Might I presume so far, reverend father," said the knight, "I should wish to know the author and evidence of all these suspicions, so unfoundedly urged against me?"

"It is soon told," said the Sub-Prior; "nor do I wish to disguise it, if it can avail you in your defence. This maiden, Mary Avenel, apprehending that you nourished malice against her foster-brother under a friendly brow, did advisedly send up the old man, Martin Tacket, to follow your footsteps and to prevent mischief. But it seems that your evil passions had outrun precaution; for when he came to the spot, guided by your footsteps upon the dew, he found but the bloody turf and the new covered grave; and after long and vain search through the wilds after Halbert and yourself, he brought back the sorrowful news to her who had sent him."

"Saw he not my doublet, I pray you?" said Sir Piercie; "for when I came to myself, I found that I was wrapped in my cloak, but without my under garment, as your reverence may observe."

So saying, he opened his cloak, forgetting, with his characteristical inconsistency, that he shewed his shirt stained with blood.

"How! cruel man," said the monk, when he observed this confirmation of his suspicions; "wilt thou deny the guilt, even while thou bearest on thy person the blood thou hast shed?—Wilt thou longer deny that thy rash hand has robbed a mother of a son, our community of a vassal, the Queen of Scotland of a liege subject? and what canst thou expect, but that, at the least, we deliver thee up to England, as undeserving our farther protection?"

"By the Saints!" said the knight, now driven to extremity, "if this blood be the witness against me, it is but rebel blood, since this morning at sunrise it flowed within my own veins."

"How were that possible, Sir Piercie Shafton," said the monk, "since I see no wound from whence it can have flowed?"

"That," said the knight, "is the most mysterious part of the transaction—See here!"

So saying, he undid his shirt collar, and, opening his bosom, shewed the spot through which Halbert's sword had passed, but already cicatrized, and bearing the appearance of a wound lately healed.

"This exhausts my patience, Sir Knight," said the Sub-Prior, "and is adding insult to violence and injury. Do you hold me for a child or an idiot, that you pretend to make me believe that the fresh blood with which your shirt is stained, flowed from a wound which has been healed for weeks or months? Unhappy mocker, thinkest thou thus to blind us? Too well do we know that it is the blood of your victim, wrestling with you in the desperate and mortal struggle, which has thus dyed your apparel."

The knight, after a moment's recollection, said in reply, "I will be open with you, my father—bid these men stand out of ear-shot, and I will tell you all I know of this mysterious business; and muse not, good father, though it may pass thy wit to expound it, for I avouch to you it is too dark for mine own."

The monk commanded Edward and the two men to withdraw, assuring the former that his conference with the prisoner should be brief, and giving him permission to keep watch at the door of the apartment; without which allowance he might, perhaps, have had some difficulty in procuring his absence. Edward had no sooner left the chamber, than he despatched messengers to one or two families of the Halidome, with whose sons his brother and he sometimes associated, to tell them that Halbert Glendinning had been murdered by an Englishman, and to require them to repair to the Tower of Glendearg without delay. The duty of revenge in such cases was held so sacred, that he had no reason to doubt they would instantly come with such assistance as would ensure the detention of the prisoner. He then locked the doors of the tower, both inner and outer, and also the gate of the court-yard. Having taken these precautions, he made a hasty visit to the females of the family, exhausting himself in efforts to console them, and in protestations that he would have vengeance for his murdered brother.

CHAPTER XXVII.

> Now, by Our Lady, Sheriff, 'tis hard reckoning,
> That I, with every odds of birth and barony,
> Should be detain'd here for the casual death
> Of a wild forester, whose utmost having
> Is but the brazen buckle of the belt
> In which he sticks his hedge-knife.
>
> *Old Play.*

While Edward was making preparations for securing and punishing the supposed murderer of his brother, with an intense thirst for vengeance, which had not hitherto shewn itself as part of his character, Sir Piercie Shafton made such communications as it pleased him to the Sub-Prior, who listened with great attention, though the knight's narrative was none of the clearest, especially as his self-conceit led him to conceal or abridge the details which were necessary to render it intelligible.

"You are to know," he said, "reverend father, that this rustical juvenal having chosen to offer me, in the presence of your venerable Superior, yourself, and other excellent and worthy persons, besides the damsel Mary Avenel, whom I term my Discretion in all honour and kindness, a gross insult, rendered yet more intolerable by the time and place, my just resentment did so gain the mastery

over my discretion, that I resolved to allow him the privileges of an equal, and to indulge him with the combat."

"But, Sir Knight," said the Sub-Prior, "you still leave two matters very obscure. First, why the token he presented to you gave you so much offence, as I with others witnessed; and then again, how the youth, whom you then met for the first, or, at least, the second time, knew so much of your history as enabled him so greatly to move you."

The knight coloured very deeply.

"For your first query," he said, "most reverend father, we will, if you please, pretermit it as nothing essential to the matter in hand; and for the second — I protest to you that I know as little of his means of knowledge as you do, and that I am well-nigh persuaded he deals with Sathanas, of which more anon. — Well, sir — In the evening, I failed not to veil my purpose with a pleasant brow, as is the custom amongst us martialists, who never display the bloody colours of defiance in our countenance until our hand is armed to fight under them. I amused the fair Discretion with some canzonettes, and other toys, which could not but be ravishing to her inexperienced ears. I arose in the morning, and met my antagonist, who, to say truth, for an inexperienced villagio, comported himself as stoutly as I could have desired. — So, coming to the encounter, reverend sir, I did try his mettle with some half-a-dozen of downright passes, with any one of which I could have been through his body, only that I was loth to take so fatal an advantage, but rather, mixing mercy with my just indignation, studied to inflict upon him some flesh-wound of no very fatal quality. But, sir, in the midst of my clemency, he, being instigated, I think, by the devil, did follow up his first offence with some insult of the same nature. Whereupon being eager to punish him, I made an estramazone, and my foot slipping at the same time, — not from any fault of fence on my part, or any advantage of skill on his, but the devil having, as I said, taken up the matter in hand, and the grass being slippery,— ere I recovered my position I encountered his sword, which he had advanced, with my undefended person, so that, as I think, I was in some sort run through the body. My juvenal, being beyond measure appalled at his own unexpected and unmerited success in this strange encounter, takes the flight and leaves me there, and I fall into a dead swoon for the lack of the blood I had lost so foolishly — and when I awake, as from a sound sleep, I find myself lying, an it like you, wrapt up in my cloak at the foot of one of the birch-trees which stand together in a clump near to this place. I feel my limbs, and experience little pain, but much weakness — I put my hand to the wound — it was whole and skinned over as you now see it — I rise and come hither; and in these words you have my whole day's story."

"I can only reply to so strange a tale," answered the monk, "that it is scarce possible that Sir Piercie Shafton can expect me to credit it. Here is a quarrel, the cause of which you conceal, — a wound received in the morning, of which there is no recent appearance at sunset, — a grave filled up, in which no body is deposited — the vanquished found alive and well — the victor departed no man knows whither. These things, Sir Knight, hang not so well together, that I should receive them as gospel."

"Reverend father," answered Sir Piercie Shafton, "I pray you in the first place to observe, that if I offer peaceful and civil justification of that which I have already averred to be true, I do so only in devout deference to your dress and to your order, protesting, that to any other opposite, saving a man of religion, a lady, or my liege prince, I would not deign to support that which I had once attested, otherwise than with the point of my good sword. And so much being premised, I have to add, that I can but gage my honour as a gentleman, and my faith as a catholic Christian, that the things which I have described to you have happened to me as I have described them, and not otherwise."

"It is a deep assertion, Sir Knight," answered the Sub-Prior; "yet, bethink you, it is only an assertion, and that no reason can be alleged why things should be believed which are so contrary to reason. Let me pray you to say whether the grave, which has been seen at your place of combat, was open or closed when your encounter took place?"

"Reverend father," said the knight, "I will veil from you nothing, but shew you each secret of my bosom; even as the pure fountain revealeth the smallest pebble which graces the sand at the bottom of its crystal mirror, and as ——"

"Speak in plain terms, for the love of heaven!" said the monk; "these holiday phrases belong not to solemn affairs — Was the grave open when the conflict began?"

"It was," answered the knight, "I acknowledge it; even as he that acknowledgeth ——"

"Nay, I pray you, fair son, forbear these similitudes, and observe me. On yesterday at even no grave was found in that place, for old Martin chanced, contrary to his wont, to go thither in quest of a strayed sheep. At break of day, by your own confession, a grave was opened in that spot, and there a combat was fought — only one of the combatants appears, and he is covered with blood, and to all appearance woundless." — Here the knight made a gesture of impatience. — "Nay, fair son, hear me but one moment — the grave is closed and covered by the sod — what can we believe, but that it conceals the bloody corpse of the fallen duellist?"

"By Heaven, it cannot!" said the knight, "unless the juvenal hath slain himself, and buried himself, in order to place me in the predicament of his murderer."

"The grave shall doubtless be explored, and that by to-morrow's dawn," said the monk; "I will see it done with mine own eyes."

"But," said the prisoner, "I protest against all evidence which may arise from its contents, and do insist beforehand, that whatever may be found in that grave shall not prejudicate me in my defence. I have been so haunted by diabolical deceptions in this matter, that what do I know but that the devil may assume the form of this rustical juvenal, in order to procure me farther vexation? — I protest to you, holy father, it is my very thought that there is witchcraft in all that hath befallen me. Since I entered into this northern land, in which men say that sorceries do abound, I, who am held in awe and regard even by the prime gallants in the court of Feliciana, have been here bearded and

taunted by a clod-treading clown. I, whom Vincentio Saviola termed his nimblest and most agile disciple, was, to speak briefly, foiled by a cow-boy, who knew no more of fence than is used at every country wake. I am run, as it seemed to me, through the body, with a very sufficient stoccata, and faint on the spot; and yet, when I recover, I find myself without either wem or wound, and lacking nothing of my apparel, saving my murrey-coloured doublet, slashed with satin, which I will pray may be inquired after, lest the devil, who transported me, should have dropped it in his passage among some of the trees or bushes — it being a choice and most fanciful piece of raiment, which I wore for the first time at the Queen's pageant in Southwark."

"Sir Knight," said the monk, "you do again go astray from this matter. I inquire of you respecting that which concerns the life of another man, and, it may be, touches your own also, and you answer me with a tale of an old doublet!"

"Old!" exclaimed the knight; "now, by the gods and saints, if there be a gallant at the British Court more fancifully considerate, and more considerately fanciful, more quaintly curious, and more curiously quaint, in frequent changes of all rich articles of vesture, becoming one who may be accounted point-de-vice a courtier, I will give you leave to term me a slave and a liar."

The monk thought, but did not say, that he had already acquired right to doubt the veracity of the Euphuist, considering the marvellous tale which he had told. Yet his own strange adventure, and that of Father Philip, rushed on his mind, and forbade his coming to any conclusion. He contented himself, therefore, with observing, that these were certainly strange incidents, and requested to know if Sir Piercie Shafton had any other reason for suspecting himself to be in a manner so particularly selected for the sport of sorcery and witchcraft.

"Sir Sub-Prior," said the Euphuist, "the most extraordinary circumstance remains behind, which alone, had I neither been bearded in dispute, nor foiled in combat, nor wounded and cured in the space of a few hours, would nevertheless of itself, and without any other corroborative, have compelled me to believe myself the subject of some malevolent fascination. Reverend sir, it is not to your ears that men should tell tales of love and gallantry, nor is Sir Piercie Shafton one who, to any ears whatsoever, is wont to boast of his fair acceptance with the choice and prime beauties of the court; insomuch that a lady, none of the least resplendent constellations which revolve in that hemisphere of honour, pleasure, and beauty, but whose name I here pretermit, was wont to call me her Taciturnity. Nevertheless truth must be spoken; and I cannot but allow, as the general report of the court, allowed in camps, and echoed back by city and country, that in the alacrity of the accost, the tender delicacy of the regard, the facetiousness of the address, the adopting and pursuing of the fancy, the solemn close and the graceful fall-off, Piercie Shafton was accounted the only gallant of the time, and so well accepted amongst the choicer beauties of the age, that no silk-hosed reveller of the presence-chamber, or plumed jouster of the tilt-yard, approached him by a bow's length in the ladies' regard, being the mark at which every well-born and generous juvenal aimeth his shaft. Nevertheless, reverend sir, having found in this rude place something which by blood and birth might be termed a lady, and being desirous to keep my gallant humour in exercise, as well as to shew my sworn devotion to the sex in general, I did shoot off some arrows of compliment at this Mary Avenel, terming her my Discretion, with other quaint and well-imagined courtesies, rather bestowed out of my bounty than warranted by her merit, or perchance like unto the boyish fowler, who, rather than not exercise his bird-piece, will shoot at crows or magpies for lack of better game ——"

"Mary Avenel is much obliged by your notice," answered the monk; "but to what does all this detail of past and present gallantry conduct us?"

"Marry, to this conclusion," answered the knight; "that either this my Discretion, or I myself, am little less than bewitched; for, instead of receiving my accost with a gratified bow, answering my regard with a suppressed smile, accompanying my falling off or departure with a slight sigh — honours with which I protest to you the noblest dancers and proudest beauties in Feliciana have graced my poor services — she hath paid me as little and as cold regard as if I had been some hob-nailed clown of these bleak mountains! Nay, this very day, while I was in the act of kneeling at her feet to render her the succours of this pungent quintessence of purest spirit distilled by the fairest hands of the court of Feliciana, she pushed me from her with looks which savoured of repugnance, and, as I think, thrust at me with her foot as if to spurn me from her presence. These things, reverend father, are strange, portentous, unnatural, and befall not in the current of mortal affairs, but are symptomatic of sorcery and fascination. So that, having given to your reverence a perfect, simple, and plain account of all that I know concerning this matter, I leave it to your wisdom to solve what may be found soluble in the same, it being my purpose to-morrow, with the peep of dawn, to set forward towards Edinburgh."

"I grieve to be an interruption to your designs, Sir Knight," said the monk, "but that purpose of thine may hardly be fulfilled."

"How, reverend father!" said the knight, with an air of the utmost surprise; "if what you say respects my departure, understand that it *must* be, for I have so resolved it."

"Sir Knight," reiterated the Sub-Prior, "I must once more repeat, this *cannot* be, until the Abbot's pleasure be known in the matter."

"Reverend sir," said the knight, drawing himself up with great dignity, "I desire my hearty and thankful commendations to the Abbot; but in this matter I have nothing to do with his reverend pleasure, designing only to consult my own."

"Pardon me," said the Sub-Prior; "the Lord Abbot hath in this matter a voice potential."

Sir Piercie Shafton's colour began to rise — "I marvel," he said, "to hear your reverence talk thus — What! will you, for the imagined death of a rude low-born rampler and wrangler, venture to impinge upon the liberty of the kinsman of the house of Piercie?"

"Sir Knight," returned the Sub-Prior, civilly, "your high lineage and your kindling anger will avail you nothing in this matter — You shall not come here to seek a shelter, and then spill our blood as if it were water."

"I tell you,' said the knight, "once more, as I have told you already, that there was no blood spilled but mine own !"

"That remains to be proved," replied the Sub-Prior ; "we of the community of Saint Mary's of Kennaquhair, use not to take fairy tales in exchange for the lives of our liege vassals."

"We of the house of Piercie," answered Shafton, "brook neither threats nor restraint — I say I will travel to-morrow, happen what may !"

"And I," answered the Sub-Prior, in the same tone of determination, "say that I will break your journey, come what may!"

"Who shall gainsay me," said the knight, "if I make my way by force ?"

"You will judge wisely to think ere you make such an attempt," answered the monk, with composure ; "there are men enough in the Halidome to vindicate its rights over those who dare to infringe them."

"My cousin of Northumberland will know how to revenge this usage to a beloved kinsman so near to his blood," said the Englishman.

"The Lord Abbot will know how to protect the rights of his territory, both with the temporal and spiritual sword," said the monk. "Besides, consider, were we to send you to your kinsman at Alnwick or Warkworth to-morrow, he dare do nothing but transmit you in fetters to the Queen of England. Bethink, Sir Knight, that you stand on slippery ground, and will act most wisely in reconciling yourself to be a prisoner in this place until the Abbot shall decide the matter. There are armed men enow to countervail all your efforts at escape. Let patience and resignation, therefore, arm you to a necessary submission."

So saying, he clapped his hands, and called aloud. Edward entered, accompanied by two young men who had already joined him, and were well armed.

"Edward," said the Sub-Prior, "you will supply the English knight here in this spence with suitable food and accommodation for the night, treating him with as much kindness as if nothing had happened between you. But you will place a sufficient guard, and look carefully that he make not his escape. Should he attempt to break forth, resist him to the death ; but in no other case harm a hair of his head, as you shall be answerable."

Edward Glendinning replied, — "That I may obey your commands, reverend sir, I will not again offer myself to this person's presence ; for shame it were to me to break the peace of the Halidome, but not less shame to leave my brother's death unavenged."

As he spoke, his lip grew livid, the blood forsook his cheek, and he was about to leave the apartment, when the Sub-Prior recalled him and said in a solemn tone, — "Edward, I have known you from infancy — I have done what lay within my reach to be of use to you — I say nothing of what you owe to me as the representative of your spiritual Superior — I say nothing of the duty from the vassal to the Sub-Prior — But Father Eustace expects from the pupil whom he has nurtured — he expects from Edward Glendinning, that he will not by any deed of sudden violence, however justified in his own mind by the provocation, break through the respect due to public justice, or that which he has an especial right to claim from him."

"Fear nothing, my reverend father, for so in an hundred senses may I well term you," said the young man ; "fear not, I would say, that I will in any thing diminish the respect I owe to the venerable community by whom we have so long been protected, far less that I will do aught which can be personally less than respectful to you. But the blood of my brother must not cry for vengeance in vain — your reverence knows our Border creed."

"'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will requite it,'" answered the monk. "The heathenish custom of deadly feud which prevails in this land, through which each man seeks vengeance at his own hand when the death of a friend or kinsman has chanced, hath already deluged our vales with the blood of Scottish men, spilled by the hands of countrymen and kindred. It were endless to count up the fatal results. On the Eastern Border, the Homes are at feud with the Swintons and Cockburns ; in our Middle Marches, the Scotts and Kerrs have spilled as much brave blood in domestic feud as might have fought a pitched field in England, could they have but forgiven and forgotten a casual rencounter that placed their names in opposition to each other. On the west frontier, the Johnstones are at war with the Maxwells, the Jardines with the Bells, drawing with them the flower of the country, which should place their breasts as a bulwark against England, into private and bloody warfare, of which it is the only end to waste and impair the forces of the country, already divided in itself. Do not, my dear son Edward, permit this bloody prejudice to master your mind. I cannot ask you to think of the crime supposed as if the blood spilled had been less dear to you — Alas ! I know that is impossible. But I do require you, in proportion to your interest in the supposed sufferer, (for as yet the whole is matter of supposition,) to bear on your mind the evidence on which the guilt of the accused person must be tried. He hath spoken with me, and I confess his tale is so extraordinary, that I should have, without a moment's hesitation, rejected it as incredible, but that an affair which chanced to myself in this very glen — More of that another time — Suffice it for the present to say, that from what I have myself experienced, I deem it possible, that, extraordinary as Sir Piercie Shafton's story may seem, I hold it not utterly impossible."

"Father," said Edward Glendinning, when he saw that his preceptor paused, unwilling farther to explain upon what grounds he was inclined to give a certain degree of credit to Sir Piercie Shafton's story, while he admitted it as improbable — "Father to me you have been in every sense. You know that my hand grasped more readily to the book than to the sword ; and that I lacked utterly the ready and bold spirit which distinguished——" Here his voice faltered, and he paused for a moment, and then went on with resolution and rapidity — "I would say, that I was unequal to Halbert in promptitude of heart and of hand ; but Halbert is gone, and I stand his representative, and that of my father — his successor in all his rights," (while he said this his eyes shot fire,) "and bound to assert and maintain them as he would have done — therefore I am a changed man, increased in courage as in my rights and pretensions. And, reverend father, respectfully, but plainly and firmly do I say, his blood, if it has been shed by this

man, shall be atoned — Halbert shall not sleep neglected in his lonely grave, as if with him the spirit of my father had ceased for ever. His blood flows in my veins, and while his has been poured forth unrequited, mine will permit me no rest. My poverty and meanness of rank shall not avail the lordly murderer. My calm nature and peaceful studies shall not be his protection. Even the obligations, holy father, which I acknowledge to you, shall not be his protection. I wait with patience the judgment of the Abbot and Chapter, for the slaughter of one of their most anciently descended vassals. If they do right to my brother's memory, it is well. But mark me, father, if they shall fail in rendering me that justice, I bear a heart and a hand which, though I love not such extremities, are capable of remedying such an error. He who takes up my brother's succession must avenge his death."

The monk perceived with surprise, that Edward, with his extreme diffidence, humility, and obedient assiduity, for such were his general characteristics, had still boiling in his veins the wild principles of those from whom he was descended, and by whom he was surrounded. His eyes sparkled, his frame was agitated, and the extremity of his desire of vengeance seemed to give a vehemence to his manner resembling the restlessness of joy.

"May God help us," said Father Eustace, "for, frail wretches as we are, we cannot help ourselves under sudden and strong temptation. — Edward, I will rely on your word that you do nothing rashly."

"That will I not," said Edward, — "that, my better than father, I surely will not. But the blood of my brother, — the tears of my mother — and — and — and of Mary Avenel, shall not be shed in vain. I will not deceive you, father — if this Piercie Shafton hath slain my brother, he dies, if the whole blood of the whole house of Piercie were in his veins."

There was a deep and solemn determination in the utterance of Edward Glendinning, expressive of a rooted resolution. The Sub-Prior sighed deeply, and for the moment yielded to circumstances, and urged the acquiescence of his pupil no farther. He commanded lights to be placed in the lower chamber, which for a time he paced in silence.

A thousand ideas, and even differing principles, debated with each other in his bosom. He greatly doubted the English knight's account of the duel, and of what had followed it. Yet the extraordinary and supernatural circumstances which had befallen the Sacristan and himself in that very glen, prevented him from being absolutely incredulous on the score of the wonderful wound and recovery of Sir Piercie Shafton, and prevented him from at once condemning as impossible that which was altogether improbable. Then he was at a loss how to control the fraternal affections of Edward, with respect to whom he felt something like the keeper of a wild animal, a lion's whelp or tiger's cub, which he has held under his command from infancy, but which, when grown to maturity, on some sudden provocation displays his fangs and talons, erects his crest, resumes his savage nature, and bids defiance at once to his keeper and to all mankind.

How to restrain and mitigate an ire which the universal example of the times rendered deadly and inveterate, was sufficient cause of anxiety to Father Eustace. But he had also to consider the situation of his community, dishonoured and degraded by submitting to suffer the slaughter of a vassal to pass unavenged; a circumstance which of itself might in those difficult times have afforded pretext for a revolt among their wavering adherents, or, on the other hand, exposed the community to imminent danger, should they proceed against a subject of England of high degree, connected with the house of Northumberland, and other northern families of high rank, who, as they possessed the means, could not be supposed to lack inclination, to wreak upon the patrimony of Saint Mary of Kennaquhair, any violence which might be offered to their kinsman.

In either case, the Sub-Prior well knew that the ostensible cause of feud, insurrection, or incursion, being once afforded, the case would not be ruled either by reason or by evidence, and he groaned in spirit when, upon counting up the chances which arose in this ambiguous dilemma, he found he had only a choice of difficulties. He was a monk, but he felt also as a man, indignant at the supposed slaughter of young Glendinning by one skilful in all the practice of arms, in which the vassal of the Monastery was most likely to be deficient; and to aid the resentment which he felt for the loss of a youth whom he had known from infancy, came in full force the sense of dishonour arising to his community from passing over so gross an insult unavenged. Then the light in which it might be viewed by those who at present presided in the stormy Court of Scotland, attached as they were to the Reformation, and allied by common faith and common interest with Queen Elizabeth, was a formidable subject of apprehension. The Sub-Prior well knew how they lusted after the revenues of the church, (to express it in the ordinary phrase of the religious of the time,) and how readily they would grasp at such a pretext for encroaching on those of Saint Mary's, as would be afforded by the suffering to pass unpunished the death of a native Scottishman by a Catholic Englishman, a rebel to Queen Elizabeth.

On the other hand, to deliver up to England, or, which was nearly the same thing, to the Scottish administration, an English knight leagued with the Piercie by kindred and political intrigue, a faithful follower of the Catholic Church, who had fled to the Halidome for protection, was, in the estimation of the Sub-Prior, an act most unworthy in itself, and meriting the malediction of Heaven, besides being, moreover, fraught with great temporal risk. If the government of Scotland was now almost entirely in the hands of the Protestant party, the Queen was still a Catholic, and there was no knowing when, amid the sudden changes which agitated that tumultuous country, she might find herself at the head of her own affairs, and able to protect those of her own faith. Then if the Court of England and its Queen were zealously Protestant, the northern counties, whose friendship or enmity were of most consequence in the first instance to the community of Saint Mary's, contained many Catholics, the heads of whom were able, and must be supposed willing, to avenge any injury suffered by Sir Piercie Shafton.

On either side, the Sub-Prior, thinking, according to his sense of duty, most anxiously for the safety

and welfare of his Monastery, saw the greatest risk of damage, blame, inroad, and confiscation. The only course on which he could determine, was to stand by the helm like a resolute pilot, watch every contingence, do his best to weather each reef and shoal, and commit the rest to heaven and his patroness.

As he left the apartment, the knight called after him, beseeching he would order his trunk-mails to be sent into his apartment, understanding he was to be guarded there for the night, as he wished to make some alteration in his apparel.[1]

"Ay, ay," said the monk, muttering as he went up the winding stair, "carry him his trumpery with all despatch. Alas! that man, with so many noble objects of pursuit, will amuse himself like a jackanape, with a laced jerkin and a cap and bells! — I must now to the melancholy work of consoling that which is well-nigh inconsolable, a mother weeping for her first-born."

Advancing, after a gentle knock, into the apartment of the women, he found that Mary Avenel had retired to bed, extremely indisposed, and that Dame Glendinning and Tibb were indulging their sorrows by the side of a decaying fire, and by the light of a small iron lamp, or cruize, as it was termed. Poor Elspeth's apron was thrown over her head, and bitterly did she sob and weep for "her beautiful, her brave, — the very image of her dear Simon Glendinning, the stay of her widowhood and the support of her old age."

The faithful Tibb echoed her complaints, and, more violently clamorous, made deep promises of revenge on Sir Piercie Shafton, "if there were a man left in the south who could draw a whinger, or a woman that could thraw a rape." The presence of the Sub-Prior imposed silence on these clamours. He sate down by the unfortunate mother, and essayed, by such topics as his religion and reason suggested, to interrupt the current of Dame Glendinning's feelings; but the attempt was in vain. She listened, indeed, with some little interest, while he pledged his word and his influence with the Abbot, that the family which had lost their eldest-born by means of a guest received at his command, should experience particular protection at the hands of the community; and that the fief which belonged to Simon Glendinning should, with extended bounds and added privileges, be conferred on Edward.

But it was only for a very brief space that the mother's sobs were apparently softer, and her grief more mild. She soon blamed herself for casting a moment's thought upon world's gear while poor Halbert was lying stretched in his bloody shirt. The Sub-Prior was not more fortunate, when he promised that Halbert's body "should be removed to hallowed ground, and his soul secured by the prayers of the church in his behalf." Grief would have its natural course, and the voice of the comforter was wasted in vain.

[1] See Note K. *Foppery of the Sixteenth Century.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

He is at liberty, I have ventured for him!
——————————— if the law
Find and condemn me for 't, some living wenches,
Some honest-hearted maids will sing my dirge,
And tell to memory my death was noble,
Dying almost a martyr.

Two Noble Kinsmen.

The Sub-Prior of Saint Mary's, in taking his departure from the spence in which Sir Piercie Shafton was confined, and in which some preparations were made for his passing the night as the room which might be most conveniently guarded, left more than one perplexed person behind him. There was connected with this chamber, and opening into it, a small *outshot*, or projecting part of the building, occupied by a sleeping apartment, which upon ordinary occasions, was that of Mary Avenel, and which, in the unusual number of guests who had come to the tower on the former evening, had also accommodated Mysie Happer, the Miller's daughter; for anciently, as well as in the present day, a Scottish house was always rather too narrow and limited for the extent of the owner's hospitality, and some shift and contrivance was necessary, upon any unusual occasion, to ensure the accommodation of all the guests.

The fatal news of Halbert Glendinning's death had thrown all former arrangements into confusion. Mary Avenel, whose case required immediate attention, had been transported into the apartment hitherto occupied by Halbert and his brother, as the latter proposed to watch all night, in order to prevent the escape of the prisoner. Poor Mysie had been altogether overlooked, and had naturally enough betaken herself to the little apartment which she had hitherto occupied, ignorant that the spence, through which lay the only access to it, was to be the sleeping chamber of Sir Piercie Shafton. The measures taken for securing him there had been so sudden, that she was not aware of it, until she found that the other females had been removed from the spence by the Sub-Prior's direction, and having once missed the opportunity of retreating along with them, bashfulness, and the high respect which she was taught to bear to the monks, prevented her venturing forth alone, and intruding herself on the presence of Father Eustace, while in secret conference with the Southron. There appeared no remedy but to wait till their interview was over; and, as the door was thin, and did not shut very closely, she could hear every word that passed betwixt them.

It thus happened, that without any intended intrusion on her part, she became privy to the whole conversation of the Sub-Prior and the English knight, and could also observe from the window of her little retreat, that more than one of the young men summoned by Edward arrived successively at the tower. These circumstances led her to entertain most serious apprehension that the life of Sir Piercie Shafton was in great and instant peril.

Woman is naturally compassionate, and not less willingly so when youth and fair features are on the side of him who claims her sympathy. The handsome presence, elaborate dress and address of Sir Piercie Shafton, which had failed to make any favourable impression on the grave and lofty

character of Mary Avenel, had completely dazzled and bewildered the poor Maid of the Mill. The knight had perceived this result, and, flattered by seeing that his merit was not universally underrated, he had bestowed on Mysie a good deal more of his courtesy than in his opinion her rank warranted. It was not cast away, but received with a devout sense of his condescension, and with gratitude for his personal notice, which, joined to her fears for his safety, and the natural tenderness of her disposition, began to make wild work in her heart.

"To be sure it was very wrong in him to slay Halbert Glendinning," (it was thus she argued the case with herself,) "but then he was a gentleman born, and a soldier, and so gentle and courteous withal, that she was sure the quarrel had been all of young Glendinning's own seeking; for it was well known that both these lads were so taken up with that Mary Avenel, that they never looked at another lass in the Halidome, more than if they were of a different degree. And then Halbert's dress was as clownish as his manners were haughty; and this poor young gentleman, (who was habited like any prince,) banished from his own land, was first drawn into a quarrel by a rude brangler, and then persecuted and like to be put to death by his kin and allies."

Mysie wept bitterly at the thought, and then her heart rising against such cruelty and oppression to a defenceless stranger, who dressed with so much skill, and spoke with so much grace, she began to consider whether she could not render him some assistance in this extremity.

Her mind was now entirely altered from its original purpose. At first her only anxiety had been to find the means of escaping from the interior apartment, without being noticed by any one; but now she began to think that Heaven had placed her there for the safety and protection of the persecuted stranger. She was of a simple and affectionate, but at the same time an alert and enterprising character, possessing more than female strength of body, and more than female courage, though with feelings as capable of being bewildered with gallantry of dress and language, as a fine gentleman of any generation would have desired to exercise his talents upon. "I will save him," she thought, "that is the first thing to be resolved — and then I wonder what he will say to the poor Miller's maiden, that has done for him what all the dainty dames in London or Holyrood would have been afraid to venture upon."

Prudence began to pull her sleeve as she indulged speculations so hazardous, and hinted to her that the warmer Sir Piercie Shafton's gratitude might prove, it was the more likely to be fraught with danger to his benefactress. Alas! poor Prudence, thou mayest say with our moral teacher,

"I preach for ever, but I preach in vain."

The Miller's maiden, while you pour your warning into her unwilling bosom, has glanced her eye on the small mirror by which she has placed her little lamp, and it returns to her a countenance and eyes, pretty and sparkling at all times, but ennobled at present with the energy of expression proper to those who have dared to form, and stand prepared to execute, deeds of generous audacity.

"Will these features — will these eyes, joined to the benefit I am about to confer upon Sir Piercie Shafton, do nothing towards removing the distance of rank between us?"

Such was the question which female vanity asked of fancy; and though even fancy dared not answer in a ready affirmative, a middle conclusion was adopted — "Let me first succour the gallant youth, and trust to fortune for the rest."

Banishing, therefore, from her mind every thing that was personal to herself, the rash but generous girl turned her whole thoughts to the means of executing this enterprise.

The difficulties which interposed were of no ordinary nature. The vengeance of the men of that country, in cases of deadly feud, that is, in cases of a quarrel excited by the slaughter of any of their relations, was one of their most marked characteristics; and Edward, however gentle in other respects, was so fond of his brother, that there could be no doubt that he would be as signal in his revenge as the customs of the country authorized. There were to be passed the inner door of the apartment, the two gates of the tower itself, and the gate of the court-yard, ere the prisoner was at liberty; and then a guide and means of flight were to be provided, otherwise ultimate escape was impossible. But where the will of woman is strongly bent on the accomplishment of such a purpose, her wit is seldom baffled by difficulties, however embarrassing.

The Sub-Prior had not long left the apartment, ere Mysie had devised a scheme for Sir Piercie Shafton's freedom, daring, indeed, but likely to be successful, if dexterously conducted. It was necessary, however, that she should remain where she was till so late an hour, that all in the tower should have betaken themselves to repose, excepting those whose duty made them watchers. The interval she employed in observing the movements of the person in whose service she was thus boldly a volunteer.

She could hear Sir Piercie Shafton pace the floor to and fro, in reflection doubtless on his own untoward fate and precarious situation. By and by she heard him making a rustling among his trunks, which, agreeable to the order of the Sub-Prior, had been placed in the apartment to which he was confined, and which he was probably amusing more melancholy thoughts by examining and arranging. Then she could hear him resume his walk through the room, and, as if his spirits had been somewhat relieved and elevated by the survey of his wardrobe, she could distinguish that at one turn he half recited a sonnet, at another half whistled a galliard, and at the third hummed a saraband. At length she could understand that he extended himself on the temporary couch which had been allotted to him, after muttering his prayers hastily, and in a short time she concluded he must be fast asleep.

She employed the moments which intervened in considering her enterprize under every different aspect; and dangerous as it was, the steady review which she took of the various perils accompanying her purpose, furnished her with plausible devices for obviating them. Love and generous compassion, which give singly such powerful impulse to the female heart, were in this case united, and championed her to the last extremity of hazard.

It was an hour past midnight. All in the tower slept soundly but those who had undertaken to guard the English prisoner; or if sorrow and suffer-

ing drove sleep from the bed of Dame Glendinning and her foster-daughter, they were too much wrapt in their own griefs to attend to external sounds. The means of striking light were at hand in the small apartment, and thus the Miller's maiden was enabled to light and trim a small lamp. With a trembling step and throbbing heart, she undid the door which separated her from the apartment in which the Southron knight was confined, and almost flinched from her fixed purpose, when she found herself in the same room with the sleeping prisoner. She scarcely trusted herself to look upon him, as he lay wrapped in his cloak, and fast asleep upon the pallet bed, but turned her eyes away while she gently pulled his mantle with no more force than was just equal to awaken him. He moved not until she had twitched his cloak a second and a third time, and then at length looking up, was about to make an exclamation in the suddenness of his surprise.

Mysie's bashfulness was conquered by her fear. She placed her fingers on her lips, in token that he must observe the most strict silence, and then pointed to the door to intimate that it was watched.

Sir Piercie Shafton now collected himself, and sat upright on his couch. He gazed with surprise on the graceful figure of the young woman who stood before him; her well-formed person, her flowing hair, and the outline of her features, shewed dimly, and yet to advantage, by the partial and feeble light which she held in her hand. The romantic imagination of the gallant would soon have coined some compliment proper for the occasion, but Mysie left him not time.

"I come," she said, "to save your life, which is else in great peril — if you answer me, speak as low as you can, for they have sentinelled your door with armed men."

"Comeliest of millers' daughters," answered Sir Piercie, who by this time was sitting upright on his couch, "dread nothing for my safety. Credit me, that, as in very truth, I have not spilled the red puddle (which these villagios call the blood) of their most uncivil relation, so I am under no apprehension whatever for the issue of this restraint, seeing that it cannot but be harmless to me. Natheless, to thee, O most Molendinar beauty, I return the thanks which thy courtesy may justly claim."

"Nay, but, Sir Knight," answered the maiden, in a whisper as low as it was tremulous, "I deserve no thanks, unless you will act by my counsel. Edward Glendinning hath sent for Dan of the Howlet-hirst, and young Adie of Aikenshaw, and they are come with three men more, and with bow, and jack, and spear, and I heard them say to each other, and to Edward, as they alighted in the court, that they would have amends for the death of their kinsman, if the monk's cowl should smoke for it — And the vassals are so wilful now, that the Abbot himself dare not control them, for fear they turn heretics, and refuse to pay their feu-duties."

"In faith," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "it may be a shrewd temptation, and perchance the monks may rid themselves of trouble and cumber, by handing me over the march to Sir John Foster or Lord Hunsdon, the English wardens, and so make peace with their vassals and with England at once. Fairest Molinara, I will for once walk by thy rede, and if thou dost contrive to extricate me from this vile kennel, I will so celebrate thy wit and beauty, that the Baker's nymph of Raphael d'Urbino shall seem but a gipsey in comparison of my Molinara."

"I pray you, then, be silent," said the Miller's daughter; "for if your speech betrays that you are awake, my scheme fails utterly, and it is Heaven's mercy and Our Lady's that we are not already overheard and discovered."

"I am silent," replied the Southron, "even as the starless night — but yet — if this contrivance of thine should endanger thy safety, fair and no less kind than fair damsel, it were utterly unworthy of me to accept it at thy hand."

"Do not think of me," said Mysie, hastily; "I am safe — I will take thought for myself, if I once saw you out of this dangerous dwelling — if you would provide yourself with any part of your apparel or goods, lose no time."

The knight *did*, however, lose some time, ere he could settle in his own mind what to take and what to abandon of his wardrobe, each article of which seemed endeared to him by recollection of the feasts and revels at which it had been exhibited. For some little while Mysie left him to make his selections at leisure, for she herself had also some preparations to make for flight. But when, returning from the chamber into which she had retired, with a small bundle in her hand, she found him still indecisive, she insisted in plain terms, that he should either make up his baggage for the enterprise, or give it up entirely. Thus urged, the disconsolate knight hastily made up a few clothes into a bundle, regarded his trunk-mails with a mute expression of parting sorrow, and intimated his readiness to wait upon his kind guide.

She led the way to the door of the apartment, having first carefully extinguished her lamp, and motioning to the knight to stand close behind her, tapped once or twice at the door. She was at length answered by Edward Glendinning, who demanded to know who knocked within, and what was desired.

"Speak low," said Mysie Happer, "or you will awaken the English knight. It is I, Mysie Happer, who knock — I wish to get out — you have locked me up — and I was obliged to wait till the Southron slept."

"Locked you up!" replied Edward, in surprise.

"Yes," answered the Miller's daughter, "you have locked me up into this room — I was in Mary Avenel's sleeping apartment."

"And can you not remain there till morning," replied Edward, "since it has so chanced?"

"What!" said the Miller's daughter, in a tone of offended delicacy, "I remain here a moment longer than I can get out without discovery! — I would not, for all the Halidome of St Mary's, remain a minute longer in the neighbourhood of a man's apartment than I can help it — For whom, or for what do you hold me? I promise you, my father's daughter has been better brought up than to put in peril her good name."

"Come forth then, and get to thy chamber in silence," said Edward.

So saying, he undid the bolt. The staircase without was in utter darkness, as Mysie had before ascertained. So soon as she stept out, she took hold of Edward as if to support herself, thus interposing her person betwixt him and Sir Piercie Shafton, by whom she was closely followed. Thus screened from observation, the Englishman slipped past on

tiptoe, unshod and in silence, while the damsel complained to Edward that she wanted a light.

"I cannot get you a light," said he, "for I cannot leave this post; but there is a fire below."

"I will sit below till morning," said the Maid of the Mill; and, tripping down stairs, heard Edward bolt and bar the door of the now tenantless apartment with vain caution.

At the foot of the stair which she descended, she found the object of her care waiting her farther directions. She recommended to him the most absolute silence, which, for once in his life, he seemed not unwilling to observe, conducted him with as much caution as if he were walking on cracked ice, to a dark recess, used for depositing wood, and instructed him to ensconce himself behind the fagots. She herself lighted her lamp once more at the kitchen fire, and took her distaff and spindle, that she might not seem to be unemployed, in case any one came into the apartment. From time to time, however, she stole towards the window on tiptoe, to catch the first glance of the dawn, for the farther prosecution of her adventurous project. At length she saw, to her great joy, the first peep of the morning brighten upon the gray clouds of the east, and, clasping her hands together, thanked Our Lady for the sight, and implored protection during the remainder of her enterprise. Ere she had finished her prayer, she started at feeling a man's arm across her shoulder, while a rough voice spoke in her ear — "What! menseful Mysie of the Mill so soon at her prayers? — now, benison on the bonny eyes that open so early!—I'll have a kiss for good morrow's sake."

Dan of the Howlet-hirst, for he was the gallant who paid Mysie this compliment, suited the action with the word, and the action, as is usual in such cases of rustic gallantry, was rewarded with a cuff, which Dan received as a fine gentleman receives a tap with a fan, but which, delivered by the energetic arm of the Miller's maiden, would have certainly astonished a less robust gallant.

"How now, Sir Coxcomb!" said she, "and must you be away from your guard over the English knight, to plague quiet folks with your horse-tricks!"

"Truly you are mistaken, pretty Mysie," said the clown, "for I have not yet relieved Edward at his post; and were it not a shame to let him stay any longer, by my faith, I could find it in my heart not to quit you these two hours."

"Oh, you have hours and hours enough to see any one," said Mysie; "but you must think of the distress of the household even now, and get Edward to sleep for a while, for he has kept watch this whole night."

"I will have another kiss first," answered Dan of the Howlet-hirst.

But Mysie was now on her guard, and, conscious of the vicinity of the wood-hole, offered such strenuous resistance, that the swain cursed the nymph's bad humour with very unpastoral phrase and emphasis, and ran up stairs to relieve the guard of his comrade. Stealing to the door, she heard the new sentinel hold a brief conversation with Edward, after which the latter withdrew, and the former entered upon the duties of his watch.

Mysie suffered him to walk there a little while undisturbed, until the dawning became more general, by which time she supposed he might have digested her coyness, and then presenting herself before the watchful sentinel, demanded of him "the keys of the outer tower, and of the court-yard gate."

"And for what purpose?" answered the warder.

"To milk the cows, and drive them out to their pasture," said Mysie; "you would not have the poor beasts kept in the byre a' morning, and the family in such distress, that there is na ane fit to do a turn but the byre-woman and myself?"

"And where is the byre-woman?" said Dan.

"Sitting with me in the kitchen, in case these distressed folks want any thing."

"There are the keys, then, Mysie Dorts," said the sentinel.

"Many thanks, Dan Ne'er-do-weel," answered the Maid of the Mill, and escaped down stairs in a moment.

To hasten to the wood-hole, and there to robe the English knight in a short-gown and petticoat, which she had provided for the purpose, was the work of another moment. She then undid the gates of the tower, and made towards the byre, or cow-house, which stood in one corner of the court-yard. Sir Piercie Shafton remonstrated against the delay which this would occasion.

"Fair and generous Molinara," he said, "had we not better undo the outward gate, and make the best of our way hence, even like a pair of sea-mews who make towards shelter of the rocks as the storm waxes high?"

"We must drive out the cows first," said Mysie, "for a sin it were to spoil the poor widow's cattle, both for her sake and the poor beasts' own; and I have no mind any one shall leave the tower in a hurry to follow us. Besides, you must have your horse, for you will need a fleet one ere all be done."

So saying, she locked and double-locked both the inward and outward door of the tower, proceeded to the cow-house, turned out the cattle, and, giving the knight his own horse to lead, drove them before her out at the court-yard gate, intending to return for her own palfrey. But the noise attending the first operation caught the wakeful attention of Edward, who, starting to the bartizan, called to know what the matter was.

Mysie answered with great readiness, that "she was driving out the cows, for that they would be spoiled for want of looking to."

"I thank thee, kind maiden," said Edward — "and yet," he added, after a moment's pause, "what damsel is that thou hast with thee?"

Mysie was about to answer, when Sir Piercie Shafton, who apparently did not desire that the great work of his liberation should be executed without the interposition of his own ingenuity, exclaimed from beneath, "I am she, O most bucolical juvenal, under whose charge are placed the milky mothers of the herd."

"Hell and darkness!" exclaimed Edward, in a transport of fury and astonishment, "it is Piercie Shafton — What! treason! treason!—ho!—Dan —Jasper—Martin—the villain escapes!"

"To horse! to horse!" cried Mysie, and in an instant mounted behind the knight, who was already in the saddle.

Edward caught up a cross-bow, and let fly a bolt, which whistled so near Mysie's ear, that she called to her companion,— "Spur — spur, Sir Knight!—

the next will not miss us.—Had it been Halbert instead of Edward who bent that bow, we had been dead."

The knight pressed his horse, which dashed past the cows, and down the knoll on which the tower was situated. Then taking the road down the valley, the gallant animal, reckless of its double burden, soon conveyed them out of hearing of the tumult and alarm with which their departure filled the Tower of Glendearg.

Thus it strangely happened, that two men were flying in different directions at the same time, each accused of being the other's murderer.

CHAPTER XXIX.

> ——— Sure he cannot
> Be so unmanly as to leave me here;
> If he do, maids will not so easily
> Trust men again.
>
> *The Two Noble Kinsmen.*

The knight continued to keep the good horse at a pace as quick as the road permitted, until they had cleared the valley of Glendearg, and entered upon the broad dale of the Tweed, which now rolled before them in crystal beauty, displaying on its opposite bank the huge gray Monastery of St Mary's, whose towers and pinnacles were scarce yet touched by the newly-risen sun, so deeply the edifice lies shrouded under the mountains which rise to the southward.

Turning to the left, the knight continued his road down the northern bank of the river, until they arrived nearly opposite to the weir, or damdike, where Father Philip concluded his extraordinary aquatic excursion.

Sir Piercie Shafton, whose brain seldom admitted more than one idea at a time, had hitherto pushed forward without very distinctly considering where he was going. But the sight of the Monastery so near to him, reminded him that he was still on dangerous ground, and that he must necessarily provide for his safety by choosing some settled plan of escape. The situation of his guide and deliverer also occurred to him, for he was far from being either selfish or ungrateful. He listened, and discovered that the Miller's daughter was sobbing and weeping bitterly as she rested her head on his shoulder.

"What ails thee," he said, "my generous Molinara?—is there aught that Piercie Shafton can do which may shew his gratitude to his deliverer?" Mysie pointed with her finger across the river, but ventured not to turn her eyes in that direction. "Nay, but speak plain, most generous damsel," said the knight, who, for once, was puzzled as much as his own elegance of speech was wont to puzzle others, "for I swear to you that I comprehend nought by the extension of thy fair digit."

"Yonder is my father's house," said Mysie, in a voice interrupted by the increased burst of her sorrow.

"And I was carrying thee discourteously to a distance from thy habitation?" said Shafton, imagining he had found out the source of her grief. "Wo worth the hour that Piercie Shafton, in attention to his own safety, neglected the accommodation of any female, far less of his most beneficent liberatrice! Dismount, then, O lovely Molinara, unless thou wouldst rather that I should transport thee on horseback to the house of thy molendinary father, which, if thou sayest the word, I am prompt to do, defying all dangers which may arise to me personally, whether by monk or miller."

Mysie suppressed her sobs, and with considerable difficulty muttered her desire to alight, and take her fortune by herself. Sir Piercie Shafton, too devoted a squire of dames to consider the most lowly as exempted from a respectful attention, independent of the claims which the Miller's maiden possessed over him, dismounted instantly from his horse, and received in his arms the poor girl, who still wept bitterly, and, when placed on the ground, seemed scarce able to support herself, or at least still clung, though, as it appeared, unconsciously, to the support he had afforded. He carried her to a weeping birch tree, which grew on the greensward bank around which the road winded, and, placing her on the ground beneath it, exhorted her to compose herself. A strong touch of natural feeling struggled with, and half overcame, his acquired affectation, while he said, "Credit me, most generous damsel, the service you have done to Piercie Shafton he would have deemed too dearly bought, had he foreseen it was to cost you these tears and singults. Shew me the cause of your grief, and if I can do aught to remove it, believe that the rights you have acquired over me will make your commands sacred as those of an empress. Speak, then, fair Molinara, and command him whom fortune hath rendered at once your debtor and your champion. What are your orders?"

"Only that you will fly and save yourself," said Mysie, mustering up her utmost efforts to utter these few words.

"Yet," said the knight, "let me not leave you without some token of remembrance." Mysie would have said there needed none, and most truly would she have spoken, could she have spoken for weeping. "Piercie Shafton is poor," he continued, "but let this chain testify he is not ungrateful to his deliverer."

He took from his neck the rich chain and medallion we have formerly mentioned, and put it into the powerless hand of the poor maiden, who neither received nor rejected it, but, occupied with more intense feelings, seemed scarce aware of what he was doing.

"We shall meet again," said Sir Piercie Shafton, "at least I trust so; meanwhile, weep no more, fair Molinara, an thou lovest me."

The phrase of conjuration was but used as an ordinary commonplace expression of the time, but bore a deeper sense to poor Mysie's ear. She dried her tears; and when the knight, in all kind and chivalrous courtesy, stooped to embrace her at their parting, she rose humbly up to receive the proffered honour in a posture of more deference, and meekly and gratefully accepted the offered salute. Sir Piercie Shafton mounted his horse, and began to ride off, but curiosity, or perhaps a stronger feeling, soon induced him to look back, when he beheld the Miller's daughter standing still motionless on the spot where they had parted, her eyes turned after him, and the unheeded chain hanging from her hand.

It was at this moment that a glimpse of the real state of Mysie's affections, and of the motive from which she had acted in the whole matter, glanced on Sir Piercie Shafton's mind. The gallants of that age, disinterested, aspiring, and lofty-minded even in their coxcombry, were strangers to those degrading and mischievous pursuits which are usually termed low amours. They did not "chase the humble maidens of the plain," or degrade their own rank, to deprive rural innocence of peace and virtue. It followed, of course, that as conquests in this class were no part of their ambition, they were in most cases totally overlooked and unsuspected, left unimproved, as a modern would call it, where, as on the present occasion, they were casually made. The companion of Astrophel, and flower of the tilt-yard of Feliciana, had no more idea that his graces and good parts could attach the love of Mysie Happer, than a first-rate beauty in the boxes dreams of the fatal wound which her charms may inflict on some attorney's romantic apprentice in the pit. I suppose, in any ordinary case, the pride of rank and distinction would have pronounced on the humble admirer the doom which Beau Fielding denounced against the whole female world, "Let them look and die;" but the obligations under which he lay to the enamoured maiden, miller's daughter as she was, precluded the possibility of Sir Piercie's treating the matter *en cavalier*, and, much embarrassed, yet a little flattered at the same time, he rode back to try what could be done for the damsel's relief.

The innate modesty of poor Mysie could not prevent her shewing too obvious signs of joy at Sir Piercie Shafton's return. She was betrayed by the sparkle of the rekindling eye, and a caress which, however timidly bestowed, she could not help giving to the neck of the horse which brought back the beloved rider.

"What farther can I do for you, kind Molinara?" said Sir Piercie Shafton, himself hesitating and blushing; for, to the grace of Queen Bess's age be it spoken, her courtiers wore more iron on their breasts than brass on their foreheads, and even amid their vanities preserved still the decaying spirit of chivalry, which inspired of yore the very gentle Knight of Chaucer,

"Who in his port was modest as a maid."

Mysie blushed deeply, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and Sir Piercie proceeded in the same tone of embarrassed kindness. "Are you afraid to return home alone, my kind Molinara?—would you that I should accompany you?"

"Alas!" said Mysie, looking up, and her cheek changing from scarlet to pale, "I have no home left."

"How! no home?" said Shafton; "says my generous Molinara she hath no home, when yonder stands the house of her father, and but a crystal stream between?"

"Alas!" answered the Miller's maiden, "I have no longer either home or father. He is a devoted servant to the Abbey—I have offended the Abbot, and if I return home my father will kill me."

"He dare not injure thee, by Heaven!" said Sir Piercie; "I swear to thee, by my honour and knighthood, that the forces of my cousin of Northumberland shall lay the Monastery so flat, that a horse shall not stumble as he rides over it, if they should dare to injure a hair of your head! Therefore be hopeful and content, kind Mysinda, and know you have obliged one who can and will avenge the slightest wrong offered to you."

He sprung from his horse as he spoke, and, in the animation of his argument, grasped the willing hand of Mysie, (or Mysinda as he had now christened her.) He gazed too upon full black eyes, fixed upon his own with an expression which, however subdued by maidenly shame, it was impossible to mistake, on cheeks where something like hope began to restore the natural colour, and on two lips which, like double rosebuds, were kept a little apart by expectation, and shewed within a line of teeth as white as pearl. All this was dangerous to look upon, and Sir Piercie Shafton, after repeating with less and less force his request that the fair Mysinda would allow him to carry her to her father's, ended by asking the fair Mysinda to go along with him—"At least," he added, "until I shall be able to conduct you to a place of safety."

Mysie Happer made no answer; but blushing scarlet betwixt joy and shame, mutely expressed her willingness to accompany the Southron Knight, by knitting her bundle closer, and preparing to resume her seat *en croupe*. "And what is your pleasure that I should do with this?" she said holding up the chain as if she had been for the first time aware that it was in her hand.

"Keep it, fairest Mysinda, for my sake," said the Knight.

"Not so, sir," answered Mysie, gravely; "the maidens of my country take no such gifts from their superiors, and I need no token to remind me of this morning."

Most earnestly and courteously did the Knight urge her acceptance of the proposed guerdon, but on this point Mysie was resolute; feeling, perhaps, that to accept of any thing bearing the appearance of reward, would be to place the service she had rendered him on a mercenary footing. In short, she would only agree to conceal the chain, lest it might prove the means of detecting the owner, until Sir Piercie should be placed in perfect safety.

They mounted and resumed their journey, of which Mysie, as bold and sharp-witted in some points as she was simple and susceptible in others, now took in some degree the direction, having only inquired its general destination, and learned that Sir Piercie Shafton desired to go to Edinburgh, where he hoped to find friends and protection. Possessed of this information, Mysie availed herself of her local knowledge to get as soon as possible out of the bounds of the Halidome, and into those of a temporal baron, supposed to be addicted to the reformed doctrines, and upon whose limits, at least, she thought their pursuers would not attempt to hazard any violence. She was not indeed very apprehensive of a pursuit, reckoning with some confidence that the inhabitants of the Tower of Glendearg would find it a matter of difficulty to surmount the obstacles arising from their own bolts and bars, with which she had carefully secured them before setting forth on the retreat.

They journeyed on, therefore, in tolerable security, and Sir Piercie Shafton found leisure to amuse the time in high-flown speeches and long anecdotes of the court of Feliciana, to which Mysie bent an ear not a whit less attentive, that she did not understand one word out of three which

was uttered by her fellow-traveller. She listened, however, and admired upon trust, as many a wise man has been contented to treat the conversation of a handsome but silly mistress. As for Sir Piercie, he was in his element; and, well assured of the interest and full approbation of his auditor, he went on spouting Euphuism of more than usual obscurity, and at more than usual length. Thus passed the morning, and noon brought them within sight of a winding stream, on the side of which arose an ancient baronial castle, surrounded by some large trees. At a small distance from the gate of the mansion, extended, as in those days was usual, a straggling hamlet, having a church in the centre.

"There are two hostelries in this Kirk-town," said Mysie, "but the worst is best for our purpose; for it stands apart from the other houses, and I ken the man weel, for he has dealt with my father for malt."

This *causa scientiæ*, to use a lawyer's phrase, was ill chosen for Mysie's purpose; for Sir Piercie Shafton had, by dint of his own loquacity, been talking himself all this while into a high esteem for his fellow-traveller, and, pleased with the gracious reception which she afforded to his powers of conversation, had well-nigh forgotten that she was not herself one of those high-born beauties of whom he was recounting so many stories, when this unlucky speech at once placed the most disadvantageous circumstances attending her lineage under his immediate recollection. He said nothing, however. What indeed could he say? Nothing was so natural as that a miller's daughter should be acquainted with publicans who dealt with her father for malt, and all that was to be wondered at was the concurrence of events which had rendered such a female the companion and guide of Sir Piercie Shafton of Wilverton, kinsman of the great Earl of Northumberland, whom princes and sovereigns themselves termed cousin, because of the Piercie blood.[1] He felt the disgrace of strolling through the country with a miller's maiden on the crupper behind him, and was even ungrateful enough to feel some emotions of shame, when he halted his horse at the door of the little inn.

But the alert intelligence of Mysie Happer spared him farther sense of derogation, by instantly springing from the horse, and cramming the ears of mine host, who came out with his mouth agape to receive a guest of the knight's appearance, with an imagined tale, in which circumstance on circumstance were huddled so fast, as to astonish Sir Piercie Shafton, whose own invention was none of the most brilliant. She explained to the publican that this was a great English knight travelling from the Monastery to the Court of Scotland, after having paid his vows to Saint Mary, and that she had been directed to conduct him so far on the road; and that Ball, her palfrey, had fallen by the way, because he had been over-wrought with carrying home the last melder of meal to the portioner of Langhope; and that she had turned in Ball to graze in the Tasker's park, near Cripplecross, for he had stood as still as Lot's wife with very weariness; and that the knight had courteously insisted she should ride behind him, and that she had brought him to her kend friend's hostelry rather than to proud Peter Peddie's, who got his malt at the Mellerstane mills; and that he must get the best that the house afforded, and that he must get it ready in a moment of time, and that she was ready to help in the kitchen.

All this ran glibly off the tongue without pause on the part of Mysie Happer, or doubt on that of the landlord. The guest's horse was conducted to the stable, and he himself installed in the cleanest corner and best seat which the place afforded. Mysie, ever active and officious, was at once engaged in preparing food, in spreading the table, and in making all the better arrangements which her experience could suggest, for the honour and comfort of her companion. He would fain have resisted this; for while it was impossible not to be gratified with the eager and alert kindness which was so active in his service, he felt an undefinable pain in seeing Mysinda engaged in these menial services, and discharging them, moreover, as one to whom they were but too familiar. Yet this jarring feeling was mixed with, and perhaps balanced by, the extreme grace with which the neat-handed maiden executed these tasks, however mean in themselves, and gave to the wretched corner of a miserable inn of the period, the air of a bower, in which an enamoured fairy, or at least a shepherdess of Arcadia, was displaying, with unavailing solicitude, her designs on the heart of some knight, destined by fortune to higher thoughts, and a more splendid union.

The lightness and grace with which Mysie covered the little round table with a snow-white cloth, and arranged upon it the hastily-roasted capon, with its accompanying stoup of Bourdeaux, were but plebeian graces in themselves; but yet there were very flattering ideas excited by each glance. She was so very well made, agile at once and graceful, with her hand and arm as white as snow, and her face in which a smile contended with a blush, and her eyes which looked ever at Shafton when he looked elsewhere, and were dropped at once when they encountered his, that she was irresistible! In fine, the affectionate delicacy of her whole demeanour, joined to the promptitude and boldness she had so lately evinced, tended to ennoble the services she had rendered, as if some

> —— "sweet engaging Grace
> Put on some clothes to come abroad,
> And took a waiter's place."

But, on the other hand, came the damning reflection, that these duties were not taught her by Love, to serve the beloved only, but arose from the ordinary and natural habits of a miller's daughter, accustomed, doubtless, to render the same service to every wealthier churl who frequented her father's mill. This stopped the mouth of vanity, and of the love which vanity had been hatching, as effectually as a peck of literal flour would have done.

Amidst this variety of emotions, Sir Piercie Shafton forgot not to ask the object of them to sit down and partake the good cheer which she had been so anxious to provide and to place in order. He expected that this invitation would have been bashfully, perhaps, but certainly most thankfully, accepted; but he was partly flattered, and partly piqued, by the mixture of deference and resolution with which Mysie declined his invitation. Immediately after, she vanished from the apart-

[1] Froissart tells us somewhere, (the readers of romances are indifferent to accurate reference,) that the King of France called one of the Piercies cousin, because of the blood of Northumberland.

ment, leaving the Euphuist to consider whether he was most gratified or displeased by her disappearance.

In fact, this was a point on which he would have found it difficult to make up his mind, had there been any necessity for it. As there was none, he drank a few cups of claret, and sang (to himself) a strophe or two of the canzonettes of the divine Astrophel. But in spite both of wine and of Sir Philip Sidney, the connection in which he now stood, and that which he was in future to hold, with the lovely Molinara, or Mysinda, as he had been pleased to denominate Mysie Happer, recurred to his mind. The fashion of the times (as we have already noticed) fortunately coincided with his own natural generosity of disposition, which indeed amounted almost to extravagance, in prohibiting, as a deadly sin, alike against gallantry, chivalry, and morality, his rewarding the good offices he had received from this poor maiden, by abusing any of the advantages which her confidence in his honour had afforded. To do Sir Piercie justice, it was an idea which never entered into his head; and he would probably have dealt the most scientific *imbroccata*, *stoccata*, or *punto reverso*, which the school of Vincent Saviola had taught him, to any man who had dared to suggest to him such selfish and ungrateful meanness. On the other hand, he was a man, and foresaw various circumstances which might render their journey together in this intimate fashion a scandal and a snare. Moreover, he was a coxcomb and a courtier, and felt there was something ridiculous in travelling the land with a miller's daughter behind his saddle, giving rise to suspicions not very creditable to either, and to ludicrous constructions, so far as he himself was concerned.

"I would," he said half aloud, "that, if such might be done without harm or discredit to the too-ambitious, yet too-well-distinguishing Molinara, she and I were fairly severed, and bound on our different courses; even as we see the goodly vessel bound for the distant seas hoist sails and bear away into the deep, while the humble fly-boat carries to shore those friends, who, with wounded hearts and watery eyes, have committed to their higher destinies the more daring adventurers by whom the fair frigate is manned."

He had scarce uttered the wish when it was gratified; for the host entered to say that his worshipful knighthood's horse was ready to be brought forth as he had desired; and on his inquiry for "the — the damsel — that is — the young woman ——"

"Mysie Happer," said the landlord, "has returned to her father's; but she bade me say, you could not miss the road for Edinburgh, in respect it was neither far way nor foul gate."

It is seldom we are exactly blessed with the precise fulfilment of our wishes at the moment when we utter them; perhaps because Heaven wisely withholds what, if granted, would be often received with ingratitude. So at least it chanced in the present instance; for when mine host said that Mysie was returned homeward, the knight was tempted to reply, with an ejaculation of surprise and vexation, and a hasty demand, whither and when she had departed? The first emotions his prudence suppressed, the second found utterance.

"Where is she gane?" said the host, gazing on him, and repeating his question — "She is gane hame to her father's, it is like — and she gaed just when she gave orders about your worship's horse, and saw it well fed, (she might have trusted me, but millers and millers' kin think a' body as thief-like as themselves,) an' she's three miles on the gate by this time."

"Is she gone then?" muttered Sir Piercie, making two or three hasty strides through the narrow apartment — "Is she gone? — Well, then, let her go. She could have had but disgrace by abiding by me, and I little credit by her society. That I should have thought there was such difficulty in shaking her off! I warrant she is by this time laughing with some clown she has encountered; and my rich chain will prove a good dowry. — And ought it not to prove so? and has she not deserved it, were it ten times more valuable? — Piercie Shafton! Piercie Shafton! dost thou grudge thy deliverer the guerdon she hath so dearly won? The selfish air of this northern land hath infected thee, Piercie Shafton! and blighted the blossoms of thy generosity, even as it is said to shrivel the flowers of the mulberry. — Yet I thought," he added, after a moment's pause, "that she would not so easily and voluntarily have parted from me. But it skills not thinking of it. — Cast my reckoning, mine host, and let your groom lead forth my nag."

The good host seemed also to have some mental point to discuss, for he answered not instantly, debating perhaps whether his conscience would bear a double charge for the same guests. Apparently his conscience replied in the negative, though not without hesitation, for he at length replied — "It's daffing to lee; it winna deny that the lawing is clean paid. Ne'ertheless, if your worshipful knighthood pleases to give aught for increase of trouble ——"

"How!" said the knight; "the reckoning paid? and by whom, I pray you?"

"E'en by Mysie Happer, if truth maun be spoken, as I said before," answered the honest landlord, with as many compunctious visitings for telling the verity as another might have felt for making a lie in the circumstances — "And out of the moneys supplied for your honour's journey by the Abbot, as she tauld to me. And laith were I to surcharge any gentleman that darkens my doors." He added in the confidence of honesty which his frank avowal entitled him to entertain, "Nevertheless, as I said before, if it pleases your knighthood of free good-will to consider extraordinary trouble ——"

The knight cut short his argument, by throwing the landlord a rose-noble, which probably doubled the value of a Scottish reckoning, though it would have defrayed but a half one at the Three Cranes or the Vintry. The bounty so much delighted mine host, that he ran to fill the stirrup-cup (for which no charge was ever made) from a butt yet charier than that which he had pierced for the former stoup. The knight paced slowly to horse, partook of his courtesy, and thanked him with the stiff condescension of the court of Elizabeth; then mounted and followed the northern path, which was pointed out as the nearest to Edinburgh, and which, though very unlike a modern highway, bore yet so distinct a resemblance to a public and frequented road as not to be easily mistaken.

"I shall not need her guidance it seems," said he to himself, as he rode slowly onward; "and I

suppose that was one reason of her abrupt departure, so different from what one might have expected. — Well, I am well rid of her. Do we not pray to be liberated from temptation? Yet that she should have erred so much in estimation of her own situation and mine, as to think of defraying the reckoning! I would I saw her once more, but to explain to her the solecism of which her inexperience hath rendered her guilty. And I fear," he added, as he emerged from some straggling trees, and looked out upon a wild moorish country, composed of a succession of swelling lumpish hills, "I fear I shall soon want the aid of this Ariadne, who might afford me a clew through the recesses of yonder mountainous labyrinth."

As the Knight thus communed with himself, his attention was caught by the sound of a horse's footsteps; and a lad, mounted on a little gray Scottish nag, about fourteen hands high, coming along a path which led from behind the trees, joined him on the high-road, if it could be termed such.

The dress of the lad was completely in village fashion, yet neat and handsome in appearance. He had a jerkin of gray cloth slashed and trimmed, with black hose of the same, with deer-skin rullions or sandals, and handsome silver spurs. A cloak of a dark mulberry colour was closely drawn round the upper part of his person, and the cape in part muffled his face, which was also obscured by his bonnet of black velvet cloth, and its little plume of feathers.

Sir Piercie Shafton, fond of society, desirous also to have a guide, and, moreover, prepossessed in favour of so handsome a youth, failed not to ask him whence he came, and whither he was going. The youth looked another way, as he answered, that he was going to Edinburgh, "to seek service in some nobleman's family."

"I fear me you have run away from your last master," said Sir Piercie, "since you dare not look me in the face while you answer my question."

"Indeed, sir, I have not," answered the lad, bashfully, while, as if with reluctance, he turned round his face, and instantly withdrew it. It was a glance, but the discovery was complete. There was no mistaking the dark full eye, the cheek in which much embarrassment could not altogether disguise an expression of comic humour, and the whole figure at once betrayed, under her metamorphosis, the Maid of the Mill. The recognition was joyful, and Sir Piercie Shafton was too much pleased to have regained his companion to remember the very good reasons which had consoled him for losing her.

To his questions respecting her dress, she answered, that she had obtained it in the Kirktown from a friend; it was the holiday suit of a son of hers, who had taken the field with his liege-lord, the baron of the land. She had borrowed the suit under pretence she meant to play in some mumming or rural masquerade. She had left, she said, her own apparel in exchange, which was better worth ten crowns than this was worth four.

"And the nag, my ingenious Molinara," said Sir Piercie, "whence comes the nag?"

"I borrowed him from our host at the Gled's-Nest," she replied; and added, half stifling a laugh, "he has sent to get, instead of it, our Ball, which I left in the Tasker's Park at Cripplecross. He will be lucky if he find it there."

"But then the poor man will lose his horse, most argute Mysinda," said Sir Piercie Shafton, whose English notions of property were a little startled at a mode of acquisition more congenial to the ideas of a miller's daughter (and he a Border miller to boot) than with those of an English person of quality.

"And if he does lose his horse," said Mysie, laughing, "surely he is not the first man on the marches who has had such a mischance. But he will be no loser, for I warrant he will stop the value out of moneys which he has owed my father this many a day."

"But then your father will be the loser," objected yet again the pertinacious uprightness of Sir Piercie Shafton.

"What signifies it now to talk of my father?" said the damsel, pettishly; then instantly changing to a tone of deep feeling, she added, "My father has this day lost that which will make him hold light the loss of all the gear he has left."

Struck with the accents of remorseful sorrow in which his companion uttered these few words, the English knight felt himself bound both in honour and conscience to expostulate with her as strongly as he could, on the riskof the step which she had now taken, and on the propriety of her returning to her father's house. The matter of his discourse, though adorned with many unnecessary flourishes, was honourable both to his head and heart.

The Maid of the Mill listened to his flowing periods with her head sunk on her bosom as she rode, like one in deep thought or deeper sorrow. When he had finished, she raised up her countenance, looked full on the knight, and replied with great firmness — "If you are weary of my company, Sir Piercie Shafton, you have but to say so, and the Miller's daughter will be no farther cumber to you. And do not think I will be a burden to you, if we travel together to Edinburgh; I have wit enough and pride enough to be a willing burden to no man. But if you reject not my company at present, and fear not it will be burdensome to you hereafter, speak no more to me of returning back. All that you can say to me I have said to myself; and that I am now here, is a sign that I have said it to no purpose. Let this subject, therefore, be for ever ended betwixt us. I have already, in some small fashion, been useful to you, and the time may come I may be more so; for this is not your land of England, where men say justice is done with little fear or favour to great and to small; but it is a land where men do by the strong hand, and defend by the ready wit, and I know better than you the perils you are exposed to."

Sir Piercie Shafton was somewhat mortified to find that the damsel conceived her presence useful to him as a protectress as well as guide, and said something of seeking protection from nought save his own arm and his good sword. Mysie answered very quietly, that she nothing doubted his bravery; but it was that very quality of bravery which was most likely to involve him in danger. Sir Piercie Shafton, whose head never kept very long in any continued train of thinking, acquiesced without much reply, resolving in his own mind that the maiden only used this apology to disguise her real motive, of affection to his person. The romance of the situation flattered his vanity and elevated his imagination, as placing him in the

situation of one of those romantic heroes of whom he had read the histories, where similar transformations made a distinguished figure.

He took many a sidelong glance at his page, whose habits of country sport and country exercise had rendered her quite adequate to sustain the character she had assumed. She managed the little nag with dexterity, and even with grace; nor did any thing appear that could have betrayed her disguise, except when a bashful consciousness of her companion's eye being fixed on her, gave her an appearance of temporary embarrassment, which greatly added to her beauty.

The couple rode forward as in the morning, pleased with themselves and with each other, until they arrived at the village where they were to repose for the night, and where all the inhabitants of the little inn, both male and female, joined in extolling the good grace and handsome countenance of the English knight, and the uncommon beauty of his youthful attendant.

It was here that Mysie Happer first made Sir Piercie Shafton sensible of the reserved manner in which she proposed to live with him. She announced him as her master, and, waiting upon him with the reverent demeanour of an actual domestic, permitted not the least approach to familiarity, not even such as the knight might with the utmost innocence have ventured upon. For example, Sir Piercie, who, as we know, was a great connoisseur in dress, was detailing to her the advantageous change which he proposed to make in her attire as soon as they should reach Edinburgh, by arraying her in his own colours of pink and carnation. Mysie Happer listened with great complacency to the unction with which he dilated upon welts, laces, slashes, and trimmings, until, carried away by the enthusiasm with which he was asserting the superiority of the falling band over the Spanish ruff, he approached his hand, in the way of illustration, towards the collar of his page's doublet. She instantly stepped back and gravely reminded him that she was alone and under his protection.

"You cannot but remember the cause which has brought me here," she continued; "make the least approach to any familiarity which you would not offer to a princess surrounded by her court, and you have seen the last of the Miller's daughter—She will vanish as the chaff disappears from the shieling-hill,[1] when the west wind blows."

"I do protest, fair Molinara," said Sir Piercie Shafton—but the fair Molinara had disappeared before his protest could be uttered. "A most singular wench," said he to himself; "and by this hand, as discreet as she is fair-featured—Certes, shame it were to offer her scathe or dishonour! She makes similes too, though somewhat savouring of her condition. Had she but read Euphues, and forgotten that accursed mill and shieling-hill, it is my thought that her converse would be broidered with as many and as choice pearls of compliment, as that of the most rhetorical lady in the court of Felciania. I trust she means to return to bear me company."

But that was no part of Mysie's prudential scheme. It was then drawing to dusk, and he saw her not again until the next morning, when the horses were brought to the door that they might prosecute their journey.

But our story here necessarily leaves the English knight and his page, to return to the Tower of Glendearg.

[1] The place where corn was winnowed, while that operation was performed by the hand, was called in Scotland the Shieling-hill.

CHAPTER XXX.

> You call it an ill angel—it may be so;
> But sure I am, among the ranks which fell,
> 'Tis the first fiend e'er counsell'd man to rise,
> And win the bliss the sprite himself had forfeited.
> *Old Play.*

We must resume our narrative at the period when Mary Avenel was conveyed to the apartment which had been formerly occupied by the two Glendinnings, and when her faithful attendant, Tibbie, had exhausted herself in useless attempts to compose and to comfort her. Father Eustace also dealt forth with well-meant kindness those apothegms and dogmata of consolation, which friendship almost always offers to grief, though they are uniformly offered in vain. She was at length left to indulge in the desolation of her own sorrowful feelings. She felt as those who, loving for the first time, have lost what they loved, before time and repeated calamity have taught them that every loss is to a certain extent reparable or endurable.

Such grief may be conceived better than it can be described, as is well known to those who have experienced it. But Mary Avenel had been taught by the peculiarity of her situation, to regard herself as the Child of Destiny; and the melancholy and reflecting turn of her disposition gave to her sorrows a depth and breadth peculiar to her character, The grave—and it was a bloody grave—had closed, as she believed, over the youth to whom she was secretly, but most warmly attached; the force and ardour of Halbert's character bearing a singular correspondence to the energy of which her own was capable. Her sorrow did not exhaust itself in sighs and tears, but when the first shock had passed away, concentrated itself with deep and steady meditation, to collect and calculate, like a bankrupt debtor, the full amount of her loss. It seemed as if all that connected her with earth, had vanished with this broken tie. She had never dared to anticipate the probability of an ultimate union with Halbert, yet now his supposed fall seemed that of the only tree which was to shelter her from the storm. She respected the more gentle character, and more peaceful attainments, of the younger Glendinning; but it had not escaped her (what never indeed escaped woman in such circumstances) that he was disposed to place himself in competition with what she, the daughter of a proud and warlike race, deemed the more manly qualities of his elder brother; and there is no time when a woman does so little justice to the character of a surviving lover, as when comparing him with the preferred rival of whom she has been recently deprived.

The motherly, but coarse kindness of Dame Glendinning, and the doating fondness of her old domestic, seemed now the only kind feeling of which she formed the object; and she could not but reflect how little these were to be compared with the devoted attachment of a high-souled youth, whom the least glance of her eye could command, as the high-

mettled steed is governed by the bridle of the rider. It was when plunged among these desolating reflections, that Mary Avenel felt the void of mind, arising from the narrow and bigoted ignorance in which Rome then educated the children of her church. Their whole religion was a ritual, and their prayers were the formal iteration of unknown words, which, in the hour of affliction, could yield but little consolation to those who from habit resorted to them. Unused to the practice of mental devotion, and of personal approach to the Divine Presence by prayer, she could not help exclaiming in her distress, "There is no aid for me on earth, and I know not how to ask it from Heaven!"

As she spoke thus in an agony of sorrow, she cast her eyes into the apartment, and saw the mysterious Spirit, which waited upon the fortunes of her house, standing in the moonlight in the midst of the room. The same form, as the reader knows, had more than once offered itself to her sight; and either her native boldness of mind, or some peculiarity attached to her from her birth, made her now look upon it without shrinking. But the White Lady of Avenel was now more distinctly visible, and more closely present, than she had ever before seemed to be, and Mary was appalled by her presence. She would, however, have spoken; but there ran a tradition, that though others who had seen the White Lady had asked questions and received answers, yet those of the house of Avenel who had ventured to speak to her, had never long survived the colloquy. The figure, besides, as sitting up in her bed, Mary Avenel gazed on it intently, seemed by its gestures to caution her to keep silence, and at the same time to bespeak attention.

The White Lady then seemed to press one of the planks of the floor with her foot, while, in her usual low, melancholy, and musical chant, she repeated the following verses:

"Maiden, whose sorrows wail the Living Dead,
Whose eyes shall commune with the Dead Alive,
Maiden, attend! Beneath my foot lies hid
The Word, the Law, the Path, which thou dost strive
To find and canst not find. — Could spirits shed
Tears for their lot, it were my lot to weep,
Shewing the road which I shall never tread,
Though my foot points it. — Sleep, eternal sleep,
Dark, long, and cold forgetfulness my lot! —
But do not thou at human ills repine,
Secure there lies full guerdon in this spot,
For all the woes that wait frail Adam's line —
Stoop, then, and make it yours — I may not make it mine!"

The phantom stooped towards the floor as she concluded, as if with the intention of laying her hand on the board on which she stood. But ere she had completed that gesture, her form became indistinct, was presently only like the shade of a fleecy cloud, which passed betwixt earth and the moon, and was soon altogether invisible.

A strong impression of fear, the first which she had experienced in her life to any agitating extent, seized upon the mind of Mary Avenel, and for a minute she felt a disposition to faint. She repelled it, however, mustered her courage, and addressed herself to saints and angels, as her church recommended. Broken slumbers at length stole on her exhausted mind and frame, and she slept until the dawn was about to arise, when she was awakened by the cry of "Treason! treason! follow, follow!" which arose in the tower, when it was found that Piercie Shafton had made his escape.

Apprehensive of some new misfortune, Mary Avenel hastily arranged the dress which she had not laid aside, and, venturing to quit her chamber, learned from Tibb, who, with her gray hairs dishevelled like those of a sibyl, was flying from room to room, that the bloody Southron villain had made his escape, and that Halbert Glendinning, poor bairn, would sleep unrevenged and unquiet in his bloody grave. In the lower apartments, the young men were roaring like thunder, and venting in oaths and exclamations against the fugitives the rage which they experienced in finding themselves locked up within the tower, and debarred from their vindictive pursuit by the wily precautions of Mysie Happer. The authoritative voice of the Sub-Prior commanding silence was next heard; upon which Mary Avenel, whose tone of feeling did not lead her to enter into counsel or society with the rest of the party, again retired to her solitary chamber.

The rest of the family held counsel in the spence, Edward almost beside himself with rage, and the Sub-Prior in no small degree offended at the effrontery of Mysie Happer in attempting such a scheme, as well as at the mingled boldness and dexterity with which it had been executed. But neither surprise nor anger availed aught. The windows, well secured with iron bars for keeping assailants out, proved now as effectual for detaining the inhabitants within. The battlements were open, indeed; but without ladder or ropes to act as a substitute for wings, there was no possibility of descending from them. They easily succeeded in alarming the inhabitants of the cottages beyond the precincts of the court; but the men had been called in to strengthen the guard for the night, and only women and children remained, who could contribute nothing in the emergency, except their useless exclamations of surprise, and there were no neighbours for miles around. Dame Elspeth, however, though drowned in tears, was not so unmindful of external affairs, but that she could find voice enough to tell the women and children without, to "leave their skirling, and look after the cows that she couldna get minded, what wi' the awfu' distraction of her mind, what wi' that fause slut having locked them up in their ain tower as fast as if they had been in the Jeddart tolbooth."

Meanwile, the men finding other modes of exit impossible, unanimously concluded to force the doors with such tools as the house afforded for the purpose. These were not very proper for the occasion, and the strength of the doors was great. The interior one, formed of oak, occupied them for three mortal hours, and there was little prospect of the iron door being forced in double the time.

While they were engaged in this ungrateful toil, Mary Avenel had with much less labour acquired exact knowledge of what the Spirit had intimated in her mystic rhyme. On examining the spot which the phantom had indicated by her gestures, it was not difficult to discover that a board had been loosened, which might be raised at pleasure. On removing this piece of plank, Mary Avenel was astonished to find the Black Book, well remembered by her as her mother's favourite study, of which she immediately took possession, with as much joy as her present situation rendered her capable of feeling.

Ignorant in a great measure of its contents, Mary Avenel had been taught from her infancy to hold this volume in sacred veneration. It is probable that the deceased Lady of Walter Avenel only

postponed initiating her daughter into the mysteries of the Divine Word, until she should be better able to comprehend both the lessons which it taught, and the risk at which, in those times, they were studied. Death interposed, and removed her before the times became favourable to the reformers, and before her daughter was so far advanced in age as to be fit to receive religious instruction of this deep import. But the affectionate mother had made preparations for the earthly work which she had most at heart. There were slips of paper inserted in the volume, in which, by an appeal to, and a comparison of, various passages in holy writ, the errors and human inventions with which the Church of Rome had defaced the simple edifice of Christianity, as erected by its divine architect, were pointed out. These controversial topics were treated with a spirit of calmness and Christian charity, which might have been an example to the theologians of the period; but they were clearly, fairly, and plainly argued, and supported by the necessary proofs and references. Other papers there were which had no reference whatever to polemics, but were the simple effusions of a devout mind communing with itself. Among these was one frequently used, as it seemed from the state of the manuscript, on which the mother of Mary had transcribed and placed together those affecting texts to which the heart has recourse in affliction, and which assures us at once of the sympathy and protection afforded to the children of the promise. In Mary Avenel's state of mind, these attracted her above all the other lessons, which, coming from a hand so dear, had reached her at a time so critical, and in a manner so touching. She read the affecting promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and the consoling exhortation, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." She read them, and her heart acquiesced in the conclusion, Surely this is the word of God!

There are those to whom a sense of religion has come in storm and tempest; there are those whom it has summoned amid scenes of revelry and idle vanity; there are those, too, who have heard its "still small voice" amid rural leisure and placid contentment. But perhaps the knowledge which causeth not to err, is most frequently impressed upon the mind during seasons of affliction; and tears are the softened showers which cause the seed of Heaven to spring and take root in the human breast. At least it was thus with Mary Avenel. She was insensible to the discordant noise which rang below, the clang of bars and the jarring symphony of the levers which they used to force them, the measured shouts of the labouring inmates as they combined their strength for each heave, and gave time with their voices to the exertion of their arms, and their deeply muttered vows of revenge on the fugitives who had bequeathed them at their departure a task so toilsome and difficult. Not all this din, combined in hideous concert, and expressive of aught but peace, love, and forgiveness, could divert Mary Avenel from the new course of study on which she had so singularly entered. "The serenity of Heaven," she said, "is above me; the sounds which are around are but those of earth and earthly passion."

Meanwhile the noon was passed, and little impression was made on the iron grate, when they who laboured at it received a sudden reinforcement by the unexpected arrival of Christie of the Clinthill. He came at the head of a small party, consisting of four horsemen, who bore in their caps the sprig of holly, which was the badge of Avenel.

"What, ho! — my masters," he said, "I bring you a prisoner."

"You had better have brought us liberty," said Dan of the Howlet-hirst.

Christie looked at the state of affairs with great surprise. "An I were to be hanged for it," he said, "as I may for as little a matter, I could not forbear laughing at seeing men peeping through their own bars like so many rats in a rat-trap, and he with the beard behind, like the oldest rat in the cellar."

"Hush, thou unmannered knave," said Edward, "it is the Sub-Prior; and this is neither time, place, nor company, for your ruffian jests."

"What, ho! is my young master malapert?" said Christie; "why, man, were he my own carnal father, instead of being father to half the world, I would have my laugh out. And now it is over, I must assist you, I reckon, for you are setting very greenly about this gear — put the pinch nearer the staple, man, and hand me an iron crow through the grate, for that's the fowl to fly away with a wicket on its shoulders. I have broke into as many grates as you have teeth in your young head — ay, and broke out of them too, as the captain of the Castle of Lochmaben knows full well."

Christie did not boast more skill than he really possessed; for, applying their combined strength, under the direction of that experienced engineer, bolt and staple gave way before them, and in less than half an hour, the grate, which had so long repelled their force, stood open before them.

"And now," said Edward, "to horse, my mates, and pursue the villain Shafton!"

"Halt there," said Christie of the Clinthill; "pursue your guest, my master's friend and my own? — there go two words to that bargain. What the foul fiend would you pursue him for?"

"Let me pass," said Edward, vehemently, "I will be staid by no man — the villain has murdered my brother!"

"What says he?" said Christie, turning to the others; "murdered? who is murdered, and by whom?"

"The Englishman, Sir Piercie Shafton," said Dan of the Howlet-hirst, "has murdered young Halbert Glendinning yesterday morning, and we have all risen to the fray."

"It is a bedlam business, I think," said Christie. "First I find you all locked up in your own tower, and next I am come to prevent you revenging a murder that was never committed!"

"I tell you," said Edward, "that my brother was slain and buried yesterday morning by this false Englishman."

"And I tell you," answered Christie, "that I saw him alive and well last night. I would I knew his trick of getting out of the grave; most men find it more hard to break through a green sod than a grated door."

Every body now paused, and looked on Christie in astonishment, until the Sub-Pior, who had hitherto avoided communication with him, came up and required earnestly to know, whether he meant really to maintain that Halbert Glendinning lived.

"Father," he said, with more respect than he

usually shewed to any one save his master, "I confess I may sometimes jest with those of your coat, but not with you; because, as you may partly recollect, I owe you a life. It is certain as the sun is in heaven, that Halbert Glendinning supped at the house of my master the Baron of Avenel last night, and that he came thither in company with an old man, of whom more anon."

"And where is he now?"

"The devil only can answer that question," replied Christie, "for the devil has possessed the whole family, I think. He took fright, the foolish lad, at something or other which our Baron did in his moody humour, and so he jumped into the lake and swam ashore like a wild-duck. Robin of Redcastle spoiled a good gelding in chasing him this morning."

"And why did he chase the youth?" said the Sub-Prior; "what harm had he done?"

"None that I know of," said Christie; "but such was the Baron's order, being in his mood, and all the world having gone mad, as I have said before."

"Whither away so fast, Edward?" said the monk.

"To Corri-nan-shian, Father," answered the youth.—"Martin and Dan, take pick-axe and mattock, and follow me if you be men!"

"Right," said the monk, "and fail not to give us instant notice what you find."

"If you find aught there like Halbert Glendinning," said Christie, hallooing after Edward, "I will be bound to eat him unsalted.—'Tis a sight to see now how that fellow takes the bent!—It is in the time of action men see what lads are made of. Halbert was aye skipping up and down like a roe, and his brother used to sit in the chimney-nook with his book and sick-like trash—But the lad was like a loaded hackbut, which will stand in the corner as quiet as an old crutch until ye draw the trigger, and then there is nothing but flash and smoke.—But here comes my prisoner; and, setting other matters aside, I must pray a word with you, Sir Sub-Prior, respecting him. I came on before to treat about him, but I was interrupted with this fasherie."

As he spoke, two more of Avenel's troopers rode into the court-yard, leading betwixt them a horse, on which, with his hands bound to his side, sate the reformed preacher, Henry Warden.

CHAPTER XXXI.

> At school I knew him—a sharp-witted youth,
> Grave, thoughtful, and reserved among his mates,
> Turning the hours of sport and food to labour,
> Starving his body to inform his mind.
>
> *Old Play.*

The Sub-Prior, at the Borderer's request, had not failed to return to the tower, into which he was followed by Christie of the Clinthill, who, shutting the door of the apartment, drew near, and began his discourse with great confidence and familiarity.

"My master," he said, "sends me with his commendations to you, Sir Sub-Prior, above all the community of Saint Mary's, and more specially than even to the Abbot himself; for though he be termed my lord, and so forth, all the world knows that you are the tongue of the trump."

"If you have aught to say to me concerning the community," said the Sub-Prior, "it were well you proceeded in it without farther delay. Time presses, and the fate of young Glendinning dwells on my mind."

"I will be caution for him, body for body," said Christie. "I do protest to you, as sure as I am a living man, so surely is he one."

"Should I not tell his unhappy mother the joyful tidings?" said Father Eustace,—"and yet better wait till they return from searching the grave. Well, Sir Jackman, your message to me from your master?"

"My lord and master," said Christie, "hath good reason to believe that, from the information of certain back friends, whom he will reward at more leisure, your reverend community hath been led to deem him ill attached to Holy Church, allied with heretics and those who favour heresy, and a hungerer after the spoils of your Abbey."

"Be brief, good henchman," said the Sub-Prior, "for the devil is ever most to be feared when he preacheth."

"Briefly, then—my master desires your friendship; and to excuse himself from the maligner's calumnies, he sends to your Abbot that Henry Warden, whose sermons have turned the world upside down, to be dealt with as Holy Church directs, and as the Abbot's pleasure may determine."

The Sub-Prior's eyes sparkled at the intelligence; for it had been accounted a matter of great importance that this man should be arrested, possessed, as he was known to be, of so much zeal and popularity, that scarcely the preaching of Knox himself had been more awakening to the people, and more formidable to the Church of Rome.

In fact, that ancient system, which so well accommodated its doctrines to the wants and wishes of a barbarous age, had, since the art of printing, and the gradual diffusion of knowledge, lain floating like some huge Leviathan, into which ten thousand reforming fishers were darting their harpoons. The Roman Church of Scotland, in particular, was at her last gasp, actually blowing blood and water, yet still with unremitted, though animal exertions, maintaining the conflict with the assailants, who on every side were plunging their weapons into her bulky body. In many large towns, the monasteries had been suppressed by the fury of the populace; in other places, their possessions had been usurped by the power of the reformed nobles; but still the hierarchy made a part of the common law of the realm, and might claim both its property and its privileges wherever it had the means of asserting them. The community of Saint Mary's of Kennaquhair was considered as being particularly in this situation. They had retained, undiminished, their territorial power and influence; and the great barons in the neighbourhood, partly from their attachment to the party in the state who still upheld the old system of religion, partly because each grudged the share of the prey which the others must necessarily claim, had as yet abstained from despoiling the Halidome. The Community was also understood to be protected by the powerful Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, whose zealous attachment to the Catholic faith caused at

a later period the great rebellion of the tenth of Elizabeth.

Thus happily placed, it was supposed by the friends of the decaying cause of the Roman Catholic faith, that some determined example of courage and resolution, exercised where the franchises of the church were yet entire, and her jurisdiction undisputed, might awe the progress of the new opinions into activity; and, protected by the laws which still existed, and by the favour of the sovereign, might be the means of securing the territory which Rome yet preserved in Scotland, and perhaps of recovering that which she had lost.

The matter had been considered more than once by the northern Catholics of Scotland, and they had held communication with those of the south. Father Eustace, devoted by his public and private vows, had caught the flame, and had eagerly advised that they should execute the doom of heresy on the first reformed preacher, or, according to his sense, on the first heretic of eminence, who should venture within the precincts of the Halidome. A heart, naturally kind and noble, was, in this instance, as it has been in many more, deceived by its own generosity. Father Eustace would have been a bad administrator of the inquisitorial power of Spain, where that power was omnipotent, and where judgment was exercised without danger to those who inflicted it. In such a situation his rigour might have relented in favour of the criminal, whom it was at his pleasure to crush or to place at freedom. But in Scotland, during this crisis, the case was entirely different. The question was, whether one of the spirituality dared, at the hazard of his own life, to step forward to assert and exercise the rights of the church. Was there any one who would venture to wield the thunder in her cause, or must it remain like that in the hand of a painted Jupiter, the object of derision instead of terror? The crisis was calculated to awake the soul of Eustace; for it comprised the question, whether he dared, at all hazards to himself, to execute with stoical severity a measure which, according to the general opinion, was to be advantageous to the church, and, according to ancient law, and to his firm belief, was not only justifiable but meritorious.

While such resolutions were agitated amongst the Catholics, chance placed a victim within their grasp. Henry Warden had, with the animation proper to the enthusiastic reformers of the age, transgressed, in the vehemence of his zeal, the bounds of the discretional liberty allowed to his sect so far, that it was thought the Queen's personal dignity was concerned in bringing him to justice. He fled from Edinburgh, with recommendations, however, from Lord James Stewart, afterwards the celebrated Earl of Murray, to some of the Border chieftains of inferior rank, who were privately conjured to procure him safe passage into England. One of the principal persons to whom such recommendation was addressed, was Julian Avenel; for as yet, and for a considerable time afterwards, the correspondence and interest of Lord James lay rather with the subordinate leaders than with the chiefs of great power, and men of distinguished influence upon the Border. Julian Avenel had intrigued without scruple with both parties — yet bad as he was, he certainly would not have practised aught against the guest whom Lord James had recommended to his hospitality, had it not been for what he termed the preacher's officious intermeddling in his family affairs. But when he had determined to make Warden rue the lecture he had read him, and the scene of public scandal which he had caused in his hall, Julian resolved, with the constitutional shrewdness of his disposition, to combine his vengeance with his interest. And therefore, instead of doing violence on the person of Henry Warden within his own castle, he determined to deliver him up to the Community of Saint Mary's, and at once make them the instruments of his own revenge, and found a claim of personal recompense, either in money, or in a grant of Abbey lands at a low quit-rent, which last began now to be the established form in which the temporal nobles plundered the spirituality.

The Sub-Prior, therefore, of Saint Mary's, unexpectedly saw the steadfast, active, and inflexible enemy of the church delivered into his hand, and felt himself called upon to make good his promises to the friends of the Catholic faith, by quenching heresy in the blood of one of its most zealous professors.

To the honour more of Father Eustace's heart than of his consistency, the communication that Henry Warden was placed within his power, struck him with more sorrow than triumph; but his next feelings were those of exultation. "It is sad," he said to himself, "to cause human suffering, it is awful to cause human blood to be spilled; but the judge to whom the sword of Saint Paul, as well as the keys of Saint Peter, are confided, must not flinch from his task. Our weapon returns into our own bosom, if not wielded with a steady and unrelenting hand against the irreconcilable enemies of the Holy Church. *Pereat iste!* It is the doom he has incurred, and were all the heretics in Scotland armed and at his back, they should not prevent its being pronounced, and, if possible, enforced. — Bring the heretic before me," he said, issuing his commands aloud, and in a tone of authority.

Henry Warden was led in, his hands still bound, but his feet at liberty.

"Clear the apartment," said the Sub-Prior, "of all but the necessary guard on the prisoner."

All retired excepting Christie of the Clinthill, who, having dismissed the inferior troopers whom he commanded, unsheathed his sword, and placed himself beside the door, as if taking upon him the character of sentinel.

The judge and the accused met face to face, and in that of both was enthroned the noble confidence of rectitude. The monk was about, at the utmost risk to himself and his community, to exercise what in his ignorance he conceived to be his duty. The preacher, actuated by a better-informed, yet not a more ardent zeal, was prompt to submit to execution for God's sake, and to seal, were it necessary, his mission with his blood. Placed at such a distance of time as better enables us to appreciate the tendency of the principles on which they severally acted, we cannot doubt to which the palm ought to be awarded. But the zeal of Father Eustace was as free from passion and personal views as if it had been exerted in a better cause.

They approached each other, armed each and prepared for intellectual conflict, and each intently regarding his opponent, as if either hoped to spy out some defect, some chasm in the armour of his antagonist. As they gazed on each other, old recollec-

tions began to awake in either bosom, at the sight of features long unseen and much altered, but not forgotten. The brow of the Sub-Prior dismissed by degrees its frown of command, the look of calm yet stern defiance gradually vanished from that of Warden, and both lost for an instant that of gloomy solemnity. They had been ancient and intimate friends in youth at a foreign university, but had been long separated from each other; and the change of name, which the preacher had adopted from motives of safety, and the monk from the common custom of the convent, had prevented the possibility of their hitherto recognizing each other in the opposite parts which they had been playing in the great polemical and political drama. But now the Sub-Prior exclaimed, "Henry Wellwood!" and the preacher replied, "William Allan!" —and, stirred by the old familiar names, and never-to-be-forgotten recollections of college studies and college intimacy, their hands were for a moment locked in each other.

"Remove his bonds," said the Sub-Prior, and assisted Christie in performing that office with his own hands, although the prisoner scarcely would consent to be unbound, repeating with emphasis, that he rejoiced in the cause for which he suffered shame. When his hands were at liberty, however, he shewed his sense of the kindness by again exchanging a grasp and a look of affection with the Sub-Prior.

The salute was frank and generous on either side, yet it was but the friendly recognition and greeting which are wont to take place betwixt adverse champions, who do nothing in hate but all in honour. As each felt the pressure of the situation in which they stood, he quitted the grasp of the other's hand, and fell back, confronting each other with looks more calm and sorrowful than expressive of any other passion. The Sub-Prior was the first to speak.

"And is this, then, the end of that restless activity of mind, that bold and indefatigable love of truth that urged investigation to its utmost limits, and seemed to take heaven itself by storm — is this the termination of Wellwood's career! — And having known and loved him during the best years of our youth, do we meet in our old age as judge and criminal?"

"Not as judge and criminal," said Henry Warden, — for to avoid confusion we describe him by his later and best known name — "Not as judge and criminal do we meet, but as a misguided oppressor and his ready and devoted victim. I, too, may ask, are these the harvest of the rich hopes excited by the classical learning, acute logical powers, and varied knowledge of William Allan, that he should sink to be the solitary drone of a cell, graced only above the swarm with the high commission of executing Roman malice on all who oppose Roman imposture?"

"Not to thee," answered the Sub-Prior, "be assured — not unto thee, nor unto mortal man, will I render an account of the power with which the church may have invested me. It was granted but as a deposit for her welfare — for her welfare it shall at every risk be exercised, without fear and without favour."

"I expected no less from your misguided zeal," answered the preacher; "and in me have you met one on whom you may fearlessly exercise your authority, secure that his mind at least will defy your influence, as the snows of that Mont Blanc which we saw together, shrink not under the heat of the hottest summer sun."

"I do believe thee," said the Sub-Prior, "I do believe that thine is indeed metal unmalleable by force. Let it yield then to persuasion. Let us debate these matters of faith, as we once were wont to conduct our scholastic disputes, when hours, nay, days, glided past in the mutual exercise of our intellectual powers. It may be thou mayst yet hear the voice of the shepherd, and return to the universal fold."

"No, Allan," replied the prisoner, "this is no vain question, devised by dreaming scholiasts, on which they may whet their intellectual faculties until the very metal be wasted away. The errors which I combat are like those fiends which are only cast out by fasting and prayer. Alas! not many wise, not many learned are chosen; the cottage and the hamlet shall in our days bear witness against the schools and their disciples. Thy very wisdom, which is foolishness, hath made thee, as the Greeks of old, hold as foolishness that which is the only true wisdom."

"This," said the Sub-Prior, sternly, "is the mere cant of ignorant enthusiasm, which appealeth from learning and from authority, from the sure guidance of that lamp which God hath afforded us in the Councils and in the Fathers of the Church, to a rash, self-willed, and arbitrary interpretation of the Scriptures, wrested according to the private opinion of each speculating heretic."

"I disdain to reply to the charge," replied Warden. "The question at issue between your church and mine, is, whether we will be judged by the Holy Scriptures, or by the devices and decisions of men not less subject to error than ourselves, and who have defaced our holy religion with vain devices, reared up idols of stone and wood, in form of those, who, when they lived, were but sinful creatures, to share the worship due only to the Creator — established a toll-house betwixt heaven and hell, that profitable purgatory of which the Pope keeps the keys, like an iniquitous judge commutes punishment for bribes, and ——"

"Silence, blasphemer," said the Sub-Prior, sternly, "or I will have thy blatant obloquy stopped with a gag!"

"Ay," replied Warden, "such is the freedom of the Christian conference to which Rome's priests so kindly invite us! — the gag — the rack — the axe — is the *ratio ultima Romæ*. But know thou, mine ancient friend, that the character of thy former companion is not so changed by age, but that he still dares to endure for the cause of truth all that thy proud hierarchy shall dare to inflict."

"Of that," said the monk, "I nothing doubt — Thou wert ever a lion to turn against the spear of the hunter, not a stag to be dismayed at the sound of his bugle." — He walked through the room in silence. "Wellwood," he said at length, "we can no longer be friends. Our faith, our hope, our anchor on futurity, is no longer the same."

"Deep is my sorrow that thou speakest truth. May God so judge me," said the Reformer, "as I would buy the conversion of a soul like thine with my dearest heart's blood."

"To thee, and with better reason, do I return the wish," replied the Sub-Prior; "it is such an

arm as thine that should defend the bulwarks of the Church, and it is now directing the battering-ram against them, and rendering practicable the breach through which all that is greedy, and all that is base, and all that is mutable and hot-headed in this innovating age, already hope to advance to destruction and to spoil. But since such is our fate, that we can no longer fight side by side as friends, let us at least act as generous enemies. You cannot have forgotten,

> 'O gran bonta dei cavalieri antiqui!
> Erano nemici, eran' de fede diversa'—

Although, perhaps," he added, stopping short in his quotation, "your new faith forbids you to reserve a place in your memory, even for what high poets have recorded of loyal faith and generous sentiment."

"The faith of Buchanan," replied the preacher, "the faith of Buchanan and of Beza cannot be unfriendly to literature. But the poet you have quoted affords strains fitter for a dissolute court than for a convent."

"I might retort on your Theodore Beza," said the Sub-Prior, smiling; "but I hate the judgment that, like the flesh-fly, skims over whatever is sound, to detect and settle upon some spot which is tainted. But to the purpose. If I conduct thee or send thee a prisoner to Saint Mary's, thou art to-night a tenant of the dungeon, to-morrow a burden to the gibbet-tree. If I were to let thee go hence at large, I were thereby wronging the Holy Church, and breaking mine own solemn vow. Other resolutions may be adopted in the capital, or better times may speedily ensue. Wilt thou remain a true prisoner upon thy parole, rescue or no rescue, as is the phrase amongst the warriors of this country? Wilt thou solemnly promise that thou wilt do so, and that at my summons thou wilt present thyself before the Abbot and Chapter at Saint Mary's, and that thou wilt not stir from this house above a quarter of a mile in any direction? Wilt thou, I say, engage me thy word for this? and such is the sure trust which I repose in thy good faith, that thou shalt remain here unharmed and unsecured, a prisoner at large, subject only to appear before our court when called upon."

The preacher paused—"I am unwilling," he said, "to fetter my native liberty by any self-adopted engagement. But I am already in your power, and you may bind me to my answer. By such promise, to abide within a certain limit, and to appear when called upon, I renounce not any liberty which I at present possess, and am free to exercise; but, on the contrary, being in bonds, and at your mercy, I acquire thereby a liberty which I at present possess not. I will therefore accept of thy proffer, as what is courteously offered on thy part, and may be honourably accepted on mine."

"Stay yet," said the Sub-Prior, "one important part of thy engagement is forgotten—thou art farther to promise, that while thus left at liberty, thou wilt not preach or teach, directly or indirectly, any of those pestilent heresies by which so many souls have been in this our day won over from the kingdom of light to the kingdom of darkness."

"There we break off our treaty," said Warden, firmly—"Wo unto me if I preach not the Gospel!"

The Sub-Prior's countenance became clouded, and he again paced the apartment, and muttered, "A plague upon the self-willed fool!" then stopped short in his walk, and proceeded in his argument.—"Why, by thine own reasoning, Henry, thy refusal here is but peevish obstinacy. It is in my power to place you where your preaching can reach no human ear; in promising therefore to abstain from it, you grant nothing which you have it in your power to refuse."

"I know not that," replied Henry Warden; "thou mayest indeed cast me into a dungeon, but can I foretell that my Master hath not task-work for me to perform even in that dreary mansion? The chains of saints have, ere now, been the means of breaking the bonds of Satan. In a prison, holy Paul found the jailor whom he brought to believe the word of salvation, he and all his house."

"Nay," said the Sub-Prior, in a tone betwixt anger and scorn, "if you match yourself with the blessed Apostle, it were time we had done—prepare to endure what thy folly, as well as thy heresy, deserves.—Bind him, soldier."

With proud submission to his fate, and regarding the Sub-Prior with something which almost amounted to a smile of superiority, the preacher placed his arms so that the bonds could be again fastened round him.

"Spare me not," he said to Christie; for even that ruffian hesitated to draw the cord straitly.

The Sub-Prior, meanwhile, looked at him from under his cowl, which he had drawn over his head, and partly over his face, as if he wished to shade his own emotions. They were those of a huntsman within point-blank shot of a noble stag, who is yet too much struck with his majesty of front and of antler to take aim at him. They were those of a fowler, who, levelling his gun at a magnificent eagle, is yet reluctant to use his advantage when he sees the noble sovereign of the birds pruning himself in proud defiance of whatever may be attempted against him. The heart of the Sub-Prior (bigoted as he was) relented, and he doubted if he ought to purchase by a rigorous discharge of what he deemed his duty, the remorse he might afterwards feel for the death of one so nobly independent in thought and character, the friend, besides, of his own happiest years, during which they had, side by side, striven in the noble race of knowledge, and indulged their intervals of repose in the lighter studies of classical and general letters.

The Sub-Prior's hand pressed his half-o'er-shadowed cheek, and his eye, more completely obscured, was bent on the ground, as if to hide the workings of his relenting nature.

"Were but Edward safe from the infection," he thought to himself—"Edward, whose eager and enthusiastic mind presses forward in the chase of all that hath even the shadow of knowledge, I might trust this enthusiast with the women, after due caution to them that they cannot, without guilt, attend to his reveries."

As the Sub-Prior revolved these thoughts, and delayed the definitive order which was to determine the fate of the prisoner, a sudden noise at the entrance of the tower diverted his attention for an instant, and, his cheek and brow inflamed with all the glow of heat and determination, Edward Glendinning rushed into the room.

CHAPTER XXXII

Then in my gown of sober gray
Along the mountain path I 'll wander,
And wind my solitary way
To the sad shrine that courts me yonder.

There, in the calm monastic shade,
All injuries may be forgiven;
And there for thee, obdurate maid,
My orisons shall rise to heaven.
The Cruel Lady of the Mountains.

The first words which Edward uttered were, — "My brother is safe, reverend father — he is safe, thank God, and lives! — There is not in Corri-nan-shian a grave, nor a vestige of a grave. The turf around the fountain has neither been disturbed by pick-axe, spade, nor mattock, since the deer's-hair first sprang there. He lives as surely as I live!"

The earnestness of the youth — the vivacity with which he looked and moved — the springy step, outstretched hand, and ardent eye, reminded Henry Warden of Halbert, so lately his guide. The brothers had indeed a strong family resemblance, though Halbert was far more athletic and active in his person, taller and better knit in the limbs, and though Edward had, on ordinary occasions, a look of more habitual acuteness and more profound reflection. The preacher was interested as well as the Sub-Prior.

"Of whom do you speak, my son?" he said, in a tone as unconcerned as if his own fate had not been at the same instant trembling in the balance, and as if a dungeon and death did not appear to be his instant doom — "Of whom, I say, speak you? If of a youth somewhat older than you seem to be — brown-haired, open-featured, taller and stronger than you appear, yet having much of the same air and of the same tone of voice — if such a one is the brother whom you seek, it may be I can tell you news of him."

"Speak, then, for Heaven's sake," said Edward — "life or death lies on thy tongue!"

The Sub-Prior joined eagerly in the same request, and, without waiting to be urged, the preacher gave a minute account of the circumstances under which he met the elder Glendinning, with so exact a description of his person, that there remained no doubt as to his identity. When he mentioned that Halbert Glendinning had conducted him to the dell in which they found the grass bloody, and a grave newly closed, and told how the youth accused himself of the slaughter of Sir Piercie Shafton, the Sub-Prior looked on Edward with astonishment.

"Didst thou not say, even now," he said, "that there was no vestige of a grave in that spot?"

"No more vestige of the earth having been removed than if the turf had grown there since the days of Adam," replied Edward Glendinning. "It is true," he added, "that the adjacent grass was trampled and bloody."

"These are delusions of the Enemy," said the Sub-Prior, crossing himself. — "Christian men may no longer doubt of it."

"But an it be so," said Warden, "Christian men might better guard themselves by the sword of prayer than by the idle form of a cabalistical spell."

"The badge of our salvation," said the Sub-Prior, "cannot be so termed — the sign of the cross disarmeth all evil spirits."

"Ay," answered Henry Warden, apt and armed for controversy, "but it should be borne in the heart, not scored with the fingers in the air. That very impassive air, through which your hand passes, shall as soon bear the imprint of your action, as the external action shall avail the fond bigot who substitutes vain motions of the body, idle genuflections, and signs of the cross, from the living and heart-born duties of faith and good works."

"I pity thee," said the Sub-Prior, as actively ready for polemics as himself, — "I pity thee, Henry, and reply not to thee. Thou mayst as well winnow forth and measure the ocean with a sieve, as mete out the power of holy words, deeds, and signs, by the erring gauge of thine own reason."

"Not by mine own reason would I mete them," said Warden; "but by His holy Word, that unfading and unerring lamp of our paths, compared to which human reason is but as a glimmering and fading taper, and your boasted tradition only a misleading wild-fire. Shew me your Scripture warrant for ascribing virtue to such vain signs and motions?"

"I offered thee a fair field of debate," said the Sub-Prior, "which thou didst refuse. I will not at present resume the controversy."

"Were these my last accents," said the reformer, "and were they uttered at the stake, half-choked with smoke, and as the fagots kindled into a blaze around me, with that last utterance I would testify against the superstitious devices of Rome."

The Sub-Prior suppressed with pain the controversial answer which arose to his lips, and, turning to Edward Glendinning, he said, "there could be now no doubt that his mother ought presently to be informed that her son lived."

"I told you that two hours since," said Christie of the Clinthill, "an you would have believed me. But it seems you are more willing to take the word of an old gray sorner, whose life has been spent in pattering heresy, than mine, though I never rode a foray in my life without duly saying my paternoster."

"Go then," said Father Eustace to Edward; "let thy sorrowing mother know that her son is restored to her from the grave, like the child of the widow of Zarephath; at the intercession," he added, looking at Henry Warden, "of the blessed Saint whom I invoked in his behalf."

"Deceived thyself," said Warden, instantly, "thou art a deceiver of others. It was no dead man, no creature of clay, whom the blessed Tishbite invoked, when, stung by the reproach of the Shunamite woman, he prayed that her son's soul might come into him again."

"It was by his intercession, however," repeated the Sub-Prior; "for what says the Vulgate? Thus is it written: '*Et exaudivit Dominus vocem Helie; et reversa est anima pueri intra eum, et revixit;*' — and thinkest thou the intercession of a glorified saint is more feeble than when he walks on earth, shrouded in a tabernacle of clay, and seeing but with the eye of flesh?"

During this controversy Edward Glendinning appeared restless and impatient, agitated by some strong internal feeling, but whether of joy, grief, or expectation, his countenance did not expressly declare. He took now the unusual freedom to break in upon the discourse of the Sub-Prior, who, notwithstanding his resolution to the contrary, was obviously kindling in the spirit of controversy,

which Edward diverted by conjuring his reverence to allow him to speak a few words with him in private.

"Remove the prisoner," said the Sub-Prior to Christie; "look to him carefully that he escape not; but for thy life do him no injury."

His commands being obeyed, Edward and the monk were left alone, when the Sub-Prior thus addressed him.

"What hath come over thee, Edward, that thy eye kindles so wildly, and thy cheek is thus changing from scarlet to pale? Why didst thou break in so hastily and unadvisedly upon the argument with which I was prostrating yonder heretic? And wherefore dost thou not tell thy mother that her son is restored to her by the intercession, as Holy Church well warrants us to believe, of blessed Saint Benedict, the patron of our Order? For if ever my prayers were put forth to him with zeal, it hath been in behalf of this house, and thine eyes have seen the result — go tell it to thy mother."

"I must tell her then," said Edward, "that if she has regained one son, another is lost to her."

"What meanest thou, Edward? what language is this?" said the Sub-Prior.

"Father," said the youth, kneeling down to him, "my sin and my shame shall be told thee, and thou shalt witness my penance with thine own eyes."

"I comprehend thee not," said the Sub-Prior. "What canst thou have done to deserve such self-accusation? — Hast thou too listened," he added, knitting his brows, "to the demon of heresy, ever most effectual tempter of those, who, like yonder unhappy man, are distinguished by their love of knowledge?"

"I am guiltless in that matter," answered Glendinning, "nor have presumed to think otherwise than thou, my kind father, hast taught me, and than the church allows."

"And what is it then, my son," said the Sub-Prior, kindly, "which thus afflicts thy conscience? speak it to me, that I may answer thee in the words of comfort; for the church's mercy is great to those obedient children who doubt not her power."

"My confession will require her mercy," replied Edward. "My brother Halbert — so kind, so brave, so gentle, who spoke not, thought not, acted not, but in love to me, whose hand had aided me in every difficulty, whose eye watched over me like the eagle's over her nestlings, when they prove their first flight from the eyry — this brother, so kind, so gently affectionate — I heard of his sudden, his bloody, his violent death, and I rejoiced — I heard of his unexpected restoration, and I sorrowed!"

"Edward," said the father, "thou art beside thyself — what could urge thee to such odious ingratitude? — In your hurry of spirits you have mistaken the confused tenor of your feelings — Go, my son, pray and compose thy mind — we will speak of this another time."

"No, father, no," said Edward, vehemently, "now, or never! — I will find the means to tame this rebellious heart of mine, or I will tear it out of my bosom — Mistake its passions? — No, father, grief can ill be mistaken for joy — All wept, all shrieked around me — my mother — the menials — she too, the cause of my crime — all wept — and I — I could hardly disguise my brutal and insane joy under the appearance of revenge — Brother, I said, I cannot give thee tears, but I will give thee blood — Yes, Father, as I counted hour after hour, while I kept watch upon the English prisoner, and said, I am an hour nearer to hope and to happiness ——"

"I understand thee not, Edward," said the monk, "nor can I conceive in what way thy brother's supposed murder should have affected thee with such unnatural joy — Surely the sordid desire to succeed him in his small possessions ——"

"Perish the paltry trash!" said Edward, with the same emotion. "No, father, it was rivalry — it was jealous rage — it was the love of Mary Avenel, that rendered me the unnatural wretch I confess myself!"

"Of Mary Avenel!" said the priest — "of a lady so high above either of you in name and in rank? How dared Halbert — how dared you, to presume to lift your eye to her but in honour and respect, as a superior of another degree from yours?"

"When did love wait for the sanction of heraldry?" replied Edward; "and in what but a line of dead ancestors was Mary, our mother's guest and foster-child, different from us, with whom she was brought up? — Enough, we loved — we both loved her! But the passion of Halbert was requited. He knew it not, he saw it not — but I was sharper-eyed. I saw that even when I was more approved, Halbert was more beloved. With me she would sit for hours at our common task with the cold simplicity and indifference of a sister, but with Halbert she trusted not herself. She changed colour, she was fluttered when he approached her; and when he left her, she was sad, pensive, and solitary. I bore all this — I saw my rival's advancing progress in her affections — I bore it, father, and yet I hated him not — I could not hate him!"

"And well for thee that thou didst not," said the father; "wild and headstrong as thou art, wouldst thou hate thy brother for partaking in thine own folly?"

"Father," replied Edward, "the world esteems thee wise, and holds thy knowledge of mankind high; but thy question shews that thou hast never loved. It was by an effort that I saved myself from hating my kind and affectionate brother, who, all unsuspicious of my rivalry, was perpetually loading me with kindness. Nay, there were moods of my mind, in which I could return that kindness for a time with energetic enthusiasm. Never did I feel this so strongly as on the night which parted us. But I could not help rejoicing when he was swept from my path — could not help sorrowing when he was again restored to be a stumbling-block in my paths."

"May God be gracious to thee, my son!" said the monk; "this is an awful state of mind. Even in such evil mood did the first murderer rise up against his brother, because Abel's was the more acceptable sacrifice."

"I will wrestle with the demon which has haunted me, father," replied the youth, firmly — "I will wrestle with him, and I will subdue him. But first I must remove from the scenes which are to follow here. I cannot endure that I should see Mary Avenel's eyes again flash with joy at the restoration of her lover. It were a sight to make indeed a second Cain of me! My fierce, turbid, and tran-

story joy discharged itself in a thirst to commit homicide, and how can I estimate the frenzy of my despair !"

"Madman !" said the Sub-Prior, "at what dreadful crime does thy fury drive ?"

"My lot is determined, father," said Edward, in a resolute tone ; "I will embrace the spiritual state which you have so oft recommended. It is my purpose to return with you to Saint Mary's, and, with the permission of the Holy Virgin and of Saint Benedict, to offer my profession to the Abbot."

"Not now, my son," said the Sub-Prior, "not in this distemperature of mind. The wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of ; and shall we make our offerings to wisdom and to goodness itself with less of solemn resolution and deep devotion of mind, than is necessary to make them acceptable to our own frail companions in this valley of darkness ? This I say to thee, my son, not as meaning to deter thee from the good path thou art now inclined to prefer, but that thou mayst make thy vocation and thine election sure."

"There are actions, father," returned Edward, "which brook no delay, and this is one. It must be done this very *now ;* or it may never be done. Let me go with you ; let me not behold the return of Halbert into this house. Shame, and the sense of the injustice I have already done him, will join with these dreadful passions which urge me to do him yet farther wrong. Let me then go with you."

"With me, my son," said the Sub-Prior, "thou shalt surely go ; but our rule, as well as reason and good order, require that you should dwell a space with us as a probationer, or novice, before taking upon thee those final vows, which, sequestering thee for ever from the world, dedicate thee to the service of Heaven."

"And when shall we set forth, father ?" said the youth, as eagerly as if the journey which he was now undertaking led to the pleasures of a summer holiday.

"Even now, if thou wilt," said the Sub-Prior, yielding to his impetuosity — "go, then, and command them to prepare for our departure. — Yet stay," he said, as Edward, with all the awakened enthusiasm of his character, hastened from his presence, "come hither, my son, and kneel down."

Edward obeyed, and kneeled down before him. Notwithstanding his slight figure and thin features, the Sub-Prior could, from the energy of his tone, and the earnestness of his devotional manner, impress his pupils and his penitents with no ordinary feelings of personal reverence. His heart always was, as well as seemed to be, in the duty which he was immediately performing ; and the spiritual guide who thus shews a deep conviction of the importance of his office, seldom fails to impress a similar feeling upon his hearers. Upon such occasions as the present, his puny body seemed to assume more majestic stature — his spare and emaciated countenance bore a bolder, loftier, and more commanding port — his voice, always beautiful, trembled as labouring under the immediate impulse of the Divinity — and his whole demeanour seemed to bespeak, not the mere ordinary man, but the organ of the Church in which she had vested her high power for delivering sinners from their load of iniquity.

"Hast thou, my fair son," said he, "faithfully recounted the circumstances which have thus suddenly determined thee to a religious life ?"

"The sins I have confessed, my father," answered Edward, "but I have not yet told of a strange appearance, which, acting in my mind, hath, I think, aided to determine my resolution."

"Tell it, then, now," returned the Sub-Prior ; "it is thy duty to leave me uninstructed in nought, so that thereby I may understand the temptation that besets thee."

"I tell it with unwillingness," said Edward ; "for although, God wot, I speak but the mere truth, yet even while my tongue speaks it as truth, my own ears receive it as fable."

"Yet say the whole," said Father Eustace ; "neither fear rebuke from me, seeing I may know reasons for receiving as true that which others might regard as fabulous."

"Know, then, father," replied Edward, "that betwixt hope and despair — and, heavens ! what a hope ! — the hope to find the corpse mangled and crushed hastily in amongst the bloody clay which the foot of the scornful victor had trod down upon my good, my gentle, my courageous brother, — I sped to the glen called Corri-nan-shian ; but, as your reverence has been already informed, neither the grave, which my unhallowed wishes had in spite of my better self longed to see, nor any appearance of the earth having been opened, was visible in the solitary spot where Martin had, at morning yesterday, seen the fatal hillock. You know our dalesmen, father. The place hath an evil name, and this deception of the sight inclined them to leave it. My companions became affrighted, and hastened down the glen as men caught in trespass. My hopes were too much blighted, my mind too much agitated, to fear either the living or the dead. I descended the glen more slowly than they, often looking back, and not ill pleased with the poltroonery of my companions, which left me to my own perplexed and moody humour, and induced them to hasten into the broader dale. They were already out of sight, and lost amongst the windings of the glen, when, looking back, I saw a female form standing beside the fountain ——"

"How, my fair son ?" said the Sub-Prior, "beware you jest not with your present situation !"

"I jest not, father," answered the youth ; "it may be I shall never jest again — surely not for many a day. I saw, I say, the form of a female clad in white, such as the Spirit which haunts the house of Avenel is supposed to be. Believe me, my father, for, by heaven and earth, I say nought but what I saw with these eyes !"

"I believe thee, my son," said the monk ; "proceed in thy strange story."

"The apparition," said Edward Glendinning, "sung, and thus run her lay ; for, strange as it may seem to you, her words abide by my remembrance as if they had been sung to me from infancy upward :

> 'Thou who seek'st my fountain lone,
> With thoughts and hopes thou darest not own ;
> Whose heart within leap'd wildly glad
> When most his brow seem'd dark and sad ;
> Hie thee back, thou find'st not here
> Corpse or coffin, grave or bier ;
> The Dead Alive is gone and fled —
> Go thou, and join the Living Dead !
>
> 'The Living Dead, whose sober brow
> Oft shrouds such thoughts as thou hast now,
> Whose hearts within are seldom cured
> Of passions by their vows abjured ;

Where, under sad and solemn show,
Vain hopes are nursed, wild wishes glow.
Seek the convent's vaulted room,
Prayer and vigil be thy doom;
Doff the green, and don the gray,
To the cloister hence away!' "

"'Tis a wild lay," said the Sub-Prior, "and chanted, I fear me, with no good end. But we have power to turn the machinations of Satan to his shame. Edward, thou shalt go with me as thou desirest; thou shalt prove the life for which I have long thought thee best fitted — thou shalt aid, my son, this trembling hand of mine to sustain the Holy Ark, which bold unhallowed men press rashly forward to touch and to profane. — Wilt thou not first see thy mother?"

"I will see no one," said Edward, hastily; "I will risk nothing that may shake the purpose of my heart. From Saint Mary's they shall learn my destination — all of them shall learn it. My mother — Mary Avenel — my restored and happy brother — they shall all know that Edward lives no longer to the world to be a clog on their happiness. Mary shall no longer need to constrain her looks and expressions to coldness because I am nigh. She shall no longer ——"

"My son," said the Sub-Prior, interrupting him, "it is not by looking back on the vanities and vexations of this world, that we fit ourselves for the discharge of duties which are not of it. Go, get our horses ready, and, as we descend the glen together, I will teach thee the truths through which the fathers and wise men of old had that precious alchemy, which can convert suffering into happiness."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Now, on my faith, this gear is all entangled,
Like to the yarn-clew of the drowsy knitter,
Dragg'd by the frolic kitten through the cabin,
While the good dame sits nodding o'er the fire!
Masters, attend; 'twill crave some skill to clear it.
Old Play.

Edward, with the speed of one who doubts the steadiness of his own resolution, hastened to prepare the horses for their departure, and at the same time thanked and dismissed the neighbours who had come to his assistance, and who were not a little surprised both at the suddenness of his proposed departure, and at the turn affairs had taken.

"Here's cold hospitality," quoth Dan of the Howlet-hirst to his comrades; "I trow the Glendinnings may die and come alive right oft, ere I put foot in stirrup again for the matter."

Martin soothed them by placing food and liquor before them. They ate sullenly, however, and departed in bad humour.

The joyful news that Halbert Glendinning lived, was quickly communicated through the sorrowing family. The mother wept and thanked Heaven alternately; until her habits of domestic economy awakening as her feelings became calmer, she observed, "It would be an unco task to mend the yetts, and what were they to do while they were broken in that fashion? At open doors dogs come in."

Tibb remarked, "She aye thought Halbert was ower gleg at his weapon to be killed sae easily by ony Sir Piercie of them a'. They might say of these Southrons as they liked; but they had not the pith and wind of a canny Scot, when it came to close grips."

On Mary Avenel the impression was inconceivably deeper. She had but newly learned to pray, and it seemed to her that her prayers had been instantly answered — that the compassion of Heaven, which she had learned to implore in the words of Scripture, had descended upon her after a manner almost miraculous, and recalled the dead from the grave at the sound of her lamentations. There was a dangerous degree of enthusiasm in this strain of feeling, but it originated in the purest devotion.

A silken and embroidered muffler, one of the few articles of more costly attire which she possessed, was devoted to the purpose of wrapping up and concealing the sacred volume, which henceforth she was to regard as her chiefest treasure, lamenting only that, for want of a fitting interpreter, much must remain to her a book closed and a fountain sealed. She was unaware of the yet greater danger she incurred, of putting an imperfect or even false sense upon some of the doctrines which appeared most comprehensible. But Heaven had provided against both these hazards.

While Edward was preparing the horses, Christie of the Clinthill again solicited his orders respecting the reformed preacher, Henry Warden, and again the worthy monk laboured to reconcile in his own mind the compassion and esteem which, almost in spite of him, he could not help feeling for his former companion, with the duty which he owed to the church. The unexpected resolution of Edward had removed, he thought, the chief objection to his being left at Glendearg.

"If I carry this Wellwood, or Warden, to the Monastery," he thought, "he must die — die in his heresy — perish body and soul: And though such a measure was once thought advisable, to strike terror into the heretics, yet such is now their daily increasing strength, that it may rather rouse them to fury and to revenge. True, he refuses to pledge himself to abstain from sowing his tares among the wheat; but the ground here is too barren to receive them. I fear not his making impression on these poor women, the vassals of the church, and bred up in due obedience to her behests. The keen, searching, inquiring, and bold disposition of Edward, might have afforded fuel to the fire; but that is removed, and there is nothing left which the flame may catch to. — Thus shall he have no power to spread his evil doctrines abroad, and yet his life shall be preserved, and it may be his soul rescued as a prey from the fowler's net. I will myself contend with him in argument; for when we studied in common, I yielded not to him, and surely the cause for which I struggle will support me, were I yet more weak than I deem myself. Were this man reclaimed from his errors, an hundred-fold more advantage would arise to the church from his spiritual regeneration, than from his temporal death."

Having finished these meditations, in which there was at once goodness of disposition and narrowness of principle, a considerable portion of self-opinion, and no small degree of self-delusion, the Sub-Prior commanded the prisoner to be brought into his presence.

"Henry," he said, "whatever a rigid sense of duty may demand of me, ancient friendship and

Christian compassion forbid me to lead thee to assured death. Thou wert wont to be generous, though stern and stubborn in thy resolves; let not thy sense of what thine own thoughts term duty, draw thee farther than mine have done. Remember, that every sheep whom thou shalt here lead astray from the fold, will be demanded in time and through eternity of him who hath left thee the liberty of doing such evil. I ask no engagement of thee, save that thou remain a prisoner on thy word at this tower, and wilt appear when summoned."

"Thou hast found an invention to bind my hands," replied the preacher, "more sure than would have been the heaviest shackles in the prison of thy convent. I will not rashly do what may endanger thee with thy unhappy superiors, and I will be the more cautious, because, if we had farther opportunity of conference, I trust thine own soul may yet be rescued as a brand from the burning, and that, casting from thee the livery of Anti-Christ, that trader in human sins and human souls, I may yet assist thee to lay hold on the Rock of Ages."

The Sub-Prior heard the sentiment, so similar to that which had occurred to himself, with the same kindly feelings with which the game-cock hears and replies to the challenge of his rival.

"I bless God and Our Lady," said he, drawing himself up, "that my faith is already anchored on that Rock on which Saint Peter founded his church."

"It is a perversion of the text," said the eager Henry Warden, "grounded on a vain play upon words — a most idle paronomasia."

The controversy would have been rekindled, and in all probability — for what can insure the good temper and moderation of polemics? — might have ended in the preacher's being transported a captive to the Monastery, had not Christie of the Clinthill observed that it was growing late, and that he having to descend the glen, which had no good reputation, cared not greatly for travelling there after sunset. The Sub-Prior, therefore, stifled his desire of argument, and again telling the preacher, that he trusted to his gratitude and generosity, he bade him farewell.

"Be assured, mine old friend," replied Warden, "that no willing act of mine shall be to thy prejudice. But if my Master shall place work before me, I must obey God rather than man."

These two men, both excellent from natural disposition and acquired knowledge, had more points of similarity than they themselves would have admitted. In truth, the chief distinction betwixt them was, that the Catholic, defending a religion which afforded little interest to the feelings, had, in his devotion to the cause he espoused, more of the head than of the heart, and was politic, cautious, and artful; while the Protestant, acting under the strong impulse of more lately adopted conviction, and feeling, as he justly might, a more animated confidence in his cause, was enthusiastic, eager, and precipitate in his desire to advance it. The priest would have been contented to defend, the preacher aspired to conquer; and, of course, the impulse by which the latter was governed, was more active and more decisive. They could not part from each other without a second pressure of hands, and each looked in the face of his old companion, as he bade him adieu, with a countenance strongly expressive of sorrow, affection, and pity.

Father Eustace then explained briefly to Dame Glendinning, that this person was to be her guest for some days, forbidding her and her whole household, under high spiritual censures, to hold any conversation with him on religious subjects, but commanding her to attend to his wants in all other particulars.

"May Our Lady forgive me, reverend father," said Dame Glendinning, somewhat dismayed at this intelligence, "but I must needs say, that ower mony guests have been the ruin of mony a house, and I trow they will bring down Glendearg. First came the Lady of Avenel — (her soul be at rest — she meant nae ill) — but she brought with her as mony bogles and fairies, as hae kept the house in care ever since, sae that we have been living as it were in a dream. And then came that English knight, if it please you, and if he hasna killed my son outright, he has chased him aff the gate, and it may be lang eneugh ere I see him again — forby the damage done to outer door and inner door. And now your reverence has given me the charge of a heretic, who, it is like, may bring the great horned devil himself down upon us all; and they say that it is neither door nor window will serve him, but he will take away the side of the auld tower along with him. Nevertheless, reverend father, your pleasure is doubtless to be done to our power."

"Go to, woman," said the Sub-Prior; "send for workmen from the clachan, and let them charge the expense of their repairs to the Community, and I will give the treasurer warrant to allow them. Moreover, in settling the rental mails, and feu-duties, thou shalt have allowance for the trouble and charges to which thou art now put, and I will cause strict search to be made after thy son."

The dame curtsied deep and low at each favourable expression; and when the Sub-Prior had done speaking, she added her farther hope that the Sub-Prior would hold some communing with her gossip the Miller, concerning the fate of his daughter, and expound to him that the chance had by no means happened through any negligence on her part.

"I sair doubt me, father," she said, "whether Mysie finds her way back to the Mill in a hurry; but it was all her father's own fault that let her run lamping about the country, riding on bare-backed naigs, and never settling to do a turn of wark within doors, unless it were to dress dainties at dinner-time for his ain kyte."

"You remind me, dame, of another matter of urgency," said Father Eustace; "and, God knows, too many of them press on me at this moment. This English knight must be sought out, and explanation given to him of these most strange chances. The giddy girl must also be recovered. If she hath suffered in reputation by this unhappy mistake, I will not hold myself innocent of the disgrace. Yet how to find them out I know not."

"So please you," said Christie of the Clinthill, "I am willing to take the chase, and bring them back by fair means or foul; for though you have always looked as black as night at me, whenever we have forgathered, yet I have not forgotten that had it not been for you, my neck would have kend the weight of my four quarters. If any man can track the tread of them, I will say in the face of both Merse and Teviotdale, and take the Forest to boot, I am that man. But first I have matters to treat of on my master's score, if you will permit me to ride down the glen with you."

"Nay, but, my friend," said the Sub-Prior," thou shouldst remember I have but slender cause to trust thee for a companion through a place so solitary."

"Tush! tush!" said the Jackman, "fear me not; I had the worst too surely to begin that sport again. Besides, have I not said a dozen of times, I owe you a life? and when I owe a man either a good turn or a bad, I never fail to pay it sooner or later. Moreover, beshrew me if I care to go alone down the glen, or even with my troopers, who are, every loon of them, as much devil's bairns as myself; whereas, if your reverence, since that is the word, take beads and psalter, and I come along with jack and spear, you will make the devils take the air, and I will make all human enemies take the earth."

Edward here entered, and told his reverence that his horse was prepared. At this instant his eye caught his mother's, and the resolution which he had so strongly formed was staggered when he recollected the necessity of bidding her farewell. The Sub-Prior saw his embarrassment, and came to his relief.

"Dame," said he, "I forgot to mention that your son Edward goes with me to Saint Mary's, and will not return for two or three days."

"You'll be wishing to help him to recover his brother? May the saints reward your kindness!"

The Sub-Prior returned the benediction which, in this instance, he had not very well deserved, and he and Edward set forth on their route. They were presently followed by Christie, who came up with his followers at such a speedy pace, as intimated sufficiently that his wish to obtain spiritual convoy through the glen, was extremely sincere. He had, however, other matters to stimulate his speed, for he was desirous to communicate to the Sub-Prior a message from his master Julian, connected with the delivery of the prisoner Warden; and having requested the Sub-Prior to ride with him a few yards before Edward, and the troopers of his own party, he thus addressed him, sometimes interrupting his discourse in a manner testifying that his fear of supernatural beings was not altogether lulled to rest by his confidence in the sanctity of his fellow-traveller.

"My master," said the rider, "deemed he had sent you an acceptable gift in that old heretic preacher; but it seems, from the slight care you have taken of him, that you make small account of the boon."

"Nay," said the Sub-Prior, "do not thus judge of it. The Community must account highly of the service, and will reward it to thy master in goodly fashion. But this man and I are old friends, and I trust to bring him back from the paths of perdition."

"Nay," said the moss-trooper, "when I saw you shake hands at the beginning, I counted that you would fight it all out in love and honour, and that there would be no extreme dealings betwixt ye — however it is all one to my master — Saint Mary! what call you yon, Sir Monk?"

"The branch of a willow streaming across the path betwixt us and the sky."

"Beshrew me," said Christie, "if it looked not like a man's hand holding a sword. — But touching my master, he, like a prudent man, hath kept himself aloof in these broken times, until he could see with precision what footing he was to stand upon. Right tempting offers he hath had from the Lords of Congregation, whom you call heretics; and at one time he was minded, to be plain with you, to have taken their way — for he was assured that the Lord James[1] was coming this road at the head of a round body of cavalry. And accordingly Lord James did so far reckon upon him, that he sent this man Warden, or whatsoever be his name, to my master's protection, as an assured friend; and, moreover, with tidings that he himself was marching hitherward at the head of a strong body of horse."

"Now, Our Lady forefend!" said the Sub-Prior.

"Amen!" answered Christie, in some trepidation, "did your reverence see aught?"

"Nothing whatever," replied the monk; "it was thy tale which wrested from me that exclamation."

"And it was some cause," replied he of the Clinthill, "for if Lord James should come hither, your Halidome would smoke for it. But be of good cheer — that expedition is ended before it was begun. The Baron of Avenel had sure news that Lord James has been fain to march westward with his merrymen, to protect Lord Semple against Cassilis and the Kennedies. By my faith, it will cost him a brush; for wot ye what they say of that name, —

> 'Twixt Wigton and the town of Ayr,
> Portpatrick and the cruives of Cree,
> No man need think for to bide there,
> Unless he court Saint Kennedie.'"

"Then," said the Sub-Prior, "the Lord James's purpose of coming southwards being broken, cost this person, Henry Warden, a cold reception at Avenel Castle."

"It would not have been altogether so rough a one," said the moss-trooper; "for my master was in heavy thought what to do in these unsettled times, and would scarce have hazarded misusing a man sent to him by so terrible a leader as the Lord James. But, to speak the truth, some busy devil tempted the old man to meddle with my master's Christian liberty of hand-fasting with Catherine of Newport. So that broke the wand of peace between them, and now ye may have my master, and all the force he can make, at your devotion, for Lord James never forgave wrong done to him; and if he come by the upper hand, he will have Julian's head if there were never another of the name, as it is like there is not, excepting the bit slip of a lassie yonder. And now I have told you more of my master's affairs than he would thank me for; but you have done me a frank turn once, and I may need one at your hands again."

"Thy frankness," said the Sub-Prior, "shall surely advantage thee; for much it concerns the church in these broken times to know the purposes and motives of those around us. But what is it that thy master expects from us in reward of good service; for I esteem him one of those who are not willing to work without their hire?"

"Nay, that I can tell you flatly; for Lord James had promised him, in case he would be of his faction in these parts, an easy tack of the teind-sheaves of his own Barony of Avenel, together with the lands of Cranberry-moor, which lie intersected with his own. And he will look for no less at your hand."

"But there is old Gilbert of Cranberry-moor," said the Sub-Prior, "what are we to make of him? The heretic Lord James may take on him to dispone upon the goods and lands of the Halidome at

[1] Lord James Stewart, afterwards the Regent Murray.

his pleasure, because, doubtless, but for the protection of God, and the baronage which yet remain faithful to their creed, he may despoil us of them by force; but while they are the property of the community, we may not take steadings from ancient and faithful vassals, to gratify the covetousness of those who serve God only from the lucre of gain."

"By the mass," said Christie, "it is well talking, Sir Priest; but when ye consider that Gilbert has but two half-starved cowardly peasants to follow him, and only an auld jaded aver to ride upon, fitter for the plough than for manly service; and that the Baron of Avenel never rides with fewer than ten jackmen at his back, and oftener with fifty, bodin in all that effeirs to war as if they were to do battle for a kingdom, and mounted on nags that nicker at the clash of a sword as if it were the clank of the lid of a corn-chest — I say, when ye have computed all this, you may guess which course will best serve your Monastery."

"Friend," said the monk, "I would willingly purchase thy master's assistance on his own terms, since times leave us no better means of defence against the sacrilegious spoliation of heresy; but to take from a poor man his patrimony ——"

"For that matter," said the rider, "his seat would scarce be a soft one, if my master thought that Gilbert's interest stood betwixt him and what he wishes. The Halidome has land enough, and Gilbert may be quartered elsewhere."

"We will consider the possibility of so disposing the matter," said the monk, "and will expect in consequence your master's most active assistance, with all the followers he can make, to join in the defence of the Halidome, against any force by which it may be threatened."

"A man's hand and a mailed glove on that,"[1] said the jackman. "They call us marauders, thieves, and what not; but the side we take we hold by. — And I will be blithe when my Baron comes to a point which side he will take, for the castle is a kind of hell, (Our Lady forgive me for naming such a word in this place!) while he is in his mood, studying how he may best advantage himself. And now, Heaven be praised, we are in the open valley, and I may swear a round oath, should aught happen to provoke it."

"My friend," said the Sub-Prior, "thou hast little merit in abstaining from oaths or blasphemy, if it be only out of fear of evil spirits."

"Nay, I am not quite a church vassal yet," said the jackman, "and if you link the curb too tight on a young horse, I promise you he will rear — Why, it is much for me to forbear old customs on any account whatever."

The night being fine, they forded the river at the spot where the Sacristan met with his unhappy encounter with the spirit. As soon as they arrived at the gate of the Monastery, the porter in waiting eagerly exclaimed, "Reverend father, the Lord Abbot is most anxious for your presence."

"Let these strangers be carried to the great hall," said the Sub-Prior, "and be treated with the best by the cellarer; reminding them, however, of that modesty and decency of conduct which becometh guests in a house like this."

"But the Lord Abbot demands you instantly, my venerable brother," said Father Philip, arriving in great haste. "I have not seen him more discouraged or desolate of counsel since the field of Pinkie-cleugh was stricken."

"I come, my good brother, I come," said Father Eustace. "I pray thee, good brother, let this youth, Edward Glendinning, be conveyed to the Chamber of the Novices, and placed under their instructor. God hath touched his heart, and he proposeth laying aside the vanities of the world, to become a brother of our holy order; which, if his good parts be matched with fitting docility and humility, he may one day live to adorn."

"My very venerable brother," exclaimed old Father Nicholas, who came hobbling with a third summons to the Sub-Prior, "I pray thee to hasten to our worshipful Lord Abbot. The holy patroness be with us! never saw I Abbot of the House of Saint Mary's in such consternation; and yet I remember me well when Father Ingelram had the news of Flodden-field."

"I come, I come, venerable brother," said Father Eustace — And having repeatedly ejaculated "I come!" he at last went to the Abbot in good earnest.

[1] See Note L. *Good Faith of the Borderers.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

It is not texts will do it — Church artillery
Are silenced soon by real ordnance,
And canons are but vain opposed to cannon.
Go, coin your crosier, melt your church plate down,
Bid the starved soldier banquet in your halls,
And quaff your long-saved hogsheads — Turn them out
Thus primed with your good cheer, to guard your wall,
And they will venture for 't. ——

Old Play.

The Abbot received his counsellor with a tremulous eagerness of welcome, which announced to the Sub-Prior an extreme agitation of spirits, and the utmost need of good counsel. There was neither mazer-dish nor standing-cup upon the little table, at the elbow of his huge chair of state; his beads alone lay there, and it seemed as if he had been telling them in his extremity of distress. Beside the beads was placed the mitre of the Abbot, of an antique form, and blazing with precious stones, and the rich and highly-embossed crosier rested against the same table.

The Sacristan and old Father Nicholas had followed the Sub-Prior into the Abbot's apartment, perhaps with the hope of learning something of the important matter which seemed to be in hand. — They were not mistaken; for, after having ushered in the Sub-Prior, and being themselves in the act of retiring, the Abbot made them a signal to remain.

"My brethren," he said, "it is well known to you with what painful zeal we have overseen the weighty affairs of this house committed to our unworthy hand — your bread hath been given to you, and your water hath been sure — I have not wasted the revenues of the Convent on vain pleasures, as hunting or hawking, or in change of rich cope or alb, or in feasting idle bards and jesters, saving those who, according to old wont, were received in time of Christmas and Easter. Neither have I enriched either mine own relations nor strange women, at the expense of the Patrimony."

"There hath not been such a Lord Abbot," said Father Nicholas, "to my knowledge, since the days of Abbot Ingelram, who ——"

At that portentous word, which always preluded a long story, the Abbot broke in.

"May God have mercy on his soul!—we talk not of him now.—What I would know of ye, my brethren, is, whether I have, in your mind, faithfully discharged the duties of mine office?"

"There has never been subject of complaint," answered the Sub-Prior.

The Sacristan, more diffuse, enumerated the various acts of indulgence and kindness which the mild government of Abbot Boniface had conferred on the brotherhood of Saint Mary's—the *indulgentiæ* — the *gratias* — the *biberes* — the weekly mess of boiled almonds — the enlarged accommodation of the refectory — the better arrangement of the cellarage — the improvement of the revenue of the Monastery — the diminution of the privations of the brethren.

"You might have added, my brother," said the Abbot, listening with melancholy acquiescence to the detail of his own merits, "that I caused to be built that curious screen, which secureth the cloisters from the north-east wind.—But all these things avail nothing — As we read in holy Maccabee, *Capta est civitas per voluntatem Dei.* It hath cost me no little thought, no common toil, to keep these weighty matters in such order as you have seen them—there was both barn and binn to be kept full — Infirmary, dormitory, guest-hall, and refectory, to be looked to — processions to be made, confessions to be heard, strangers to be entertained, *veniæ* to be granted or refused; and I warrant me, when every one of you was asleep in your cell, the Abbot hath lain awake for a full hour by the bell, thinking how these matters might be ordered seemly and suitably."

"May we ask, reverend my lord," said the Sub-Prior, "what additional care has now been thrown upon you, since your discourse seems to point that way?"

"Marry, this it is," said the Abbot. "The talk is not now of *biberes*, or of *caritas*, or of boiled almonds,[1] but of an English band coming against us from Hexham, commanded by Sir John Foster; nor is it of the screening us from the east wind, but how to escape Lord James Stewart, who cometh to lay waste and destroy with his heretic soldiers."

"I thought that purpose had been broken by the feud between Semple and the Kennedies," said the Sub-Prior, hastily.

"They have accorded that matter at the expense of the church as usual," said the Abbot; "the Earl of Cassilis is to have the teind-sheaves of his lands, which were given to the house of Crosraguel, and he has stricken hands with Stewart, who is now called Murray.—*Principes convenerunt unum adversus Dominum.*—There are the letters."

The Sub-Prior took the letters, which had come by an express messenger from the Primate of Scotland, who still laboured to uphold the tottering fabric of the system under which he was at length buried, and, stepping towards the lamp, read them with an air of deep and settled attention — the Sacristan and Father Nicholas looked as helplessly at each other, as the denizens of the poultry yard when the hawk soars over it. The Abbot seemed bowed down with the extremity of sorrowful apprehension, but kept his eye timorously fixed on the Sub-Prior, as if striving to catch some comfort from the expression of his countenance. When at length he beheld that, after a second intent perusal of the letters, he remained still silent and full of thought, he asked him in an anxious tone, "What is to be done?"

"Our duty must be done," answered the Sub-Prior, "and the rest is in the hands of God."

"Our duty — our duty?" answered the Abbot, impatiently; "doubtless we are to do our duty? but what is that duty? or how will it serve us?—Will bell, book, and candle, drive back the English heretics? or will Murray care for psalms and antiphonars? or can I fight for the Halidome, like Judas Maccabeus, against those profane Nicanors? or send the Sacristan against this new Holofernes, to bring back his head in a basket?"

"True, my Lord Abbot," said the Sub-Prior, "we cannot fight with carnal weapons, it is alike contrary to our habit and vow; but we can die for our Convent and for our Order. Besides, we can arm those who will and can fight. The English are but few in number, trusting, as it would seem, that they will be joined by Murray, whose march has been interrupted. If Foster, with his Cumberland and Hexham bandits, ventures to march into Scotland, to pillage and despoil our House, we will levy our vassals, and, I trust, shall be found strong enough to give him battle."

"In the blessed name of Our Lady," said the Abbot, "think you that I am Petrus Eremita, to go forth the leader of an host?"

"Nay," said the Sub-Prior, "let some man skilled in war lead our people — there is Julian Avenel, an approved soldier."

"But a scoffer, a debauched person, and, in brief, a man of Belial," quoth the Abbot.

"Still," said the monk, "we must use his ministry in that to which he has been brought up. We can guerdon him richly, and indeed I already know the price of his service. The English, it is expected, will presently set forth, hoping here to seize upon Piercie Shafton, whose refuge being taken with us, they make the pretext of this unheard-of inroad."

"Is it even so?" said the Abbot; "I never judged that his body of satin and his brain of feathers boded us much good."

"Yet we must have his assistance, if possible," said the Sub-Prior; "he may interest in our behalf the great Piercie, of whose friendship he boasts, and that good and faithful Lord may break Foster's purpose. I will despatch the jackman after him with all speed.—Chiefly, however, I trust to the military spirit of the land, which will not suffer peace to be easily broken on the frontier. Credit me, my lord, it will bring to our side the hands of many, whose hearts may have gone astray after strange doctrines. The great chiefs and barons will be ashamed to let the vassals of peaceful monks fight unaided against the old enemies of Scotland."

"It may be," said the Abbot, "that Foster will wait for Murray, whose purpose hitherward is but delayed for a short space."

"By the rood, he will not," said the Sub-Prior; "we know this Sir John Foster — a pestilent heretic. he will long to destroy the church — born a Borderer he will thirst to plunder her of her wealth — a Border-warden, he will be eager to ride in Scotland There are too many causes to urge him on. If he joins with Murray, he will have at best but an auxiliary's share of the spoil — if he comes hither

[1] See Note M. *Indulgences of the Monks.*

before him, he will reckon on the whole harvest of depredation as his own. Julian Avenel also has, as I have heard, some spite against Sir John Foster; they will fight, when they meet, with double determination. — Sacristan, send for our bailiff — Where is the roll of fencible men liable to do suit and service to the Halidome? — Send off to the Baron of Meigallot; he can raise threescore horse and better — Say to him the Monastery will compound with him for the customs of his bridge, which have been in controversy, if he will shew himself a friend at such a point. — And now, my lord, let us compute our possible numbers, and those of the enemy, that human blood be not spilled in vain — Let us therefore calculate ——"

"My brain is dizzied with the emergency," said the poor Abbot — "I am not, I think, more a coward than others, so far as my own person is concerned; but speak to me of marching and collecting soldiers, and calculating forces, and you may as well tell of it to the youngest novice of a nunnery. But my resolution is taken. — Brethren," he said, rising up, and coming forward with that dignity which his comely person enabled him to assume, "hear for the last time the voice of your Abbot Boniface. I have done for you the best that I could; in quieter times I had perhaps done better, for it was for quiet that I sought the cloister, which has been to me a place of turmoil, as much as if I had sate in the receipt of custom, or ridden forth as leader of an armed host. But now matters turn worse and worse, and I, as I grow old, am less able to struggle with them. Also, it becomes me not to hold a place, whereof the duties, through my default or misfortune, may be but imperfectly filled by me. Wherefore I have resolved to demit this mine high office, so that the order of these matters may presently devolve upon Father Eustatius here present, our well-beloved Sub-Prior; and I now rejoice that he hath not been provided according to his merits elsewhere, seeing that I well hope he will succeed to the mitre and staff which it is my present purpose to lay down."

"In the name of Our Lady, do nothing hastily, my lord!" said Father Nicholas — "I do remember that when the worthy Abbot Ingelram, being in his ninetieth year — for I warrant you he could remember when Benedict the Thirteenth was deposed — and being ill at ease and bed-rid, the brethren rounded in his ear that he were better resign his office. And what said he, being a pleasant man? marry, that while he could crook his little finger he would keep hold of the crosier with it."

The Sacristan also strongly remonstrated against the resolution of his Superior, and set down the insufficiency he pleaded to the native modesty of his disposition. The Abbot listened in downcast silence; even flattery could not win his ear.

Father Eustace took a nobler tone with his disconcerted and dejected Superior. "My Lord Abbot," he said, "if I have been silent concerning the virtues with which you have governed this house, do not think that I am unaware of them. I know that no man ever brought to your high office a more sincere wish to do well to all mankind; and if your rule has not been marked with the bold lines which sometimes distinguished your spiritual predecessors, their faults have equally been strangers to your character."

"I did not believe," said the Abbot, turning his looks to Father Eustace with some surprise, "that you, father, of all men, would have done me this justice."

"In your absence," said the Sub-Prior, "I have even done it more fully. Do not lose the good opinion which all men entertain of you, by renouncing your office when your care is most needed."

"But, my brother," said the Abbot, "I leave a more able in my place."

"That you do not," said Eustace; "because it is not necessary you should resign, in order to possess the use of whatever experience or talent I may be accounted master of. I have been long enough in this profession to know that the individual qualities which any of us may have, are not his own, but the property of the Community, and only so far useful when they promote the general advantage. If you care not in person, my lord, to deal with this troublesome matter, let me implore you to go instantly to Edinburgh, and make what friends you can in our behalf, while I in your absence will, as Sub-Prior, do my duty in defence of the Halidome. If I succeed, may the honour and praise be yours, and if I fail, let the disgrace and shame be mine own."

The Abbot mused for a space, and then replied, — "No, Father Eustatius, you shall not conquer me by your generosity. In times like these, this house must have a stronger pilotage than my weak hands afford; and he who steers the vessel must be chief of the crew. Shame were it to accept the praise of other men's labours; and, in my poor mind, all the praise which can be bestowed on him who undertakes a task so perilous and perplexing, is a meed beneath his merits. Misfortune to him would deprive him of an iota of it! Assume, therefore, your authority to-night, and proceed in the preparations you judge necessary. Let the Chapter be summoned to-morrow after we have heard mass, and all shall be ordered as I have told you. Benedicite, my brethren! — peace be with you! May the new Abbot-expectant sleep as sound as he who is about to resign his mitre."

They retired, affected even to tears. The good Abbot had shewn a point of his character to which they were strangers. Even Father Eustace had held his spiritual Superior hitherto as a good-humoured, indolent, self-indulgent man, whose chief merit was the absence of gross faults; so that this sacrifice of power to a sense of duty, even if a little alloyed by the meaner motives of fear and apprehended difficulties, raised him considerably in the Sub-Prior's estimation. He even felt an aversion to profit by the resignation of the Abbot Boniface, and in a manner to rise on his ruins; but this sentiment did not long contend with those which led him to recollect higher considerations. It could not be denied that Boniface was entirely unfit for his situation in the present crisis; and the Sub-Prior felt that he himself, acting merely as a delegate, could not well take the decisive measures which the time required; the weal of the Community therefore demanded his elevation. If, besides, there crept in a feeling of a high dignity obtained, and the native exultation of a haughty spirit called to contend with the imminent dangers attached to a post of such distinction, these sentiments were so cunningly blended and amalgamated with others of a more disinterested nature, that, as the Sub-Prior himself was unconscious of their agency, we, who have a regard for him, are not solicitous to detect it.

The Abbot elect carried himself with more dignity than formerly, when giving such directions as the pressing circumstances of the times required; and those who approached him could perceive an unusual kindling of his falcon eye, and an unusual flush upon his pale and faded cheek. With briefness and precision he wrote and dictated various letters to different barons, acquainting them with the meditated invasion of the Halidome by the English, and conjuring them to lend aid and assistance as in a common cause. The temptation of advantage was held out to those whom he judged less sensible of the cause of honour, and all were urged by the motives of patriotism and ancient animosity to the English. The time had been when no such exhortations would have been necessary. But so essential was Elizabeth's aid to the reformed party in Scotland, and so strong was that party almost every where, that there was reason to believe a great many would observe neutrality on the present occasion, even if they did not go the length of uniting with the English against the Catholics.

When Father Eustace considered the number of the immediate vassals of the church whose aid he might legally command, his heart sunk at the thoughts of ranking them under the banner of the fierce and profligate Julian Avenel.

"Were the young enthusiast Halbert Glendinning to be found," thought Father Eustace in his anxiety, "I would have risked the battle under his leading, young as he is, and with better hope of God's blessing. But the bailiff is now too infirm, nor know I a chief of name whom I might trust in this important matter better than this Avenel."—He touched a bell which stood on the table, and commanded Christie of the Clinthill to be brought before him. —"Thou owest me a life," said he to that person on his entrance, "and I may do thee another good turn if thou be'st sincere with me."

Christie had already drained two standing-cups of wine, which would, on another occasion, have added to the insolence of his familiarity. But at present there was something in the augmented dignity of manner of Father Eustace, which imposed a restraint on him. Yet his answers partook of his usual character of undaunted assurance. He professed himself willing to return a true answer to all inquiries.

"Has the Baron (so styled) of Avenel any friendship with Sir John Foster, Warden of the West Marches of England?"

"Such friendship as is between the wild-cat and the terrier," replied the rider.

"Will he do battle with him should they meet?"

"As surely," answered Christie, "as ever cock fought on Shrovetide-even."

"And would he fight with Foster in the Church's quarrel?"

"On any quarrel, or upon no quarrel whatever," replied the jackman.

"We will then write to him, letting him know, that if upon occasion of an apprehended incursion by Sir John Foster he will agree to join his force with ours, he shall lead our men,—and be gratified for doing so to the extent of his wish.— Yet one word more—Thou didst say thou couldst find out where the English knight Piercie Shafton has this day fled to?"

"That I can, and bring him back too, by fair means or force, as best likes your reverence."

"No force must be used upon him. Within what time wilt thou find him out?"

"Within thirty hours, so he have not crossed the Lothian firth—If it is to do you a pleasure, I will set off directly, and wind him as a sleuth-dog tracks the moss-trooper," answered Christie.

"Bring him hither then, and thou wilt deserve good at our hands, which I may soon have free means of bestowing on thee."

"Thanks to your reverence, I put myself in your reverence's hands. We of the spear and snaffle walk something recklessly through life; but if a man were worse than he is, your reverence knows he must live, and that's not to be done without shifting, I trow."

"Peace, Sir, and begone on thine errand—thou shalt have a letter from us to Sir Piercie."

Christie made two steps towards the door; then turning back and hesitating, like one who would make an impertinent pleasantry if he dared, he asked what he was to do with the wench Mysie Happer, whom the Southron knight had carried off with him.

"Am I to bring her hither, please your reverence?"

"Hither, you malapert knave?" said the churchman; "remember you to whom you speak?"

"No offence meant," replied Christie; "but if such is not your will, I would carry her to Avenel Castle, where a well-favoured wench was never unwelcome."

"Bring the unfortunate girl to her father's, and break no scurril jests here," said the Sub-Prior—"See that thou guide her in all safety and honour."

"In safety, surely," said the rider, "and in such honour as her outbreak has left her.—I bid your reverence farewell, I must be on horse before cock-crow."

"What, in the dark!—how knowest thou which way to go?"

"I tracked the knight's horse-tread as far as near to the ford, as we rode along together," said Christie, "and I observed the track turn to the northward. He is for Edinburgh, I will warrant you—so soon as daylight comes I will be on the road again. It is a kenspeckle hoof-mark, for the shoe was made by old Eckie of Cannobie—I would swear to the curve of the cawker." So saying, he departed.

"Hateful necessity," said Father Eustace, looking after him, "that obliges us to use such implements as these! But, assailed as we are on all sides, and by all conditions of men, what alternative is left us?—But now let me to my most needful task."

The Abbot elect accordingly sate down to write letters, arrange orders, and take upon him the whole charge of an institution which tottered to its fall, with the same spirit of proud and devoted fortitude wherewith the commander of a fortress, reduced nearly to the last extremity, calculates what means remain to him to protract the fatal hour of successful storm. In the meanwhile Abbot Boniface, having given a few natural sighs to the downfall of the pre-eminence he had so long enjoyed amongst his brethren, fell fast asleep, leaving the whole cares and toils of office to his assistant and successor.

CHAPTER XXXV.

And when he came to broken briggs,
He slack'd his bow and swam;
And when he came to grass growing,
Set down his feet and ran.

Gil Morrice.

We return to Halbert Glendinning, who, as our readers may remember, took the high-road to Edinburgh. His intercourse with the preacher Henry Warden, from whom he received a letter at the moment of his deliverance, had been so brief, that he had not even learned the name of the nobleman to whose care he was recommended. Something like a name had been spoken indeed, but he had only comprehended that he was to meet the chief advancing towards the south, at the head of a party of horse. When day dawned on his journey, he was in the same uncertainty. A better scholar would have been informed by the address of the letter, but Halbert had not so far profited by Father Eustace's lessons as to be able to decipher it. His mother-wit taught him that he must not, in such uncertain times, be too hasty in asking information of any one; and when, after a long day's journey, night surprised him near a little village, he began to be dubious and anxious concerning the issue of his journey.

In a poor country, hospitality is generally exercised freely, and Halbert, when he requested a night's quarters, did nothing either degrading or extraordinary. The old woman, to whom he made this request, granted it the more readily, that she thought she saw some resemblance between Halbert and her son Saunders, who had been killed in one of the frays so common in the time. It is true, Saunders was a short square-made fellow, with red hair and a freckled face, and somewhat bandy-legged, whereas the stranger was of a brown complexion, tall, and remarkably well-made. Nevertheless, the widow was clear that there existed a general resemblance betwixt her guest and Saunders, and kindly pressed him to share of her evening cheer. A pedlar, a man of about forty years old, was also her guest, who talked with great feeling of the misery of pursuing such a profession as his in the time of war and tumult.

"We think much of knights and soldiers," said he; "but the pedder-coffe who travels the land has need of more courage than them all. I am sure he maun face mair risk, God help him. Here have I come this length, trusting the godly Earl of Murray would be on his march to the Borders, for he was to have guestened with the Baron of Avenel; and instead of that comes news that he has gone westlandways about some tuilzie in Ayrshire. And what to do I wot not; for if I go to the south without a safeguard, the next bonny rider I meet might ease me of sack and pack, and maybe of my life to boot; and then, if I try to strike across the moors, I may be as ill off before I can join myself to that good Lord's company."

No one was quicker at catching a hint than Halbert Glendinning. He said he himself had a desire to go westward. The pedlar looked at him with a very doubtful air, when the old dame, who perhaps thought her young guest resembled the umquhile Saunders, not only in his looks, but in a certain pretty turn to slight-of-hand, which the defunct was supposed to have possessed, tipped him the wink, and assured the pedlar he need have no doubt that her young cousin was a true man.

"Cousin!" said the pedlar, "I thought you said this youth had been a stranger."

"Ill hearing makes ill rehearsing," said the landlady; "he is a stranger to me by eye-sight, but that does not make him a stranger to me by blood, more especially seeing his likeness to my son Saunders, poor bairn."

The pedlar's scruples and jealousies being thus removed, or at least silenced, the travellers agreed that they would proceed in company together the next morning by daybreak, the pedlar acting as a guide to Glendinning, and the youth as a guard to the pedlar, until they should fall in with Murray's detachment of horse. It would appear that the landlady never doubted what was to be the event of this compact, for, taking Glendinning aside, she charged him, "to be moderate with the puir body, but at all events, not to forget to take a piece of black say, to make the auld wife a new rokelay." Halbert laughed and took his leave.

It did not a little appal the pedlar, when, in the midst of a black heath, the young man told him the nature of the commission with which their hostess had charged him. He took heart, however, upon seeing the open, frank, and friendly demeanour of the youth, and vented his exclamations on the ungrateful old traitress. "I gave her," he said, "yester-e'en nae farther gane, a yard of that very black say, to make her a couvre-chef; but I see it is ill done to teach the cat the way to the kirn."

Thus set at ease on the intentions of his companion (for in those happy days the worst was always to be expected from a stranger,) the pedlar acted as Halbert's guide over moss and moor, over hill and many a dale, in such a direction as might best lead them towards the route of Murray's party. At length they arrived upon the side of an eminence, which commanded a distant prospect over a tract of savage and desolate moorland, marshy and waste—an alternate change of shingly hill and level morass, only varied by blue stagnant pools of water. A road scarcely marked winded like a serpent through the wilderness, and the pedlar, pointing to it, said—"The road from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Here we must wait, and if Murray and his train be not already passed by, we shall soon see trace of them, unless some new purpose shall have altered their resolution; for in these blessed days no man, were he the nearest the throne, as the Earl of Murray may be, knows when he lays his head on his pillow at night where it is to lie upon the following even."

They paused accordingly, and sat down, the pedlar cautiously using for a seat the box which contained his treasures, and not concealing from his companion that he wore under his cloak a pistolet hanging at his belt in case of need. He was courteous, however, and offered Halbert a share of the provisions which he carried about him for refreshment. They were of the coarsest kind—oat-bread baked into cakes, oatmeal slaked with cold water, an onion or two, and a morsel of smoked ham completed the feast. But such as it was, no Scotsman of the time, had his rank been much higher than that of Glendinning, would have refused to share in it, especially as the pedlar produced, with a mysterious air, a tup's horn, which he carried slung from his shoulders, and which, when

its contents were examined, produced to each party a clam-shell-full of excellent usquebagh — a liquor strange to Halbert, for the strong waters known in the south of Scotland came from France, and in fact such were but rarely used. The pedlar recommended it as excellent, said he had procured it in his last visit to the braes of Doune, where he had securely traded under the safe-conduct of the Laird of Buchanan. He also set an example to Halbert, by devoutly emptying the cup "to the speedy downfall of Anti-Christ."

Their conviviality was scarce ended, ere a rising dust was seen on the road of which they commanded the prospect, and half a score of horsemen were dimly descried advancing at considerble speed, their casques glancing, and the points of their spears twinkling as they caught a glimpse of the sun.

"These," said the pedlar, "must be the out-scourers of Murray's party; let us lie down in the peat-hag, and keep ourselves out of sight."

"And why so?" said Halbert; "let us rather go down and make a signal to them."

"God forbid!" replied the pedlar; "do you ken so ill the customs of our Scottish nation? That plump of spears that are spurring on so fast are doubtless commanded by some wild kinsman of Morton, or some such daring fear-nothing as neither regards God nor man. It is their business, if they meet with any enemies, to pick quarrels and clear the way of them; and the chief knows nothing of what happens, coming up with his more discreet and moderate friends, it may be a full mile in the rear. Were we to go near these lads of the laird's belt, your letter would do you little good, and my pack would do me muckle black ill; they would tirl every steek of claithes from our back, fling us into a moss-hag with a stone at our heels, naked as the hour that brought us into this cumbered and sinful world, and neither Murray nor any other man ever the wiser. But if he did come to ken of it, what might he help it? — it would be accounted a mere mistake, and there were all the moan made. O credit me, youth, that when men draw cold steel on each other in their native country, they neither can nor may dwell deeply on the offences of those whose swords are useful to them."

They suffered, therefore, the vanguard, as it might be termed, of the Earl of Murray's host to pass forward; and it was not long until a denser cloud of dust began to arise to the northward.

"Now," said the pedlar, "let us hurry down the hill; for to tell the truth," said he, dragging Halbert along earnestly, "a Scottish noble's march is like a serpent — the head is furnished with fangs, and the tail hath its sting; the only harmless point of access is the main body."

"I will hasten as fast as you," said the youth; "but tell me why the rearward of such an army should be as dangerous as the van?"

"Because, as the vanguard consists of their picked wild desperates, resolute for mischief, such as neither fear God nor regard their fellow-creatures, but understand themselves bound to hurry from the road whatever is displeasing to themselves, so the rear-guard consists of misproud serving-men, who, being in charge of the baggage, take care to amend by their exactions upon travelling-merchants and others, their own thefts on their master's property. You will hear the advanced *enfans perdus*, as the French call them, and so they are indeed, namely, children of the fall, singing unclean and fulsome ballads of sin and harlotrie. And then will come on the middle-ward, when you will hear the canticles and psalms sung by the reforming nobles, and the gentry, and honest and pious clergy, by whom they are accompanied. And last of all, you will find in the rear a legend of godless lackeys, and palfreniers, and horse-boys, talking of nothing but dicing, drinking, and drabbing."

As the pedlar spoke, they had reached the side of the high-road, and Murray's main body was in sight, consisting of about three hundred horse, marching with great regularity, and in a closely compacted body. Some of the troopers wore the liveries of their masters, but this was not common. Most of them were dressed in such colours as chance dictated. But the majority, being clad in blue cloth, and the whole armed with cuirass and back-plate, with sleeves of mail, gauntlets and poldroons, and either mailed hose or strong jack-boots, they had something of a uniform appearance. Many of the leaders were clad in complete armour, and all in a certain half-military dress, which no man of quality in those disturbed times ever felt himself sufficiently safe to abandon.

The foremost of this party immediately rode up to the pedlar and to Halbert Glendinning, and demanded of them who they were. The pedlar told his story, the young Glendinning exhibited his letter, which a gentleman carried to Murray. In an instant after, the word "Halt!" was given through the squadron, and at once the onward heavy tramp, which seemed the most distinctive attribute of the body, ceased, and was heard no more. The command was announced that the troop should halt here for an hour to refresh themselves and their horses. The pedlar was assured of safe protection, and accommodated with the use of a baggage horse. But at the same time he was ordered into the rear; a command which he reluctantly obeyed, and not without wringing pathetically the hand of Halbert as he separated from him.

The young heir of Glendearg was in the meanwhile conducted to a plot of ground more raised, and therefore drier than the rest of the moor. Here a carpet was flung on the ground by way of table-cloth, and around it sat the leaders of the party, partaking of an entertainment as coarse, with relation to their rank, as that which Glendinning had so lately shared. Murray himself rose as he came forward, and advanced a step to meet him.

This celebrated person had in his appearance, as well as in his mind, much of the admirable qualities of James V., his father. Had not the stain of illegitimacy rested upon his birth, he would have filled the Scottish throne with as much honour as any of the Stewart race. But History, while she acknowledges his high talents, and much that was princely, nay, royal, in his conduct, cannot forget that ambition led him farther than honour or loyalty warranted. Brave amongst the bravest, fair in presence and in favour, skilful to manage the most intricate affairs, to attach to himself those who were doubtful, to stun and overwhelm, by the suddenness and intrepidity of his enterprises, those who were resolute in resistance, he attained, and as to personal merit certainly deserved, the highest place in

the kingdom. But he abused, under the influence of strong temptation, the opportunities which his sister Mary's misfortunes and imprudence threw in his way; he supplanted his sovereign and benefactress in her power, and his history affords us one of those mixed characters, in which principle was so often sacrificed to policy, that we must condemn the statesman while we pity and regret the individual. Many events in his life give likelihood to the charge that he himself aimed at the crown; and it is too true, that he countenanced the fatal expedient of establishing an English, that is a foreign and a hostile interest, in the councils of Scotland. But his death may be received as an atonement for his offences, and may serve to shew how much more safe is the person of a real patriot, than that of the mere head of a faction, who is accounted answerable for the offences of his meanest attendants.

When Murray approached, the young rustic was naturally abashed at the dignity of his presence. The commanding form and the countenance to which high and important thoughts were familiar, the features which bore the resemblance of Scotland's long line of kings, were well calculated to impress awe and reverence. His dress had little to distinguish him from the high-born nobles and barons by whom he was attended. A buff-coat, richly embroidered with silken lace, supplied the place of armour; and a massive gold chain, with its medal, hung round his neck. His black velvet bonnet was decorated with a string of large and fair pearls, and with a small tufted feather; a long heavy sword was girt to his side, as the familiar companion of his hand. He wore gilded spurs on his boots, and these completed his equipment.

"This letter," he said, "is from the godly preacher of the word, Henry Warden, young man? is it not so?" Halbert answered in the affirmative. "And he writes to us, it would seem, in some strait, and refers us to you for the circumstances. Let us know, I pray you, how things stand with him."

In some perturbation Halbert Glendinning gave an account of the circumstances which had accompanied the preacher's imprisonment. When he came to the discussion of the *handfasting* engagement, he was struck with the ominous and displeased expression of Murray's brows, and, contrary to all prudential and politic rule, seeing something was wrong, yet not well aware what that something was, had almost stopped short in his narrative.

"What ails the fool?" said the Earl, drawing his dark-red eyebrows together, while the same dusky glow kindled on his brow — "Hast thou not learned to tell a true tale without stammering?"

"So please you," answered Halbert, with considerable address, "I have never before spoken in such a presence."

"He seems a modest youth," said Murray, turning to his next attendant, "and yet one who in a good cause will neither fear friend nor foe. — Speak on, friend, and speak freely."

Halbert then gave an account of the quarrel betwixt Julian Avenel and the preacher, which the Earl, biting his lip the while, compelled himself to listen to as a thing of indifference. At first he appeared even to take the part of the Baron.

"Henry Warden," he said, "is too hot in his zeal. The law both of God and man maketh allowance for certain alliances, though not strictly formal, and the issue of such may succeed."

This general declaration, he expressed, accompanying it with a glance around upon the few followers who were present at this interview. The most of them answered—"There is no contravening that;" but one or two looked on the ground, and were silent. Murray then turned again to Glendinning, commanding him to say what next chanced, and not to omit any particular. When he mentioned the manner in which Julian had cast from him his concubine, Murray drew a deep breath, set his teeth hard, and laid his hand on the hilt of his dagger. Casting his eyes once more around the circle, which was now augmented by one or two of the reformed preachers, he seemed to devour his rage in silence, and again commanded Halbert to proceed. When he came to describe how Warden had been dragged to a dungeon, the Earl seemed to have found the point at which he might give vent to his own resentment, secure of the sympathy and approbation of all who were present. "Judge you," he said, looking to those around him, "judge you, my peers, and noble gentlemen of Scotland, betwixt me and this Julian Avenel—he hath broken his own word, and hath violated my safe-conduct—and judge you also, my reverend brethren, he hath put his hand forth upon a preacher of the gospel, and perchance may sell his blood to the worshippers of Anti-Christ!"

"Let him die the death of a traitor," said the secular chiefs, "and let his tongue be struck through with the hangman's fiery iron, to avenge his perjury!"

"Let him go down to his place with Baal's priests," said the preachers, "and be his ashes cast into Tophet!"

Murray heard them with the smile of expected revenge; yet it is probable that the brutal treatment of the female, whose circumstances somewhat resembled those of the Earl's own mother, had its share in the grim smile which curled his sun-burnt cheek and its haughty lip. To Halbert Glendinning, when his narrative was finished, he spoke with great kindness.

"He is a bold and gallant youth," said he to those around, "and formed of the stuff which becomes a bustling time. There are periods when men's spirits shine bravely through them. I will know something more of him."

He questioned him more particularly concerning the Baron of Avenel's probable forces — the strength of his castle — the dispositions of his next heir, and this brought necessarily forward the sad history of his brother's daughter, Mary Avenel, which was told with an embarrassment that did not escape Murray.

"Ha! Julian Avenel," he said, "and do you provoke my resentment, when you have so much more reason to deprecate my justice! I knew Walter Avenel, a true Scotsman and a good soldier. Our sister, the Queen, must right his daughter; and were her land restored, she would be a fitting bride to some brave man who may better merit our favour than the traitor Julian." — Then looking at Halbert, he said, "Art thou of gentle blood, young man?"

Halbert, with a faltering and uncertain voice, began to speak of his distant pretensions to claim a

descent from the ancient Glendonwynes of Galloway, when Murray interrupted him with a smile.

"Nay—nay—leave pedigrees to bards and heralds. In our days, each man is the son of his own deeds. The glorious light of reformation hath shone alike on prince and peasant; and peasant as well as prince may be illustrated by fighting in its defence. It is a stirring world, where all may advance themselves who have stout hearts and strong arms. Tell me frankly why thou hast left thy father's house."

Halbert Glendinning made a frank confession of his duel with Piercie Shafton, and mentioned his supposed death.

"By my hand," said Murray, "thou art a bold sparrow-hawk, to match thee so early with such a kite as Piercie Shafton. Queen Elizabeth would give her glove filled with gold crowns to know that meddling coxcomb to be under the sod.—Would she not, Morton?"

"Ay, by my word, and esteem her glove a better gift than the crowns," replied Morton, "which few Border lads like this fellow will esteem just valuation."

"But what shall we do with this young homicide?" said Murray; "what will our preachers say?"

"Tell them of Moses and of Benaiah," said Morton; "it is but the smiting of an Egyptian when all is said out."

"Let it be so," said Murray, laughing; "but we will bury the tale, as the prophet did the body, in the sand. I will take care of this swankie.—Be near to us, Glendinning, since that is thy name. We retain thee as a squire of our household. The master of our horse will see thee fully equipped and armed."

During the expedition which he was now engaged in, Murray found several opportunities of putting Glendinning's courage and presence of mind to the test, and he began to rise so rapidly in his esteem, that those who knew the Earl considered the youth's fortune as certain. One step only was wanting to raise him to a still higher degree of confidence and favour—it was the abjuration of the Popish religion. The ministers who attended upon Murray, and formed his chief support amongst the people, found an easy convert in Halbert Glendinning, who, from his earliest days, had never felt much devotion towards the Catholic faith, and who listened eagerly to more reasonable views of religion. By thus adopting the faith of his master, he rose higher in his favour, and was constantly about his person during his prolonged stay in the west of Scotland, which the intractability of those whom the Earl had to deal with, protracted from day to day, and week to week.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Faint the din of battle bray'd
Distant down the hollow wind;
War and terror fled before,
Wounds and death were left behind.
PENROSE.

THE autumn of the year was well advanced, when the Earl of Morton, one morning, rather unexpectedly, entered the antechamber of Murray, in which Halbert Glandinning was in waiting.

"Call your master, Halbert," said the Earl; "I have news for him from Teviotdale; and for you too, Glendinning.—News! news! my Lord of Murray!" he exclaimed at the door of the Earl's bedroom; "come forth instantly." The Earl appeared, and greeted his ally, demanding eagerly his tidings.

"I have had a sure friend with me from the south," said Morton; "he has been at Saint Mary's Monastery, and brings important tidings."

"Of what complexion?" said Murray, "and can you trust the bearer?"

"He is faithful, on my life," said Morton; "I wish all around your Lordship may prove equally so."

"At what, and whom, do you point?" demanded Murray.

"Here is the Egyptian of trusty Halbert Glendinning, our Southland Moses, come alive again, and flourishing, gay and bright as ever, in that Teviotdale Goshen, the Halidome of Kennaquhair."

"What mean you, my lord?" said Murray.

"Only that your new henchman has put a false tale upon you. Piercie Shafton is alive and well; by the same token that the gull is thought to be detained there by love to a miller's daughter, who roamed the country with him in disguise."

"Glendinning," said Murray, bending his brow into his darkest frown, "thou hast not, I trust dared to bring me a lie in thy mouth, in order to win my confidence?"

"My lord," said Halbert, "I am incapable of a lie. I should choke on one were my life to require that I pronounced it. I say, that this sword of my father was through the body—the point came out behind his back—the hilt pressed upon his breast-bone. And I will plunge it as deep in the body of any one who shall dare to charge me with falsehood."

"How, fellow!" said Morton, "wouldst thou beard a nobleman?"

"Be silent, Halbert," said Murray, "and you, my Lord of Morton, forbear him. I see truth written on his brow."

"I wish the inside of the manuscript may correspond with the superscription," replied his more suspicious ally. "Look to it, my lord, you will one day lose your life by too much confidence."

"And you will lose your friends by being too readily suspicious," answered Murray. "Enough of this—let me hear thy tidings."

"Sir John Foster," said Morton, "is about to send a party into Scotland to waste the Halidome."

"How! without waiting my presence and permission?" said Murray—"he is mad—will he come as an enemy into the Queen's country?"

"He has Elizabeth's express orders," answered Morton, "and they are not to be trifled with. Indeed, his march has been more than once projected and laid aside during the time we have been here, and has caused much alarm at Kennaquhair. Boniface, the old Abbot, has resigned, and whom think you they have chosen in his place?"

"No one surely," said Murray; "they would presume to hold no election until the Queen's pleasure and mine were known?"

Morton shrugged his shoulders—"They have chosen the pupil of old Cardinal Beatoun, that wily determined champion of Rome, the bosom-friend of our busy Primate of Saint Andrews. Eustace, late the Sub-Prior of Kennaquhair, is now its Abbot,

and, like a second Pope Julius, is levying men and making musters to fight with Foster if he comes forward."

"We must prevent that meeting," said Murray, hastily; "whichever party wins the day, it were a fatal encounter for us — Who commands the troop of the Abbot?"

"Our faithful old friend, Julian Avenel, nothing less," answered Morton.

"Glendinning," said Murray, "sound trumpets to horse directly, and let all who love us get on horseback without delay — Yes, my lord, this were indeed a fatal dilemma. If we take part with our English friends, the country will cry shame on us — the very old wives will attack us with their rocks and spindles — the very stones of the street will rise up against us — we cannot set our face to such a deed of infamy. And my sister, whose confidence I already have such difficulty in preserving, will altogether withdraw it from me. Then, were we to oppose the English Warden, Elizabeth would call it a protecting of her enemies and what not, and we should lose her."

"The she-dragon," said Morton, "is the best card in our pack; and yet I would not willingly stand still and see English blades carve Scots flesh — What say you to loitering by the way, marching far and easy for fear of spoiling our horses? They might then fight dog fight bull, fight Abbot fight archer, and no one could blame us for what chanced when we were not present."

"All would blame us, James Douglas," replied Murray; "we should lose both sides — we had better advance with the utmost celerity, and do what we can to keep the peace betwixt them. — I would the nag that brought Piercie Shafton hither had broken his neck over the highest heuch in Northumberland! — He is a proper coxcomb to make all this bustle about, and to occasion perhaps a national war!"

"Had we known in time," said Douglas, "we might have had him privily waited upon as he entered the Borders; there are strapping lads enough would have rid us of him for the lucre of his spur-whang.[1] But to the saddle, James Stewart, since so the phrase goes. I hear your trumpets sound to horse and away — we shall soon see which nag is best breathed."

Followed by a train of about three hundred well-mounted men-at-arms, these two powerful barons directed their course to Dumfries, and from thence eastward to Teviotdale, marching at a rate which, as Morton had foretold, soon disabled a good many of their horses, so that when they approached the scene of expected action, there were not above two hundred of their train remaining in a body, and of these most were mounted on steeds which had been sorely jaded.

They had hitherto been amused and agitated by various reports concerning the advance of the English soldiers, and the degree of resistance which the Abbot was able to oppose to them. But when they were six or seven miles from Saint Mary's of Kennaquhair, a gentleman of the country, whom Murray had summoned to attend him, and on whose intelligence he knew he could rely, arrived at the head of two or three servants, "bloody with spurring, fiery red with haste." According to his report, Sir John Foster, after several times announcing, and as often delaying, his intended incursion, had at last been so stung with the news that Piercie Shafton was openly residing within the Halidome, that he determined to execute the commands of his mistress, which directed him, at every risk, to make himself master of the Euphuist's person. The Abbot's unceasing exertions had collected a body of men almost equal in number to those of the English Warden, but less practised in arms. They were united under the command of Julian Avenel, and it was apprehended they would join battle upon the banks of a small stream which forms the verge of the Halidome.

"Who knows the place?" said Murray.

"I do, my lord," answered Glendinning.

"'Tis well," said the Earl; "take a score of the best-mounted horse — make what haste thou canst, and announce to them that I am coming up instantly with a strong power, and will cut to pieces, without mercy, whichever party strikes the first blow. — Davidson," said he to the gentleman who brought the intelligence, "thou shalt be my guide. — Hie thee on, Glendinning — Say to Foster, I conjure him, as he respects his mistress's service, that he will leave the matter in my hands. Say to the Abbot, I will burn the Monastery over his head, if he strikes a stroke till I come — Tell the dog, Julian Avenel, that he hath already one deep score to settle with me — I will set his head on the top of the highest pinnacle of Saint Mary's, if he presume to open another. Make haste, and spare not the spur for fear of spoiling horse-flesh."

"Your bidding shall be obeyed, my lord," said Glendinning; and choosing those whose horses were in best plight to be his attendants, he went off as fast as the jaded state of their cavalry permitted. Hill and hollow vanished from under the feet of the chargers.

They had not ridden half the way, when they met stragglers coming off from the field, whose appearance announced that the conflict was begun. Two supported in their arms a third, their elder brother, who was pierced with an arrow through the body. Halbert, who knew them to belong to the Halidome, called them by their names, and questioned them of the state of the affray; but just then, in spite of their efforts to retain him in the saddle, their brother dropped from the horse, and they dismounted in haste to receive his last breath. From men thus engaged, no information was to be obtained. Glendinning, therefore, pushed on with his little troop, the more anxiously as he perceived other stragglers, bearing Saint Andrew's cross upon their caps and corslets, flying apparently from the field of battle. Most of these, when they were aware of a body of horsemen approaching on the road, held to the one hand or the other, at such a distance as precluded coming to speech of them. Others, whose fear was more intense, kept the onward road, galloping wildly as fast as their horses could carry them, and when questioned, only glared without reply on those who spoke to them, and rode on without drawing bridle. Several of these were also known to Halbert, who had therefore no doubt, from the circumstances in which he met them, that the men of the Halidome were defeated. He became now unspeakably anxious concerning the fate of his brother, who, he could not doubt, must have been engaged in the affray. He therefore increased the

[1] *Spur-whang* — Spur-leather.

speed of his horse, so that not above five or six of his followers could keep up with him. At length he reached a little hill, at the descent of which, surrounded by a semicircular sweep of a small stream, lay the plain which had been the scene of the skirmish.

It was a melancholy spectacle. War and terror, to use the expression of the poet, had rushed on to the field, and left only wounds and death behind them. The battle had been stoutly contested, as was almost always the case with these Border skirmishes, where ancient hatred, and mutual injuries, made men stubborn in maintaining the cause of their conflict. Towards the middle of the plain, there lay the bodies of several men who had fallen in the very act of grappling with the enemy; and there were seen countenances which still bore the stern expression of unextinguishable hate and defiance, hands which clasped the hilt of the broken falchion, or strove in vain to pluck the deadly arrow from the wound. Some were wounded, and, cowed of the courage they had lately shewn, were begging aid, and craving water, in a tone of melancholy depression, while others tried to teach the faltering tongue to pronounce some half forgotten prayer, which, even when first learned, they had but half-understood. Halbert, uncertain what course he was next to pursue, rode through the plain to see if, among the dead or wounded, he could discover any traces of his brother Edward. He experienced no interruption from the English. A distant cloud of dust announced that they were still pursuing the scattered fugitives, and he guessed, that to approach them with his followers, until they were again under some command, would be to throw away his own life, and that of his men, whom the victors would instantly confound with the Scots, against whom they had been successful. He resolved, therefore, to pause until Murray came up with his forces, to which he was the more readily moved, as he heard the trumpets of the English Warden sounding the retreat, and recalling from the pursuit. He drew his men together, and made a stand in an advantageous spot of ground, which had been occupied by the Scots in the beginning of the action, and most fiercely disputed while the skirmish lasted.

While he stood here, Halbert's ear was assailed by the feeble moan of a woman, which he had not expected to hear amid that scene, until the retreat of the foes had permitted the relations of the slain to approach, for the purpose of paying them the last duties. He looked with anxiety, and at length observed, that by the body of a knight in bright armour, whose crest, though soiled and broken, still shewed the marks of rank and birth, there sat a female, wrapt in a horseman's cloak, and holding something pressed against her bosom, which he soon discovered to be a child. He glanced towards the English. They advanced not, and the continued and prolonged sound of their trumpets, with the shouts of the leaders, announced that their powers would not be instantly re-assembled. He had, therefore, a moment to look after this unfortunate woman. He gave his horse to a spearman as he dismounted, and approaching the unhappy female, asked her, in the most soothing tone he could assume, whether he could assist her in her distress. The mourner made him no direct answer; but endeavouring, with a trembling and unskilful hand, to undo the springs of the visor and gorget, said in a tone of impatient grief, "Oh, he would recover instantly could I but give him air — land and living, life and honour, would I give for the power of undoing these cruel iron platings that suffocate him!" He that would soothe sorrow must not argue on the vanity of the most deceitful hopes. The body lay as that of one whose last draught of vital air had been drawn, and who must never more have concern with the nether sky. But Halbert Glendinning failed not to raise the visor and cast loose the gorget, when, to his great surprise, he recognized the pale face of Julian Avenel. His last fight was over, the fierce and turbid spirit had departed in the strife in which it had so long delighted.

"Alas! he is gone," said Halbert, speaking to the young woman, in whom he had now no difficulty of knowing the unhappy Catherine.

"Oh, no, no, no!" she reiterated, "do not say so — he is not dead — he is but in a swoon. I have lain as long in one myself — and then his voice would rouse me, when he spoke kindly, and said, Catherine, look up for my sake — And look up, Julian, for mine!" she said, addressing the senseless corpse; "I know you do but counterfeit to frighten me, but I am not frightened," she added, with an hysterical attempt to laugh; and then instantly changing her tone, entreated him to "speak, were it but to curse my folly. Oh, the rudest word you ever said to me would now sound like the dearest you wasted on me before I gave you all. Lift him up," she said, "lift him up, for God's sake! — have you no compassion? He promised to wed me if I bore him a boy, and this child is so like to its father! — How shall he keep his word, if you do not help me to awaken him? — Christie of the Clinthill, Rowley, Hutcheon! ye were constant at his feast, but ye fled from him at the fray, false villains as ye are!"

"Not I, by Heaven!" said a dying man, who made some shift to raise himself on his elbow, and discovered to Halbert the well known features of Christie; "I fled not a foot, and a man can but fight while his breath lasts — mine is going fast. — So, youngster," said he, looking at Glendinning, and seeing his military dress, "thou hast ta'en the basnet at last? it is a better cap to live in than die in. I would chance had sent thy brother here instead — there was good in him — but thou art as wild, and wilt soon be as wicked as myself."

"God forbid!" said Halbert, hastily.

"Marry, and amen, with all my heart," said the wounded man, "there will be company enow without thee where I am going. But God be praised I had no hand in that wickedness," said he, looking to poor Catherine; and with some exclamation in his mouth, that sounded betwixt a prayer and a curse, the soul of Christie of the Clinthill took wing to the last account.

Deeply wrapt in the painful interest which these shocking events had excited, Glendinning forgot for a moment his own situation and duties, and was first recalled to them by a trampling of horse, and the cry of Saint George for England, which the English soldiers still continued to use. His handful of men, for most of the stragglers had waited for Murray's coming up, remained on horseback, holding their lances upright, having no command either to submit or resist.

"There stands our Captain," said one of them,

as a strong party of English came up, the vanguard of Foster's troop.

"Your Captain! with his sword sheathed, and on foot in the presence of his enemy? a raw soldier, I warrant him," said the English leader. "So! ho! young man, is your dream out, and will you now answer me if you will fight or fly?"

"Neither," answered Halbert Glendinning, with great tranquillity.

"Then throw down thy sword and yield thee," answered the Englishman.

"Not till I can help myself no otherwise," said Halbert, with the same moderation of tone and manner.

"Art thou for thine own hand, friend, or to whom dost thou owe service?" demanded the English Captain.

"To the noble Earl of Murray."

"Then thou servest," said the Southron, "the most disloyal nobleman who breathes — false both to England and Scotland."

"Thou liest!" said Glendinning, regardless of all consequences.

"Ha! art thou so hot now, and wert so cold but a minute since? I lie, do I? Wilt thou do battle with me on that quarrel?"

"With one to one — one to two — or two to five, as you list," said Halbert Glendinning; "grant me but a fair field."

"That thou shalt have. — Stand back, my mates," said the brave Englishman. "If I fall, give him fair play, and let him go off free with his people."

"Long life to the noble Captain!" cried the soldiers, as impatient to see the duel as if it had been a bull-baiting.

"He will have a short life of it, though," said the sergeant, "if he, an old man of sixty, is to fight for any reason, or for no reason, with every man he meets, and especially the young fellows he might be father to.—And here comes the Warden besides, to see the sword-play."

In fact, Sir John Foster came up with a considerable body of his horsemen, just as his Captain, whose age rendered him unequal to the combat with so strong and active a youth as Glendinning, was deprived of his sword.

"Take it up for shame, old Stawarth Bolton," said the English Warden; "and thou, young man, tell me who and what thou art?"

"A follower of the Earl of Murray, who bore his will to your honour," answered Glendinning,— "but here he comes to say it himself, I see the van of his horsemen come over the hills.

"Get into order, my masters," said Sir John Foster to his followers; "you that have broken your spears, draw your swords. We are something unprovided for a second field, but if yonder dark cloud on the hill edge bring us foul weather, we must bear as bravely as our broken cloaks will bide it. Meanwhile, Stawarth, we have got the deer we have hunted for — here is Piercie Shafton hard and fast betwixt two troopers."

"Who, that lad?" said Bolton; "he is no more Piercie Shafton than I am. He hath his gay cloak indeed — but Piercie Shafton is a round dozen of years older than that slip of roguery. I have known him since he was thus high. Did you never see him in the tilt-yard or in the presence?"

"To the devil with such vanities!" said Sir John Foster; "when had I leisure for them or any thing else? During my whole life has she kept me to this hangman's office, chasing thieves one day and traitors another, in daily fear of my life; the lance never hung up in the hall, the foot never out of the stirrup, the saddles never off my nags' backs; and now, because I have been mistaken in the person of a man I never saw, I warrant me, the next letters from the Privy Council will rate me as I were a dog — a man were better dead than thus slaved and harassed."

A trumpet interrupted Foster's complaints, and a Scottish pursuivant who attended, declared "that the noble Earl of Murray desired, in all honour and safety, a personal conference with Sir John Foster, midway between their parties, with six of company in each, and ten free minutes to come and go."

"And now," said the Englishman, "comes another plague. I must go speak with yonder false Scot, and he knows how to frame his devices, to cast dust in the eyes of a plain man, as well as ever a knave in the north. I am no match for him in words, and for hard blows we are but too ill provided. — Pursuivant, we grant the conference — and you, Sir Swordsman," (speaking to young Glendinning,) "draw off with your troopers to your own party — march — attend your Earl's trumpet. — Stawarth Bolton, put our troop in order, and be ready to move forward at the wagging of a finger. — Get you gone to your own friends, I tell you, Sir Squire, and loiter not here."

Notwithstanding this peremptory order, Halbert Glendinning could not help stopping to cast a look upon the unfortunate Catherine, who lay insensible of the danger and of the trampling of so many horses around her, insensible, as the second glance assured him, of all and for ever. Glendinning almost rejoiced when he saw that the last misery of life was over, and that the hoofs of the war-horses, amongst which he was compelled to leave her, could only injure and deface a senseless corpse. He caught the infant from her arms, half ashamed of the shout of laughter which rose on all sides, at seeing an armed man in such a situation assume such an unwonted and inconvenient burden.

"Shoulder your infant!" cried a harquebusier.

"Port your infant!" said a pikeman.

"Peace, ye brutes," said Stawarth Bolton, "and respect humanity in others, if you have none yourselves. I pardon the lad having done some discredit to my gray hairs, when I see him take care of that helpless creature, which ye would have trampled upon as if ye had been littered of bitch-wolves, not born of women."

While this passed, the leaders on either side met in the neutral space betwixt the forces of either, and the Earl accosted the English Warden: "Is this fair or honest usage, Sir John, or for whom do you hold the Earl of Morton and myself, that you ride in Scotland with arrayed banner, fight, slay, and make prisoners at your own pleasure? Is it well done, think you, to spoil our land and shed our blood, after the many proofs we have given to your mistress of our devotion due to her will, saving always the allegiance due to our own sovereign?"

"My Lord of Murray," answered Foster, "all the world knows you to be a man of quick ingine and deep wisdom, and these several weeks have you held me in hand with promising to arrest my sovereign mistress's rebel, this Piercie Shafton of Wil-

verton, and you have never kept your word, alleging turmoils in the west, and I wot not what other causes of hinderance. Now, since he has had the insolence to return hither, and live openly within ten miles of England, I could no longer, in plain duty to my mistress and queen, tarry upon your successive delays, and therefore I have used her force to take her rebel, by the strong hand, wherever I can find him."

"And is Piercie Shafton in your hands, then?" said the Earl of Murray. "Be aware that I may not, without my own great shame, suffer you to remove him hence without doing battle."

"Will you, Lord Earl, after all the advantages you have received at the hands of the Queen of England, do battle in the cause of her rebel?" said Sir John Foster.

"Not so, Sir John," answered the Earl, "but I will fight to the death in defence of the liberties of our free kingdom of Scotland."

"By my faith," said Sir John Foster, "I am well content—my sword is not blunted with all it has done yet this day."

"By my honour, Sir John," said Sir George Heron of Chipchase, "there is but little reason we should fight these Scottish Lords e'en now, for I hold opinion with old Stawarth Bolton, and believe yonder prisoner to be no more Piercie Shafton than he is the Earl of Northumberland; and you were but ill advised to break the peace betwixt the countries for a prisoner of less consequence than that gay mischief-maker."

"Sir George," replied Foster, "I have often heard you herons are afraid of hawks—Nay, lay not hand on sword, man—I did but jest; and for this prisoner, let him be brought up hither, that we may see who or what he is—always under assurance, my Lords," he continued, addressing the Scots.

"Upon our word and honour," said Morton, "we will offer no violence."

The laugh turned against Sir John Foster considerably, when the prisoner, being brought up, proved not only a different person from Sir Piercie Shafton, but a female in man's attire.

"Pluck the mantle from the quean's face, and cast her to the horse-boys," said Foster; "she has kept such company ere now, I warrant."

Even Murray was moved to laughter, no common thing with him, at the disappointment of the English Warden; but he would not permit any violence to be offered to the fair Molinara, who had thus a second time rescued Sir Piercie Shafton at her own personal risk.

"You have already done more mischief than you can well answer," said the Earl to the English Warden, "and it were dishonour to me should I permit you to harm a hair of this young woman's head."

"My lord," said Morton, "if Sir John will ride apart with me but for one moment, I will shew him such reasons as shall make him content to depart, and to refer this unhappy day's work to the judgment of the Commissoners nominated to try offences on the Border."

He then led Sir John Foster aside, and spoke to him in this manner:—"Sir John Foster, I much marvel that a man who knows your Queen Elizabeth as you do, should not know that, if you hope any thing from her, it must be for doing her useful service, not for involving her in quarrels with her neighbours without any advantage. Sir Knight, I will speak frankly what I know to be true. Had you seized the true Piercie Shafton by this ill-advised inroad; and had your deed threatened, as most likely it might, a breach betwixt the countries, your politic princess and her politic council would rather have disgraced Sir John Foster than entered into war in his behalf. But now that you have stricken short of your aim, you may rely on it you will have little thanks for carrying the matter farther. I will work thus far on the Earl of Murray, that he will undertake to dismiss Sir Piercie Shafton from the realm of Scotland.—Be well advised, and let the matter now pass off—you will gain nothing by farther violence, for if we fight, you as the fewer and the weaker through your former action, will needs have the worse."

Sir John Foster listened with his head declining on his breast-plate.

"It is a cursed chance," he said, "and I shall have little thanks for my day's work."

He then rode up to Murray, and said, that, in deference to his Lordship's presence and that of my Lord of Morton, he had come to the resolution of withdrawing himself, with his power, without farther proceedings.

"Stop there, Sir John Foster," said Murray, "I cannot permit you to retire in safety, unless you leave some one who may be surety to Scotland, that the injuries you have at present done us may be fully accounted for—you will reflect, that by permitting your retreat, I become accountable to my Sovereign, who will demand a reckoning of me for the blood of her subjects, if I suffer those who shed it to depart so easily."

"It shall never be told in England," said the Warden, "that John Foster gave pledges like a subdued man, and that on the very field on which he stands victorious.—But," he added, after a moment's pause, "if Stawarth Bolton wills to abide with you on his own free choice, I will say nothing against it; and, as I bethink me, it were better he should stay to see the dismissal of this same Piercie Shafton."

"I receive him as your hostage, nevertheless, and shall treat him as such," said the Earl of Murray. But Foster, turning away as if to give directions to Bolton and his men, affected not to hear this observation.

"There rides a faithful servant of his most beautiful and Sovereign Lady," said Murray aside to Morton. "Happy man! he knows not whether the execution of her commands may not cost him his head; and yet he is most certain that to leave them unexecuted will bring disgrace and death without reprieve. Happy are they who are not only subjected to the caprices of Dame Fortune, but held bound to account and be responsible for them, and that to a sovereign as moody and fickle as her humorous ladyship herself!"

"We also have a female Sovereign, my lord," said Morton.

"We have so, Douglas," said the Earl, with a suppressed sigh; "but it remains to be seen how long a female hand can hold the reins of power in a realm so wild as ours. We will now go on to Saint Mary's, and see ourselves after the state of that House.—Glendinning, look to that woman, and protect her.—What the fiend, man, hast thou

got in thine arms?—an infant as I live!—where couldst thou find such a charge, at such a place and moment?"

Halbert Glendinning briefly told the story. The Earl rode forward to the place where the body of Julian Avenel lay, with his unhappy companion's arms wrapt around him, like the trunk of an uprooted oak borne down by the tempest with all its ivy garlands. Both were cold dead. Murray was touched in an unwonted degree, remembering, perhaps, his own birth. "What have they to answer for, Douglas," he said, "who thus abuse the sweetest gifts of affection?"

The Earl of Morton, unhappy in his marriage, was a libertine in his amours.

"You must ask that question of Henry Warden, my lord, or of John Knox — I am but a wild counsellor in women's matters."

"Forward to Saint Mary's," said the Earl; "pass the word on — Glendinning, give the infant to this same female cavalier, and let it be taken charge of. Let no dishonour be done to the dead bodies, and call on the country to bury or remove them. — Forward, I say, my masters!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Gone to be married? — Gone to swear a peace!
King John.

The news of the lost battle, so quickly carried by the fugitives to the village and convent, had spread the greatest alarm among the inhabitants. The Sacristan and other monks counselled flight; the Treasurer recommended that the church plate should be offered as a tribute to bribe the English officer; the Abbot alone was unmoved and undaunted.

"My brethren," he said, "since God has not given our people victory in the combat, it must be because he requires of us, his spiritual soldiers, to fight the good fight of martyrdom, a conflict in which nothing but our own faint-hearted cowardice can make us fail of victory. Let us assume, then, the armour of faith, and prepare, if it be necessary, to die under the ruin of these shrines, to the service of which we have devoted ourselves. Highly honoured are we all in this distinguished summons, from our dear brother Nicholas, whose gray hairs have been preserved until they should be surrounded by the crown of martyrdom, down to my beloved son Edward, who, arriving at the vineyard at the latest hour of the day, is yet permitted to share its toils with those who have laboured from the morning. Be of good courage, my children. I dare not, like my sainted predecessors, promise to you that you shall be preserved by miracle — I and you are alike unworthy of that especial interposition, which in earlier times, turned the sword of sacrilege against the bosom of tyrants by whom it was wielded, daunted the hardened hearts of heretics with prodigies, and called down hosts of angels to defend the shrine of God and of the Virgin. Yet, by heavenly aid, you shall this day see that your Father and Abbot will not disgrace the mitre which sits upon his brow. Go to your cells, my children, and exercise your private devotions. Array yourselves also in alb and cope, as for our most solemn festivals, and be ready, when the tolling of the largest bell announces the approach of the enemy, to march forth to meet them in solemn procession. Let the church be opened to afford such refuge as may be to those of our vassals, who, from their exertion in this day's unhappy battle, or other cause, are particularly apprehensive of the rage of the enemy. Tell Sir Piercie Shafton, if he has escaped the fight ——"

"I am here, most venerable Abbot," replied Sir Piercie; "and if it so seemeth meet to you, I will presently assemble such of the men as have escaped this escaramouche, and will renew the resistance, even unto the death. Certes, you will learn from all, that I did my part in this unhappy matter. Had it pleased Julian Avenel to have attended to my counsel, specially in somewhat withdrawing of his main battle, even as you may have marked the heron eschew the stoop of the falcon, receiving him rather upon his beak than upon his wing, affairs, as I do conceive, might have had a different face, and we might then, in a more bellicose manner, have maintained that affray. Nevertheless, I would not be understood to speak any thing in disregard of Julian Avenel, whom I saw fall fighting manfully with his face to his enemy, which hath banished from my memory the unseemly term of 'meddling coxcomb,' with which it pleased him something rashly to qualify my advice, and for which, had it pleased Heaven and the saints to have prolonged the life of that excellent person, I had it bound upon my soul to have put him to death with my own hand."

"Sir Piercie," said the Abbot, at length interrupting him, "our time allows brief leisure to speak what might have been."

"You are right, most venerable Lord and Father," replied the incorrigible Euphuist; "the preterite, as grammarians have it, concerns frail mortality less than the future mood, and indeed our cogitations respect chiefly the present. In a word, I am willing to head all who will follow me, and offer such opposition as manhood and mortality may permit, to the advance of the English, though they be my own countrymen; and be assured, Piercie Shafton will measure his length, being five feet ten inches, on the ground as he stands, rather than give two yards in retreat, according to the usual motion in which we retrograde."

"I thank you, Sir Knight," said the Abbot, "and I doubt not that you would make your words good; but it is not the will of Heaven that carnal weapons should rescue us. We are called to endure, not to resist, and may not waste the blood of our inno cent commons in vain — Fruitless opposition becomes not men of our profession; they have my commands to resign the sword and the spear, — God and Our Lady have not blessed our banner."

"Bethink you, reverend lord," said Piercie Shafton, very eagerly, "ere you resign the defence that is in your power — there are many posts near the entry of this village, where brave men might live or die to the advantage; and I have this additional motive to make defence, — the safety, namely, of a fair friend, who, I hope, hath escaped the hands of the heretics."

"I understand you, Sir Piercie," said the Abbot —"you mean the daughter of our Convent's miller?"

"Reverend my lord," said Sir Piercie, not with-

out hesitation, "the fair Mysinda is, as may be in some sort alleged, the daughter of one who mechanically prepareth corn to be manipulated into bread, without which we could not exist, and which is therefore an employment in itself honourable, nay, necessary. Nevertheless, if the purest sentiments of a generous mind, streaming forth like the rays of the sun reflected by a diamond, may ennoble one, who is in some sort the daughter of a molendinary mechanic——"

"I have no time for all this, Sir Knight," said the Abbot; "be it enough to answer, that with our will we war no longer with carnal weapons. We of the spirituality will teach you of the temporality how to die in cold blood, our hands not clenched for resistance, but folded for prayer — our minds not filled with jealous hatred, but with Christian meekness and forgiveness — our ears not deafened, nor our senses confused, by the sound of clamorous instruments of war; but, on the contrary, our voices composed to Halleluiah, Kyrie-Eleison, and Salve Regina, and our blood temperate and cold, as those who think upon reconciling themselves with God, not of avenging themselves of their fellow-mortals."

"Lord Abbot," said Sir Piercie, "this is nothing to the fate of my Molinara, whom, I beseech you to observe, I will not abandon, while golden hilt and steel blade bide together on my falchion. I commanded her not to follow us to the field, and yet methought I saw her in her page's attire amongst the rear of the combatants."

"You must seek elsewhere for the person in whose fate you are so deeply interested," said the Abbot; "and at present I will pray of your knighthood to inquire concerning her at the church, in which all our more defenceless vassals have taken refuge. It is my advice to you, that you also abide by the horns of the altar; and, Sir Piercie Shafton," he added," be of one thing secure, that if you come to harm, it will involve the whole of this brotherhood; for never, I trust, will the meanest of us buy safety at the expense of surrendering a friend or a guest. Leave us, my son, and may God be your aid!"

When Sir Piercie Shafton had departed, and the Abbot was about to betake himself to his own cell, he was surprised by an unknown person anxiously requiring a conference, who, being admitted, proved to be no other than Henry Warden. The Abbot started as he entered, and exclaimed angrily,—"Ha! are the few hours that fate allows him who may last wear the mitre of this house, not to be excused from the intrusion of heresy? Dost thou come," he said, "to enjoy the hopes which fate holds out to thy demented and accursed sect, to see the besom of destruction sweep away the pride of old religion — to deface our shrines — to mutilate and lay waste the bodies of our benefactors, as well as their sepulchres — to destroy the pinnacles and carved work of God's house, and our Lady's?"

"Peace, William Allan!" said the Protestant preacher, with dignified composure; "for none of these purposes do I come. I would have these stately shrines deprived of the idols which, no longer simply regarded as the effigies of the good and the wise, have become the objects of foul idolatry. I would otherwise have its ornaments subsist, unless as they are, or may be, a snare to the souls of men; and especially do I condemn those ravages which have been made by the heady fury of the people, stung into zeal against will-worship by bloody persecution. Against such wanton devastations I lift my testimony."

"Idle distinguisher that thou art!" said the Abbot Eustace, interrupting him; "what signifies the pretext under which thou dost despoil the house of God? and why at this present emergence wilt thou insult the master of it by thy ill-omened presence?"

"Thou art unjust, William Allan," said Warden; "but I am not the less settled in my resolution. Thou hast protected me some time since at the hazard of thy rank, and what I know thou holdest still dearer, at the risk of thy reputation with thine own sect. Our party is now uppermost, and, believe me, I have come down the valley, in which thou didst quarter me for sequestration's sake, simply with the wish to keep my engagements to thee."

"Ay," answered the Abbot, "and it may be, that my listening to that worldly and infirm compassion which pleaded with me for thy life, is now avenged by this impending judgment. Heaven hath smitten, it may be, the erring shepherd, and scattered the flock."

"Think better of the Divine judgments," said Warden. "Not for thy sins, which are those of thy blinded education and circumstances; not for thine own sins, William Allan, art thou stricken, but for the accumulated guilt which thy mis-named church hath accumulated on her head, and those of her votaries, by the errors and corruptions of ages."

"Now, by my sure belief in the Rock of Peter," said the Abbot, "thou dost rekindle the last spark of human indignation for which my bosom has fuel — I thought I might not again have felt the impulse of earthly passion, and it is thy voice which once more calls me to the expression of human anger! yes, it is thy voice that comest to insult me in my hour of sorrow, with these blasphemous accusations of that church which hath kept the light of Christianity alive from the times of the Apostles till now."

"From the times of the Apostles?" said the preacher, eagerly. "*Negatur, Gulielme Allan* — the primitive church differed as much from that of Rome, as did light from darkness, which, did time permit, I should speedily prove. And worse dost thou judge, in saying, I come to insult thee in thy hour of affliction, being here, God wot, with the Christian wish of fulfilling an engagement I had made to my host, and of rendering myself to thy will while it had yet power to exercise aught upon me, and if it might so be, to mitigate in thy behalf the rage of the victors whom God hath sent as a scourge to thy obstinacy."

"I will none of thy intercession," said the Abbot, sternly; "the dignity to which the church has exalted me, never should have swelled my bosom more proudly in the time of the highest prosperity, than it doth at this crisis — I ask nothing of thee, but the assurance that my lenity to thee hath been the means of perverting no soul to Satan, that I have not given to the wolf any of the stray lambs whom the Great Shepherd of souls had intrusted to my charge."

"William Allan," answered the Protestant, "I

will be sincere with thee. What I promised I have kept — I have withheld my voice from speaking even good things. But it has pleased Heaven to call the maiden Mary Avenel to a better sense of faith than thou and all the disciples of Rome can teach. Her I have aided with my humble power — I have extricated her from the machinations of evil spirits, to which she and her house were exposed during the blindness of their Romish superstition, and, praise be to my Master, I have not reason to fear she will again be caught in thy snares."

"Wretched man!" said the Abbot, unable to suppress his rising indignation, "is it to the Abbot of Saint Mary's that you boast having misled the soul of a dweller in Our Lady's Halidome into the paths of foul error and damning heresy? — Thou dost urge me, Wellwood, beyond what it becomes me to bear, and movest me to employ the few moments of power I may yet possess, in removing from the face of the earth one, whose qualities given by God, have been so utterly perverted as thine to the service of Satan."

"Do thy pleasure," said the preacher; "thy vain wrath shall not prevent my doing my duty to advantage thee, where it may be done without neglecting my higher call. I go to the Earl of Murray."

Their conference, which was advancing fast into bitter disputation, was here interrupted by the deep and sullen toll of the largest and heaviest bell of the Convent, a sound famous in the chronicles of the Community, for dispelling of tempests, and putting to flight demons, but which now only announced danger, without affording any means of warding against it. Hastily repeating his orders, that all the brethren should attend in the choir, arrayed for solemn procession, the Abbot ascended to the battlements of the lofty Monastery, by his own private staircase, and there met the Sacristan, who had been in the act of directing the tolling of the huge bell, which fell under his charge.

"It is the last time I shall discharge mine office, most venerable Father and Lord," said he to the Abbot, "for yonder come the Philistines; but I would not that the large bell of Saint Mary's should sound for the last time, otherwise than in true and full tone — I have been a sinful man for one of our holy profession," added he, looking upward, "yet may I presume to say, not a bell hath sounded out of tune from the tower of the house, while Father Philip had the superintendence of the chime and the belfry."

The Abbot, without reply, cast his eyes towards the path, which, winding around the mountain, descends upon Kennaquhair, from the south-east. He beheld at a distance a cloud of dust, and heard the neighing of many horses, while the occasional sparkle of the long line of spears, as they came downwards into the valley, announced that the band came thither in arms.

"Shame on my weakness!" said Abbot Eustace, dashing the tears from his eyes; "my sight is too much dimmed to observe their motions — look, my son Edward," for his favourite novice had again joined him, "and tell me what ensigns they bear."

"They are Scottish men, when all is done," exclaimed Edward — "I see the white crosses — it may be the Western Borderers, or Fernieherst and his clan."

"Look at the banner," said the Abbot; "tell me what are the blazonries?"

"The arms of Scotland," said Edward, "the lion and its tressure, quartered, as I think, with three cushions — Can it be the royal standard?"

"Alas! no," said the Abbot, "it is that of the Earl of Murray. He hath assumed with his new conquest the badge of the valiant Randolph, and hath dropt from his hereditary coat the bend which indicates his own base birth — would to God he may not have blotted it also from his memory, and aim as well at possessing the name, as the power, of a king."

"At least, my father," said Edward, "he will secure us from the violence of the Southron."

"Ay, my son, as the shepherd secures a silly lamb from the wolf, which he destines in due time to his own banquet. Oh my son, evil days are on us! A breach has been made in the walls of our sanctuary — thy brother hath fallen from the faith. Such news brought my last secret intelligence — Murray has already spoken of rewarding his services with the hand of Mary Avenel."

"Of Mary Avenel!" said the novice tottering towards and grasping hold of one of the carved pinnacles which adorned the proud battlement.

"Ay, of Mary Avenel, my son, who has also abjured the faith of her fathers. Weep not, my Edward, weep not, my beloved son! or weep for their apostasy, and not for their union — Bless God, who hath called thee to himself, out of the tents of wickedness; but for the grace of Our Lady and Saint Benedict, thou also hadst been a castaway."

"I endeavour, my father," said Edward, "I endeavour to forget; but what I would now blot from my memory has been the thought of all my former life — Murray dare not forward a match so unequal in birth."

"He dares do what suits his purpose — The Castle of Avenel is strong, and needs a good castellan, devoted to his service; as for the difference of their birth, he will mind it no more than he would mind defacing the natural regularity of the ground, were it necessary he should erect upon it military lines and intrenchments. But do not droop for that — awaken thy soul within thee, my son. Think you part with a vain vision, an idle dream, nursed in solitude and inaction. — I weep not, yet what am I now like to lose? — Look at these towers, where saints dwelt, and where heroes have been buried — Think that I, so briefly called to preside over the pious flock, which has dwelt here since the first light of Christianity, may be this day written down the last father of this holy community — Come, let us descend, and meet our fate. I see them approach near to the village."

The Abbot descended, the novice cast a glance around him; yet the sense of the danger impending over the stately structure, with which he was now united, was unable to banish the recollection of Mary Avenel. — "His brother's bride!" he pulled the cowl over his face, and followed his Superior.

The whole bells of the Abbey now added their peal to the death-toll of the largest which had so long sounded. The monks wept and prayed as they got themselves into the order of their procession for the last time, as seemed but too probable.

"It is well our Father Boniface hath retired to the inland," said Father Philip; "he could never

have put over this day — it would have broken his heart !"

"God be with the soul of Abbot Ingelram!" said old Father Nicholas, "there were no such doings in his days. — They say we are to be put forth of the cloisters; and how I am to live any where else than where I have lived for these seventy years, I wot not — the best is, that I have not long to live any where."

A few moments after this the great gate of the Abbey was flung open, and the procession moved slowly forward from beneath its huge and richly adorned gateway. Cross and banner, pix and chalice, shrines containing relics, and censers steaming with incense, preceded and were intermingled with the long and solemn array of the brotherhood, in their long black gowns and cowls, with their white scapularies hanging over them, the various officers of the convent each displaying his proper badge of office. In the centre of the procession came the Abbot, surrounded and supported by his chief assistants. He was dressed in his habit of high solemnity, and appeared as much unconcerned as if he had been taking his usual part in some ordinary ceremony. After him came the inferior persons of the convent; the novices in their albs or white dresses, and the lay brethren distinguished by their beards, which were seldom worn by the Fathers. Women and children, mixed with a few men, came in the rear, bewailing the apprehended desolation of their ancient sanctuary. They moved, however, in order, and restrained the marks of their sorrow to a low wailing sound, which rather mingled with than interrupted the measured chant of the monks.

In this order the procession entered the market-place of the village of Kennaquhair, which was then, as now, distinguished by an ancient cross of curious workmanship, the gift of some former monarch of Scotland. Close by the cross, of much greater antiquity, and scarcely less honoured, was an immensely large oak-tree, which perhaps had witnessed the worship of the Druids, ere the stately Monastery to which it adjoined had raised its spires in honour of the Christian faith. Like the Bentang-tree of the African villages, or the Plaistow-oak mentioned in White's Natural History of Selborne, this tree was the rendezvous of the villagers, and regarded with peculiar veneration; a feeling common to most nations, and which perhaps may be traced up to the remote period when the patriarch feasted the angels under the oak at Mamre.[1]

The monks formed themselves each in their due place around the cross, while under the ruins of the aged tree crowded the old and the feeble, with others who felt the common alarm. When they had thus arranged themselves, there was a deep and solemn pause. The monks stilled their chant, the lay populace hushed their lamentations, and all awaited in terror and silence the arrival of those heretical forces, whom they had been so long taught to regard with fear and trembling.

A distant trampling was at length heard, and the glance of spears was seen to shine through the trees above the village. The sounds increased, and became more thick, one close continuous rushing sound, in which the tread of hoofs was mingled with the ringing of armour. The horsemen soon appeared at the principal entrance which leads into the irregular square or market-place which forms the centre of the village. They entered two by two, slowly, and in the greatest order. The van continued to move on, riding round the open space, until they had attained the utmost point, and then turning their horses' heads to the street, stood fast; their companions followed in the same order, until the whole market-place was closely surrounded with soldiers; and the files who followed, making the same manœuvre, formed an inner line within those who had first arrived, until the place was begirt with a quadruple file of horsemen closely drawn up. There was now a pause, of which the Abbot availed himself, by commanding the brotherhood to raise the solemn chant *De profundis clamavi*. He looked around the armed ranks, to see what impression the solemn sounds made on them. All were silent, but the brows of some had an expression of contempt, and almost all the rest bore a look of indifference; their course had been too long decided to permit past feelings of enthusiasm to be anew awakened by a procession or by a hymn.

"Their hearts are hardened," said the Abbot to himself in dejection, but not in despair; "it remains to see whether those of their leaders are equally obdurate."

The leaders, in the meanwhile, were advancing slowly, and Murray, with Morton, rode in deep conversation before a chosen band of their most distinguished followers, amongst whom came Halbert Glendinning. But the preacher Henry Warden, who, upon leaving the Monastery, had instantly joined them, was the only person admitted to their conference.

"You are determined, then," said Morton to Murray, "to give the heiress of Avenel, with all her pretensions, to this nameless and obscure young man ?"

"Hath not Warden told you," said Murray, "that they have been bred together, and are lovers from their youth upward ?"

"And that they are both," said Warden, "by means which may be almost termed miraculous, rescued from the delusions of Rome, and brought within the pale of the true church. My residence at Glendearg hath made me well acquainted with these things. Ill would it beseem my habit and my calling, to thrust myself into match-making and giving in marriage, but worse were it in me to see your lordships do needless wrong to the feelings which are proper to our nature, and which, being indulged honestly and under the restraints of religion, become a pledge of domestic quiet here, and future happiness in a better world. I say, that you will do ill to rend those ties asunder, and to give this maiden to the kinsman of Lord Morton, though Lord Morton's kinsman he be."

"These are fair reasons, my Lord of Murray," said Morton, "why you should refuse me so simple a boon as to bestow this silly damsel upon young Bennygask. Speak out plainly, my lord; say you would rather see the Castle of Avenel in the hands of one who owes his name and existence solely to your favour, than in the power of a Douglas, and of my kinsman."

"My Lord of Morton," said Murray, "I have done nothing in this matter which should aggrieve you. This young man Glendinning has done me

[1] It is scarcely necessary to say, that in Melrose, the prototype of Kennaquhair, no such oak ever existed.

good service, and may do me more. My promise was in some degree passed to him, and that while Julian Avenel was alive, when aught beside the maiden's lily hand would have been hard to come by; whereas you never thought of such an alliance for your kinsman, till you saw Julian lie dead yonder on the field, and knew his land to be a waif free to the first who could seize it. Come, come, my lord, you do less than justice to your gallant kinsman, in wishing him a bride bred up under the milk-pail; for this girl is a peasant wench in all but the accident of birth. I thought you had more deep respect for the honour of the Douglasses."

"The honour of the Douglasses is safe in my keeping," answered Morton, haughtily; "that of other ancient families may suffer as well as the name of Avenel, if rustics are to be matched with the blood of our ancient barons."

"This is but idle talking," answered Lord Murray; "in times like these we must look to men, and not to pedigrees. Hay was but a rustic before the battle of Loncarty—the bloody yoke actually dragged the plough ere it was blazoned on a crest by the herald. Times of action make princes into peasants, and boors into barons. All families have sprung from one mean man; and it is well if they have never degenerated from his virtue who raised them first from obscurity."

"My Lord of Murray will please to except the house of Douglas," said Morton, haughtily; "men have seen it in the tree, but never in the sapling—have seen it in the stream, but never in the fountain.[1] In the earliest of our Scottish annals, the Black Douglas was powerful and distinguished as now."

"I bend to the honours of the house of Douglas," said Murray, somewhat ironically; "I am conscious we of the Royal House have little right to compete with them in dignity—What though we have worn crowns and carried sceptres for a few generations, if our genealogy moves no farther back than to the humble *Alanus Dapifer I*"[2]

Morton's cheek reddened as he was about to reply; but Henry Warden availed himself of the liberty which the Protestant clergy long possessed, and exerted it to interrupt a discussion which was becoming too eager and personal to be friendly.

"My lords," he said, "I must be bold in discharging the duty of my Master. It is a shame and scandal to hear two nobles, whose hands have been so forward in the work of reformation, fall into discord about such vain follies as now occupy your thoughts. Bethink you how long you have thought with one mind, seen with one eye, heard with one ear, confirmed by your union the congregation of the Church, appalled by your joint authority the congregation of Anti-Christ; and will you now fall into discord, about an old decayed castle and a few barren hills, about the loves and likings of an humble spearman, and a damsel bred in the same obscurity, or about the still vainer questions of idle genealogy?"

"The good man hath spoken right, noble Douglas," said Murray, reaching him his hand, "our union is too essential to the good cause to be broken off upon such idle terms of dissention. I am fixed to gratify Glendinning in this matter—my promise is passed. The wars, in which I have had my share, have made many a family miserable; I will at least try if I may not make one happy. There are maids and manors enow in Scotland.—I promise you, my noble ally, that young Bennygask shall be richly wived."

"My lord," said Warden, "you speak nobly, and like a Christian. Alas! this is a land of hatred and bloodshed—let us not chase from thence the few traces that remain of gentle and domestic love.—And be not too eager for wealth to thy noble kinsman, my Lord of Morton, seeing contentment in the marriage state no way depends on it."

"If you allude to my family misfortune," said Morton, whose Countess, wedded by him for her estate and honours, was insane in her mind, "the habit you wear, and the liberty, or rather license, of your profession, protect you from my resentment."

"Alas! my lord," replied Warden, "how quick and sensitive is our self-love! When, pressing forward in our high calling, we point out the errors of the Sovereign, who praises our boldness more than the noble Morton? But touch we upon his own sore, which most needs lancing, and he shrinks from the faithful chirurgeon in fear and impatient anger!"

"Enough of this, good and reverend sir," said Murray; "you transgress the prudence yourself recommended even now.—We are now close upon the village, and the proud Abbot is come forth at the head of his hive. Thou hast pleaded well for him, Warden, otherwise I had taken this occasion to pull down the nest, and chase away the rooks."

"Nay, but do not so," said Warden; "this William Allan, whom they call the Abbot Eustatius, is a man whose misfortunes would more prejudice our cause than his prosperity. You cannot inflict more than he will endure; and the more that he is made to bear, the higher will be the influence of his talents and his courage. In his conventual throne, he will be but coldly looked on—disliked, it may be, and envied. But turn his crucifix of gold into a crucifix of wood—let him travel through the land, an oppressed and impoverished man, and his patience, his eloquence, and learning, will win more hearts from the good cause, than all the mitred abbots of Scotland have been able to make prey of during the last hundred years."

"Tush! tush! man," said Morton, "the revenues of the Halidome will bring more men, spears, and horses, into the field in one day, than his preaching in a whole lifetime. These are not the days of Peter the Hermit, when monks could march armies from England to Jerusalem; but gold and good deeds will still do as much or more than ever. Had Julian Avenel had but a score or two more men this morning, Sir John Foster had not missed a worse welcome. I say, confiscating the monk's revenues is drawing his fang-teeth."

"We will surely lay him under contribution," said Murray; "and, moreover, if he desires to remain in his Abbey, he will do well to produce Piercie Shafton."

As he thus spoke, they entered the market-place, distinguished by their complete armour and their lofty plumes, as well as by the number of followers bearing their colours and badges. Both these powerful nobles, but more especially Murray, so nearly allied to the crown, had at that time a retinue and household not much inferior to that of Scottish royalty. As they advanced into the market-place, a pursuivant, pressing forward from their train,

[1] See Note N. *Pedigree of the Douglas Family.*
[2] See Note O. *Pedigree of the Stewart Family.*

addressed the monks in these words:—"The Abbot of Saint Mary's is commanded to appear before the Earl of Murray."

"The Abbot of Saint Mary's," said Eustace, "is, in the patrimony of his Convent, superior to every temporal lord. Let the Earl of Murray, if he seeks him, come himself to his presence."

On receiving this answer, Murray smiled scornfully, and, dismounting from his lofty saddle, he advanced, accompanied by Morton, and followed by others, to the body of monks assembled around the cross. There was an appearance of shrinking among them at the approach of the heretic lord, so dreaded and so powerful. But the Abbot, casting on them a glance of rebuke and encouragement, stepped forth from their ranks like a courageous leader, when he sees that his personal valour must be displayed to revive the drooping courage of his followers. "Lord James Stewart," he said, "or Earl of Murray, if that be thy title, I, Eustatius, Abbot of Saint Mary's, demand by what right you have filled our peaceful village, and surrounded our brethren, with these bands of armed men? If hospitality is sought, we have never refused it to courteous asking—if violence be meant against peaceful churchmen, let us know at once the pretext and the object?"

"Sir Abbot," said Murray, "your language would better have become another age, and a presence inferior to ours. We come not here to reply to your interrogations, but to demand of you why you have broken the peace, collecting your vassals in arms, and convocating the Queen's lieges, whereby many men have been slain, and much trouble, perchance breach of amity with England, is likely to arise?"

"*Lupus in fabula*," answered the Abbot, scornfully. "The wolf accused the sheep of muddying the stream when he drank in it above her—but it served as a pretext for devouring her. Convocate the Queen's lieges! I did so to defend the Queen's land against foreigners. I did but my duty; and I regret I had not the means to do it more effectually."

"And was it also a part of your duty to receive and harbour the Queen of England's rebel and traitor; and to inflame a war betwixt England and Scotland?" said Murray.

"In my younger days, my lord," answered the Abbot, with the same intrepidity, "a war with England was no such dreaded matter; and not merely a mitred abbot, bound by his rule to shew hospitality and afford sanctuary to all, but the poorest Scottish peasant, would have been ashamed to have pleaded fear of England as the reason for shutting his door against a persecuted exile. But in those olden days, the English seldom saw the face of a Scottish nobleman, save through the bars of his visor."

"Monk!" said the Earl of Morton, sternly, "this insolence will little avail thee; the days are gone by when Rome's priests were permitted to brave noblemen with impunity. Give us up this Piercie Shafton, or by my father's crest I will set thy Abbey in a bright flame!"

"And if thou dost, Lord of Morton, its ruins will tumble above the tombs of thine own ancestors. Be the issue as God wills, the Abbot of Saint Mary's gives up no one whom he hath promised to protect."

"Abbot!" said Murray, "bethink thee ere we are driven to deal roughly—the hands of these men," he said, pointing to the soldiers, "will make wild work among shrines and cells, if we are compelled to undertake a search for this Englishman."

"Ye shall not need," said a voice from the crowd; and, advancing gracefully before the Earls, the Euphuist flung from him the mantle in which he was muffled. "Via the cloud that shadowed Shafton!" said he; "behold, my lords, the Knight of Wilverton, who spares you the guilt of violence and sacrilege."

"I protest before God and man against any infraction of the privileges of this house," said the Abbot, "by an attempt to impose violent hands upon the person of this noble knight. If there be yet spirit in a Scottish Parliament, we will make you hear of this elsewhere, my lords!"

"Spare your threats," said Murray; "it may be, my purpose with Sir Piercie Shafton is not such as thou dost suppose—Attach him, pursuivant, as our prisoner, rescue or no rescue."

"I yield myself," said the Euphuist, "reserving my right to defy my Lord of Murray and my Lord of Morton to single duel, even as one gentleman may demand satisfaction of another."

"You shall not want those who will answer your challenge, Sir Knight," replied Morton, "without aspiring to men above thine own degree."

"And where am I to find these superlative champions," said the English knight, "whose blood runs more pure than that of Piercie Shafton?"

"Here is a flight for you, my lord!" said Murray.

"As ever was flown by a wild-goose," said Stawarth Bolton, who had now approached to the front of the party.

"Who dared to say that word?" said the Euphuist, his face crimson with rage.

"Tut! man," said Bolton, "make the best of it, thy mother's father was but a tailor, old Overstitch of Holderness—Why, what! because thou art a misproud bird, and despisest thine own natural lineage, and rufflest in unpaid silks and velvets, and keepest company with gallants and cutters, must we lose our memory for that? Thy mother, Moll Overstitch, was the prettiest wench in those parts—she was wedded by wild Shafton of Wilverton, who, men say, was a-kin to the Piercie on the wrong side of the blanket."

"Help the knight to some strong waters," said Morton; "he hath fallen from such a height, that he is stunned with the tumble."

In fact, Sir Piercie Shafton looked like a man stricken by a thunderbolt, while, notwithstanding the seriousness of the scene hitherto, no one of those present, not even the Abbot himself, could refrain from laughing at the rueful and mortified expression of his face.

"Laugh on," he said at length, "laugh on, my masters, shrugging his shoulders; "it is not for me to be offended—yet would I know full fain from that squire who is laughing with the loudest, how he had discovered this unhappy blot in an otherwise spotless lineage, and for what purpose he hath made it known?"

"*I* make it known?" said Halbert Glendinning, in astonishment,—for to him this pathetic appeal was made,—"I never heard the thing till this moment."[1]

[1] See Note P. *The White Spirit.*

"Why, did not that old rude soldier learn it from thee?" said the knight, in increasing amazement.

"Not I, by Heaven!" said Bolton; "I never saw the youth in my life before."

"But you *have* seen him ere now, my worthy master," said Dame Glendinning, bursting in her turn from the crowd. "My son, this is Stawarth Bolton, he to whom we owe life, and the means of preserving it — if he be prisoner, as seems most likely, use thine interest with these noble lords to be kind to the widow's friend."

"What, my Dame of the Glen!" said Bolton, "thy brow is more withered, as well as mine, since we met last, but thy tongue holds the touch better than my arm. This boy of thine gave me the foil sorely this morning. The Brown Varlet has turned as stout a trooper as I prophesied; and where is White Head?"

"Alas!" said the mother, looking down, "Edward has taken orders, and become a monk of this Abbey."

"A monk and a soldier! — Evil trades both, my good dame. Better have made one a good master fashioner, like old Overstitch, of Holderness. I sighed when I envied you the two bonny children, but I sigh not now to call either the monk or the soldier mine own. The soldier dies in the field, the monk scarce lives in the cloister."

"My dearest mother," said Halbert, "where is Edward — can I not speak with him?"

"He has just left us for the present," said Father Philip, "upon a message from the Lord Abbot."

"And Mary, my dearest mother?" said Halbert. — Mary Avenel was not far distant, and the three were soon withdrawn from the crowd, to hear and relate their various chances of fortune.

While the subordinate personages thus disposed of themselves, the Abbot held serious discussion with the two Earls, and, partly yielding to their demands, partly defending himself with skill and eloquence, was enabled to make a composition for his Convent, which left it provisionally in no worse situation than before. The Earls were the more reluctant to drive matters to extremity, since he protested, that if urged beyond what his conscience would comply with, he would throw the whole lands of the Monastery into the Queen of Scotland's hands, to be disposed of at her pleasure. This would not have answered the views of the Earls, who were contented, for the time, with a moderate sacrifice of money and lands. Matters being so far settled, the Abbot became anxious for the fate of Sir Piercie Shafton, and implored mercy in his behalf.

"He is a coxcomb," he said, "my lords, but he is a generous, though a vain fool; and it is my firm belief you have this day done him more pain than if you had run a poniard into him."

"Run a needle into him you mean, Abbot," said the Earl of Morton; "by mine honour, I thought this grandson of a fashioner of doublets was descended from a crowned head at least!"

"I hold with the Abbot," said Murray; "there were little honour in surrendering him to Elizabeth, but he shall be sent where he can do her no injury. Our pursuivant and Bolton shall escort him to Dunbar, and ship him off for Flanders. — But soft, here he comes, and leading a female, as I think."

"Lords and others," said the English knight with great solemnity, "make way for the Lady of Piercie Shafton — a secret which I listed not to make known, till fate, which hath betrayed what I vainly strove to conceal, makes me less desirous to hide that which I now announce to you."

"It is Mysie Happer, the Miller's daughter, on my life!" said Tibb Tacket. "I thought the pride of these Piercies would have a fa'."

"It is indeed the lovely Mysinda," said the knight, "whose merits towards her devoted servant deserved higher rank than he had to bestow."

"I suspect, though," said Murray, "that we should not have heard of the Miller's daughter being made a lady, had not the knight proved to be the grandson of a tailor."

"My lord," said Piercie Shafton, "it is poor valour to strike him that cannot smite again; and I hope you will consider what is due to a prisoner by the law of arms, and say nothing more on this odious subject. When I am once more mine own man, I will find a new road to dignity."

"*Shape* one, I presume," said the Earl of Morton.

"Nay, Douglas, you will drive him mad," said Murray; "besides, we have other matter in hand — I must see Warden wed Glendinning with Mary Avenel, and put him in possession of his wife's castle without delay. It will be best done ere our forces leave these parts."

"And I," said the Miller, "have the like grist to grind; for I hope some one of the good fathers will wed my wench with her gay bridegroom."

"It needs not," said Shafton; "the ceremonial hath been solemnly performed."

"It will not be the worse of another bolting," said the Miller; "it is always best to be sure, as I say when I chance to take multure twice from the same meal-sack."

"Stave the miller off him," said Murray, "or he will worry him dead. The Abbot, my lord, offers us the hospitality of the Convent; I move we should repair hither, Sir Piercie and all of us. I must learn to know the Maid of Avenel — to-morrow I must act as her father — All Scotland shall see how Murray can reward a faithful servant."

Mary Avenel and her lover avoided meeting the Abbot, and took up their temporary abode in a house of the village, where next day their hands were united by the Protestant preacher in presence of the two Earls. On the same day Piercie Shafton and his bride departed, under an escort which was to conduct him to the sea-side, and see him embark for the Low Countries. Early on the following morning the bands of the Earls were under march to the Castle of Avenel, to invest the young bridegroom with the property of his wife, which was surrendered to them without opposition.

But not without those omens which seemed to mark every remarkable event which befell the fated family, did Mary take possession of the ancient castle of her forefathers. The same warlike form which had appeared more than once at Glendearg, was seen by Tibb Tacket and Martin, who returned with their young mistress to partake her altered fortunes. It glided before the cavalcade as they advanced upon the long causeway, paused at each drawbridge, and flourished its hand, as in triumph, as it disappeared under the gloomy archway, which was surmounted by the insignia of the house

of Avenel. The two trusty servants made their vision only known to Dame Glendinning, who, with much pride of heart, had accompanied her son to see him take his rank among the barons of the land. "Oh, my dear bairn!" she exclaimed, when she heard the tale, "the castle is a grand place to be sure, but I wish ye dinna a' desire to be back in the quiet braes of Glendearg before the play be played out." But this natural reflection, springing from maternal anxiety, was soon forgotten amid the busy and pleasing task of examining and admiring the new habitation of her son.

While these affairs were passing, Edward had hidden himself and his sorrows in the paternal Tower of Glendearg, where every object was full of matter for bitter reflection. The Abbot's kindness had despatched him thither upon pretence of placing some papers belonging to the Abbey in safety and secrecy; but in reality to prevent his witnessing the triumph of his brother. Through the deserted apartments, the scene of so many bitter reflections, the unhappy youth stalked like a discontented ghost, conjuring up around him at every step new subjects for sorrow and for self-torment. Impatient, at length, of the state of irritation and agonized recollection in which he found himself, he rushed out and walked hastily up the glen, as if to shake off the load which hung upon his mind. The sun was setting when he reached the entrance of Corri-nan-shian, and the recollection of what he had seen when he last visited that haunted ravine, burst on his mind. He was in a humour, however, rather to seek out danger than to avoid it.

"I will face this mystic being," he said; "she foretold the fate which has wrapt me in this dress, — I will know whether she has aught else to tell me of a life which cannot but be miserable."

He failed not to see the White Spirit seated by her accustomed haunt, and singing in her usual low and sweet tone. While she sung she seemed to look with sorrow on her golden zone, which was now diminished to the fineness of a silken thread.

"Fare thee well, thou Holly green!
Thou shalt seldom now be seen,
With all thy glittering garlands bending,
As to greet my slow descending,
Startling the bewilder'd hind,
Who sees thee wave without a wind.
"Farewell, Fountain! now not long
Shalt thou murmur to my song,
While thy crystal bubbles glancing,
Keep the time in mystic dancing,
Rise and swell, are burst and lost,
Like mortal schemes by fortune crost.
"The knot of fate at length is tied,
The Churl is Lord, the Maid is bride.
Vainly did my magic sleight
Send the lover from her sight;
Wither bush, and perish well,
Fall'n is lofty Avenel!"

The Vision seemed to weep while she sung; and the words impressed on Edward a melancholy belief, that the alliance of Mary with his brother might be fatal to them both.

Here terminates the First Part of the Benedictine's Manuscript. I have in vain endeavoured to ascertain the precise period of the story, as the dates cannot be exactly reconciled with those of the most accredited histories. But it is astonishing how careless the writers of Utopia are upon these important subjects. I observe that the learned Mr Laurence Templeton, in his late publication entitled IVANHOE, has not only blessed the bed of Edward the Confessor with an offspring unknown to history, with sundry other solecisms of the same kind, but has inverted the order of nature, and feasted his swine with acorns in the midst of summer. All that can be alleged by the warmest admirer of this author amounts to this, — that the circumstances objected to are just as true as the rest of the story; which appears to me (more especially in the matter of the acorns) to be a very imperfect defence, and that the author will do well to profit by Captain Absolute's advice to his servant, and never tell him more lies than are indispensably necessary.

NOTES

TO

The Monastery.

Note A, p 661. Stawarth Bolton.

Stawarth Bolton took his embroidered red cross from his barret-cap, and putting it into the loop of the boy's bonnet, said, "By this token, which all my people will respect, you will be freed from any importunity on the part of our forayers."

As gallantry of all times and nations has the same mode of thinking and acting, so it often expresses itself by the same symbols. In the civil war 1745-6, a party of Highlanders, under a Chieftain of rank, came to Rose Castle, the seat of the Bishop of Carlisle, but then occupied by the family of Squire Dacre of Cumberland. They demanded quarters, which of course were not to be refused to armed men of a strange attire and unknown language. But the domestic represented to the captain of the mountaineers, that the lady of the mansion had been just delivered of a daughter, and expressed her hope, that, under these circumstances, his party would give as little trouble as possible. "God forbid," said the gallant chief, "that I or mine should be the means of adding to a lady's inconvenience at such a time. May I request to see the infant?" The child was brought, and the Highlander, taking his cockade out of his bonnet, and pinning it on the child's breast, "That will be a token," he said, "to any of our people who may come hither, that Donald M'Donald of Kinloch-Moidart, has taken the family of Rose Castle under his protection." The lady who received in infancy this gage of Highland protection, is now Mary, Lady Clerk of Pennycuik: and on the 10th of June still wears the cockade which was pinned on her breast, with a white rose as a kindred decoration.

Note B, p. 663. The Fairies.

It was deemed highly imprudent to speak of the fairies, when about to pass the places which they were supposed to haunt.

This superstition continues to prevail, though one would suppose it must now be antiquated. It is only a year or two since an itinerant puppet show-man, who, disdaining to acknowledge the profession of Gines de Passamonté, called himself an artist from Vauxhall, brought a complaint of a singular nature before the author, as Sheriff of Selkirkshire. The singular dexterity with which the show-man had exhibited the machinery of his little stage, had, upon a Selkirk fair-day, excited the eager curiosity of some mechanics of Galashiels. These men, from no worse motive that could be discovered than a thirst after knowledge beyond their sphere, committed a burglary upon the barn in which the puppets had been consigned to repose, and carried them off in the nook of their plaids, when returning from Selkirk to their own village.

"But with the morning cool reflection came."

The party found, however, they could not make Punch dance, and that the whole troop were equally intractable; they had also, perhaps, some apprehensions of the Rhadamanth of the district; and, willing to be quit of their booty, they left the puppets seated in a grove by the side of the Ettrick, where they were sure to be touched by the first beams of the rising sun. Here a shepherd, who was on foot with sunrise to pen his master's sheep on a field of turnips, to his utter astonishment, saw this train, profusely gay, sitting in the little grotto. His examination proceeded thus: —

Sheriff. You saw these gay-looking things? what did you think they were?

Shepherd. Ou, I am no that free to say what I might think they were.

Sheriff. Come, lad, I must have a direct answer — who did you think they were?

Shepherd. Ou, sir, troth I am no that free to say that I mind wha I might think they were.

Sheriff. Come, come sir! I ask you distinctly, did you think they were the fairies you saw?

Shepherd. Indeed, sir, and I winna say but I might think it was the Good Neighbours.

Thus unwillingly was he brought to allude to the irritable and captious inhabitants of fairy land.

Note C, p. 670. Drawbridge at Bridge-end.

A bridge of the very peculiar construction described in the text, actually existed at a small hamlet about a mile and a half above Melrose, called from the circumstance Bridge-end. It is thus noticed in Gordon's *Iter Septentrionale*: —

"In another journey through the south parts of Scotland, about a mile and a half from Melrose, in the shire of Teviotdale, I saw the remains of a curious bridge over the river Tweed, consisting of three octangular pillars, or rather towers, standing within the water, without any arches to join them. The middle one, which is the most entire, has a door towards the north, and I suppose, another opposite one toward the south, which I could not see without crossing the water. In the middle of this tower is a projection or cornice surrounding it: the whole is hollow from the door upwards, and now open at the top, near which is a small window. I was informed that not long ago a countryman and his family lived in this tower — and got his livelihood by laying out planks from pillar to pillar, and conveying passengers over the river. Whether this be ancient or modern, I know not; but as it is singular in its kind, I have thought fit to exhibit it."

The vestiges of this uncommon species of bridge still exist, and the author has often seen the foundations of the columns when drifting down the Tweed at night, for the purpose of killing salmon by torch-light. Mr John Mercer of Bridge-end recollects, that about fifty years ago the pillars were visible above water; and the late Mr David Kyle of the George Inn, Melrose, told the author that he saw a stone taken from the river bearing this inscription: —

"I, Sir John Pringle of Palmer stede,
Give an hundred markis of gowd sae reid,
To help to bigg my brigg ower Tweed."

Pringle of Galashiels, afterwards of Whytbank, was the Baron to whom the bridge belonged.

Note D, p. 682. Sorners.

To *sorne*, in Scotland, is to exact free quarters against the will of the landlord. It is declared equivalent to theft, by a statute passed in the year 1445. The great chieftains oppressed the Monasteries very much by exactions of this nature. The community of Aberbrothwick complained of an Earl of Angus, I think, who was in the regular habit of visiting them once a-year, with a train of a thousand horse, and abiding till the whole winter provisions of the convent were exhausted.

Note E, p. 696. Macfarlane's Geese.

A brood of wild-geese, which long frequented one of the uppermost islands in Loch-Lomond, called Inch-Tavoe, were supposed to have some mysterious connection with the ancient family of MacFarlane of that ilk, and it is said were never seen after the ruin and extinction of that house. The MacFarlanes had a house and garden upon that same island of Inch-Tavoe. Here James VI. was, on one occasion, regaled by the chieftain. His Majesty had been previously much amused by the geese pursuing each other on the Loch. But, when one which was brought to table, was found to be tough and ill fed, James observed, — "that MacFarlane's geese liked their play better than their meat," a proverb which has been current ever since.

Note F. p. 704. Epithets.

There are many instances to be met with in the ancient dramas of this whimsical and conceited custom of persons who formed an intimacy, distinguishing each other by some quaint epithet. In *Every Man out of his Humour*, there is a humorous debate upon names most fit to bind the relation betwixt Sogliardo and Cavaliero Shift, which ends by adopting those of Countenance and Resolution. What is more to the point is in the speech of Hedon, a voluptuary and a courtier in *Cynthia's Revels*. "You know that I call Madam Philantia my Honour, and she calls me her Ambition. Now, when I meet her in the presence, anon, I will come to her and say, 'Sweet Honour, I have hitherto contented my sense with the lilies of your hand, and now I will taste the roses of your lip.' To which she cannot but blushing answer, 'Nay, now you are too ambitious;' and then do I reply, "I cannot be too ambitious of Honour, sweet lady. Wilt not be good?'"—I think there is some remnant of this foppery preserved in masonic lodges, where each brother is distinguished by a name in the Lodge, signifying some abstract quality, as Discretion, or the like. See the poems of Gavin Wilson.

Note G. p. 710. Rowland Yorke, and Stukely.

"Yorke," says Camden, "was a Londoner, a man of loose and dissolute behaviour, and desperately audacious—famous in his time amongst the 'common bullies and swaggerers, as being the first that, to the great admiration of many at his boldness, brought into England the bold and dangerous way of fencing with the rapier in duelling. Whereas, till that time, the English used to fight with long swords and bucklers, striking with the edge, and thought it no part of man either to push or strike beneath the girdle.

Having a command in the Low Countries, Yorke revolted to the Spaniards, and died miserably, poisoned, as was supposed, by his new allies. Three years afterwards, his bones were dug up and gibbeted by the command of the States of Holland.

Thomas Stukely, another distinguished gallant of the time, was bred a merchant, being the son of a rich clothier in the west. He wedded the daughter and heiress of a wealthy alderman of London, named Curtis, after whose death he squandered the riches he thus acquired in all manner of extravagance. His wife, whose fortune supplied his waste, represented to him that he ought to make more of her. Stukely replied, "I will make as much of thee, believe me, as it is possible for any to do;" and he kept his word in one sense, having stripped her even of her wearing apparel, before he finally ran away from her.

Having fled to Italy, he contrived to impose upon the Pope, with a plan of invading Ireland, for which he levied soldiers, and made some preparations; but ended by engaging himself and his troops in the service of King Sebastian of Portugal. He sailed with that prince on his fatal voyage to Barbary, and fell with him at the battle of Alcazar.

Stukely, as one of the first gallants of the time, has had the honour to be chronicled in song, in Evans' Old Ballads, vol. iii. edition 1810. His fate is also introduced in a tragedy, by George Peel, as has been supposed, called the Battle of Alcazar, from which play Dryden is alleged to have taken the idea of Don Sebastian; if so, it is surprising he omitted a character so congenial to King Charles the Second's time, as the witty, brave, and profligate Thomas Stukely.

Note H. p. 732. Avenel Castle.

It is in vain to search near Melrose for any such castle as is here described. The lakes at the head of the Yarrow and those at the rise of the water of Ale, present no object of the kind. But in Yetholm Loch, (a romantic sheet of water, in the dry march, as it is called,) there are the remains of a fortress called Lochside Tower, which, like the supposed Castle of Avenel, is built upon an island, and connected with the land by a causeway. It is much smaller than the Castle of Avenel is described, consisting only of a single ruinous tower.

Note I. p. 739. Julian Avenel.

If it were necessary to name a prototype for this brutal, licentious, and cruel Border chief, in an age which shewed but too many such, the Laird of Black Ormiston might be selected for that purpose. He was a friend and confident of Bothwell, and an agent in Henry Darnley's murder. At his last stage, he was, like other great offenders, a seeming penitent; and, as his confession bears, divers gentlemen and servants being in the chamber, he said, "For God's sake, sit down and pray for me, for I have been a great sinner otherwise," (that is, beides his share in Darnley's death,) "for the which God is this day punishing me; for of all men on the earth, I have been one of the proudest, and most high-minded, and most unclean of my body. But specially I have shed the innocent blood of one Michael Hunter with my own hands. Alas, therefore! because the said Michael, having me lying on my back, having a fork in his hand, might have slain me if he had pleased, and did it not, which of all things grieves me most in conscience. Also, in a rage, I hanged a poor man for a horse;—with many other wicked deeds, for whilk I ask my God mercy. It is not marvel I have been wicked, considering the wicked company that ever I have been in, but specially within the seven years by-past, in which I never saw two good men or one good deed, but all kind of wickedness, and yet God would not suffer me to be lost."—See the whole confession in the State Trials.

Another worthy of the Borders, called Geordy Bourne, of somewhat subordinate rank, was a similar picture of profligacy. He had fallen into the hands of Sir Robert Carey, then Warden of the English East Marches, who gives the following account of his prisoner's confession:—

"When all things were quiet, and the watch set at night, after supper, about ten of the clock, I took one of my men's liveries and put it about me, and took two other of my servants with me in their liveries; and we three, as the Warden's men, came to the Provost Marshal's where Bourne was, and were let into his chamber. We sate down by him, and told him that we were desirous to see him, because we heard he was stout and valiant, and true to his friend, and that we were sorry our master could not be moved to save his life. He voluntarily of himself said, that he had lived long enough to do so many villainies as he had done; and withal told us, that he had lain with above forty men's wives, what in England what in Scotland; and that he had killed seven Englishmen with his own hands, cruelly murdering them; and that he had spent his whole time in whoring, drinking, stealing, and taking deep revenge for slight offences. He seemed to be very penitent, and much desired a minister for the comfort of his soul. We promised him to let our master know his desire, who, we knew, would promptly grant it. We took leave of him; and presently I took order that Mr Selby, a very honest preacher, should go to him, and not stir from him till his execution the next morning; for after I had heard his own confession, I was resolved no conditions should save his life, and so took order, that at the gates opening the next morning, he should be carried to execution, which accordingly was performed."—*Memoirs of Sir Robert Carey Earl of Monmouth.*

Note K. p. 749. Foppery of the Sixteenth Century.

Sir Piercie Shafton's extreme love of dress was an attribute of the coxcombs of this period. The display made by their forefathers was in the numbers of their retinue; but as the actual influence of the nobility began to be restrained both in France and England by the increasing power of the crown, the indulgence of vanity in personal display became more inordinate. There are many allusions to this change of custom in Shakspeare and other dramatic writers, where the reader may find mention made of

"Bonds enter'd into
For gay apparel against the triumph day."

Jonson informs us, that for the first entrance of a gallant, "'twere good you turned four or five hundred acres of your best land into two or three trunks of apparel."—*Every Man out of his Humour.*

In the Memorie of the Somerville family, a curious instance occurs of this fashionable species of extravagance. In the year 1537, when James V. brought over his shortlived bride from France, the Lord Somerville of the day was so profuse in the expense of his apparel, that the money which he borrowed on the occasion was compensated by a perpetual annuity of threescore pounds Scottish, payable out of the barony of Carnwarth till doomsday, which was assigned by the creditor to Saint Magdalen's Chapel. By this deep expense the Lord Somerville had rendered himself so glorious in apparel, that the King, who saw so brave a gallant enter the gate of Holyrood, followed by only two pages, called upon several of the courtiers to ascertain who it could be who was so richly dressed and so slightly attended, and he was not recognized until he entered the presence chamber. "You are very brave, my lord," said the King, as he received his homage; "but where are all your men and attendants?" The Lord Somerville readily answered, "If it please your Majesty, here they are," pointing to the lace that was on his own and his pages' clothes; whereat the King laughed heartily, and having surveyed the finery more nearly, bade him have away with it all, and let him have his stout band of spears again.

There is a scene in Jonson's "Every Man out of his Humour," (Act IV. Scene 6,) in which a Euphuist of the time gives an account of the effects of a duel on the clothes of himself and his opponent, and never departs a syllable from the catalogue of his wardrobe. We shall insert it in evidence that the foppery of our ancestors was not inferior to that of our own time.

"*Fastidius.* Good faith, signior, now you speak of a quarrel, I'll acquaint you with a difference that happened between a gallant and myself, Sir Puntarvolo. You know him if I should name him—Signior Luculento.

"*Punt.* Luculento! What inauspicious chance interposed itself to your two loves?

"*Fast.* Faith, sir, the same that sundered Agamemnon and great Thetis' son; but let the cause escape, sir. He sent me a challenge, mixt with some few braves, which I restored; and, in fine, we met. Now indeed, sir, I must tell you, he did offer at first very desperately, but without judgment; for look you, sir, I cast myself into this figure; now he came violently on, and withal advancing his rapier to strike, I thought to have took his arm, for he had left his body to my election, and I was sure he could not recover his guard. Sir, I mist my purpose in his arm, rashed his doublet sleeves, ran him close by the left cheek and through his hair. He, again, light me here—I had on a gold cable hat-band, then new come up, about a murrey French hat I had; cuts my hat-band, and yet it was massy goldsmith's work, cuts my brim, which, by good fortune, being thick embroidered with gold twist and spangles, disappointed the force of the blow; nevertheless it grazed on my shoulder, takes me away six purls of an Italian cut-work band I wore, cost me three pounds in the Exchange but three days before ——

"*Punt.* This was a strange encounter.

"*Fast.* Nay, you shall hear, sir. With this, we both fell out and breathed. Now, upon the second sign of his assault, I betook me to my former manner of defence; he, on the other side, abandoned his body to the same danger as before, and follows me still with blows; but I, being loath to take the deadly advantage that lay before me of his left side, made a kind of stramazoun, ran him up to the hilt through the doublet, through the shirt, and yet missed the skin. He, making a reverse blow, falls upon my embossed girdle,—I had thrown off the hangers a little before,—strikes off a skirt of a thick-laced satin doublet I had, lined with four taffetas, cuts off two panes embroidered with pearl, rends through the drawings-out of tissue, enters the linings, and skips the flesh.

"*Car.* I wonder he speaks not of his wrought shirt.

"*Fast.* Here, in the opinion of mutual damage, we paused. But, ere I proceed, I must tell you, signior, that in the last encounter, not having leisure to put off my silver spurs, one of the rowels catched hold of the ruffles of my boot, and, being Spanish leather and subject to tear, overthrows me, rends me two pair of silk stockings that I put on, being somewhat of a raw morning, a peach colour and another, and strikes me some half-inch deep into the side of the calf: He, seeing the blood come, presently takes horse and away: I having bound up my wound with a piece of my wrought shirt ——

"*Car.* O, comes it in there?

"*Fast.* Ride after him, and, lighting at the court-gate both together, embraced, and marched hand in hand up into the presence. Was not this business well carried?

"*Maci.* Well! yes; and by this we can guess what apparel the gentleman wore.

"*Punt.* 'Fore valour! it was a designment begun with much resolution, maintained with as much prowess, and ended with more humanity."

Note L. p. 771. Good Faith of the Borderers.

As some atonement for their laxity of morals on most occasions, the Borderers were severe observers of the faith which they had pledged, even to an enemy. If any person broke his word so plighted, the individual to whom faith had not been observed, used to bring to the next Border-meeting a glove hung on the point of a spear, and proclaim to Scots and English the name of the defaulter. This was accounted so great a disgrace to all connected with him, that his own clansmen sometimes destroyed him, to escape the infamy he had brought on them.

Constable, a spy engaged by Sir Ralph Sadler, talks of two Border thieves, whom he used as his guides. — "That they would not care to steal, and yet that they would not betray any man that trusts in them, for all the gold in Scotland or in France. They are my guides and outlaws. If they would betray me they might get their pardons, and cause me to be hanged; but I have tried them ere this."—*Sadler's Letters during the Northern Insurrection.*

Note M. p. 772. Indulgences of the Monks.

The *biberes*, *caritas*, and boiled almonds, of which Abbot Boniface speaks, were special occasions for enjoying luxuries, afforded to the monks by grants from different sovereigns, or from other benefactors to the convent. There is one of these charters called *De Pitancia Centum Librarum.* By this charter, which is very curious, our Robert Bruce, on the 10th January, and in the twelfth year of his reign, assigns, out of the customs of Berwick, and failing them, out of the customs of Edinburgh or Haddington, the sum of one hundred pounds, at the half-yearly terms of Pentecost and Saint Martin's in winter, to the abbot and community of the monks of Melrose. The precise purpose of this annuity is to furnish to each of the monks of the said monastery, while placed at food in the refectory, an extra mess of rice boiled with milk, or of almonds, or peas, or other pulse of that kind which could be procured in the country. This addition to their commons is to be entitled the King's Mess. And it is declared, that although any monk should, from some honest apology, want appetite or inclination to eat of the king's mess, his share should, nevertheless, be placed on the table with those of his brethren, and afterwards carried to the gate and given to the poor. "Neither is it our pleasure," continues the bountiful sovereign, "that the dinner, which is or ought to be served up to the said monks according to their ancient rule, should be diminished in quantity, or rendered inferior in quality, on account of this our mess, so furnished as aforesaid." It is, moreover, provided, that the abbot, with the consent of the most sage of his brethren, shall name a prudent and decent monk for receiving, directing, and expending, all matters concerning this annuity for the benefit of the community, agreeably to the royal desire and intention, rendering a faithful account thereof to the abbot and superiors of the same convent. And the same charter declares the king's farther pleasure, that the said men of religion should be bound yearly and for ever, in acknowledgment of the above donation, to clothe fifteen poor men at the feast of Saint Martin in winter, and to feed them on the same day, delivering to each of them four ells of large or broad, or six ells of narrow cloth, and to each also a new pair of shoes or sandals, according to their order; and if the said monks shall fail in their engagements, or any of them, it is the king's will that the fault shall be redeemed by a double performance of what has been omitted, to be executed at the sight of the chief forester of Ettrick for the time being, and before the return of Saint Martin's day succeeding that on which the omission has taken place.

Of this charter, respecting the pittance of L.100 assigned to furnish the monks of Melrose with a daily mess of boiled rice, almonds, or other pulse, to mend their commons, the antiquarian reader will be pleased, doubtless, to see the original.

Carta Regis Roberti I. Abbati et Conventui de Melross.

Carta de Pitancia Centum Librarum.

"Robertus Dei gracia Rex Scottorum omnibus probis hominibus tocius terre sue Salutem. Sciatis nos pro salute anime nostre et pro salute animarum antecessorum et successorum nostrorum Regum Scocie Dedisse Concessisse et hac presenti Carta nostra confirmasse Deo et Beate Marie virgini et Religiosis viris Abbati et Conventui de Melross et eorum successoribus in perpetuum Centum Libras Sterlingorum Annui Redditus singulis annis percipiendas de firmis nostris Burgi Berwici super Twedam ad terminos Pentecostis et Sancti Martini in hyeme pro equali portione vel de nova Custuma nostra Burgi predicti si firme nostre predicte ad dictam summam pecunie sufficere non poterunt vel de nova Custuma nostra Burgorum nostrorum de Edenburg et de Hadington Si firme nostre et Custuma nostra ville Berwici aliquo casu contingente ad hoc forte non sufficiant. Ita quod dicta summa pecunie Centum Librarum eis annuatim integre et absque contradictione aliqua plenarie persolvatur pre cunctis aliis quibuscunque assignacionibus per nos factis seu faciendis ad inveniendum in perpetuum singulis diebus cuilibet monacho monasterii predicti comedenti in Refectorio unum sufficiens ferculum risarum factarum cum lacte, amigdalarum vel pisarum sive aliorum ciborum consimilis condicionis inventorum in patria et illud ferculum ferculum Regis vocabitur in eternum. Et si aliquis monachus ex aliqua causa honesta de dicto ferculo comedere noluerit vel refici non poterit non minus attamen sibi de dicto ferculo ministretur et ad portam pro pauperibus deportetur. Nec volumus quod occasione ferculi nostri predicti prandium dicti Conventus de quo antiquitus communiter eis deserviri sive ministrari solebat in aliquo pejoretur seu diminuatur. Volumus insuper et ordinamus quod Abbas ejusdem monasterii qui pro tempore fuerit de consensu saniorum de Conventu specialiter constituat unum monachum providum et discretum ad recipiendum ordinandum et expendendum totam summam pecunie memorate pro utilitate conventus secundum votum et intencionem mentis nostre superius annotatum et ad reddendum fidele compotum coram Abbate et Maioribus de Conventu singulis annis de pecunia sic recepta. Et volumus quod dicti religiosi teneantur annuatim in perpetuum pro predicta donacione nostra ad perpetuam nostri memoriam vestire quindecim pauperes ad festum Sancti Martini in hieme et eosdem cibare eodem die liberando eorum cuilibet quatuor ulnas panni grossi et lati vel sex ulnas panni stricti et eorum cuilibet unum novum par sotularium de ordine suo. Et si dicti religiosi in premissis vel aliquo premissorum aliquo anno defecerint volumus quod illud quod minus perinpletum fuerit dupplicetur diebus magis necessariis per visum capitalis forestarii nostri de Selkirk, qui pro tempore fuerit. Et quod dicta dupplicatio fiat ante natale domini proximo sequens festum Sancti Martini predictum. In cujus rei testimonium presenti Carte nostre sigillum nostrum precipimus apponi. Testibus venerabilibus in Christo patribus Willielmo, Johanne, Willielmo et David Sancti Andree, Glasguensis, Dunkeldensis et Moraviensis ecclesiarum dei gracia episcopis Bernardo Abbate de Abirbrothock Cancellario, Duncano, Malisio, et Hugone de Fyf de Strathin et de Ross, Comitibus Waltero Senescallo Scocie. Jacobo domini de Duglas et Alexandro Fraser Camerario nostro Socie militibus. Apud Abirbrothock, decimo die Januarij. Anno Regni nostri vicesimo.

Note N, p. 787. Pedigree of the Douglas Family.

The late excellent and laborious antiquary, Mr George Chalmers, has rebuked the vaunt of the House of Douglas, or rather of Hume of Godscroft, their historian, but with less than his wonted accuracy. In the first volume of his Caledonia, he quotes the passage in Godscroft for the purpose of confuting it.

The historian (of the Douglasses) cries out, "We do not know them in the fountain, but in the stream; not in the root, but in the stem; for we know not which is the mean man that did rise above the vulgar." This assumption Mr Chalmers conceives ill-timed, and alleges, that if the historian had attended more to research than to declamation, he might easily have seen the first mean man of this renowned family This he alleges to have been one Theobaldus Flammaticus, or Theobald the Fleming, to whom Arnold, Abbot of Kelso, between the year 1147 and 1160, granted certain lands on Douglas water, by a deed which Mr Chalmers conceives to be the first link of the chain of title-deeds to Douglasdale. Hence, he says, the family must renounce their family domain, or acknowledge this obscure Fleming as their ancestor. Theobald the Fleming, it is acknowledged, did not himself assume the name of Douglas; "but," says the antiquary, "his son William, who inherited his estate, called himself, and was named by others, De Duglas;" and he refers to the deeds in which he is so designed. Mr Chalmers's full argument may be found in the first volume of his Caledonia, p. 579.

This proposition is one which a Scotsman will admit unwillingly, and only upon undeniable testimony: and as it is liable to strong grounds of challenge, the present author, with all the respect to Mr Chalmers which his zealous and effectual researches merit, is not unwilling to take this opportunity to state some plausible grounds for doubting that Theobaldus Flammaticus was either the father of the first William de Douglas, or in the slightest degree connected with the Douglas family.

It must first be observed, that there is no reason whatever for concluding Theobaldus Flammaticus to be the father of William de Douglas, except that they both held lands upon the small river of Douglas; and that there are two strong presumptions to the contrary. For, first, the father being named Fleming, there seems no good reason why the son should have assumed a different designation; secondly, there does not occur a single instance of the name of Theobald during the long line of the Douglas pedigree, an omission very unlikely to take place had the original father of the race been so called. These are secondary considerations indeed; but they are important, in so far as they exclude any support of Mr Chalmers's system, except from the point which he has rather assumed than proved, namely, that the lands granted to Theobald the Fleming were the same which were granted to William de Douglas, and which constituted the original domain of which we find this powerful family lords.

Now, it happens, singularly enough, that the lands granted by the Abbot of Kelso to Theobaldus Flammaticus are not the same of which William de Douglas was in possession. Nay, it would appear, from comparing the charter granted to Theobaldus Flammaticus, that, though situated on the water of Douglas, they never made a part of the barony of that name, and therefore cannot be the same with those held by William de Douglas in the succeeding generation. But if William de Douglas did not succeed Theobaldus Flammaticus, there is no more reason for holding these two persons to be father and son than if they had lived in different provinces; and we are still as far from having discovered the first mean man of the Douglas family as Hume of Godscroft was in the 16th century. We leave the question to antiquaries and genealogists.

Note O, p. 787. Pedigree of the Stewart Family.

To atone to the memory of the learned and indefatigable Chalmers for having ventured to impeach his genealogical proposition concerning the descent of the Douglasses, we are bound to render him our grateful thanks for the felicitous light which he has thrown on that of the House of Stewart, still more important to Scottish history.

The acute pen of Lord Hailes, which, like the spear of Ithuriel, conjured so many shadows from Scottish history, had dismissed among the rest those of Banquo and Fleance, the rejection of which fables left the illustrious family of Stewart without an ancestor beyond Walter the son of Allan, who is alluded to in the text. The researches of our late learned antiquary detected in this Walter, the descendant of Allan, the son of Fhaild, who obtained from William the Conqueror the Castle of Oswestry in Shropshire, and was the father of an illustrious line of English nobles, by his first son, William, and by his second son, Walter, the progenitor of the royal family of Stewart.

Note P, p. 788. The White Spirit.

The contrivance of provoking the irritable vanity of Sir Piercie Shafton, by presenting him with a bodkin, indicative of his descent from a tailor, is borrowed from a German romance, by the celebrated Tieck, called Das Peter Manchen, *i. e.* The Dwarf Peter. The being who gives name to the tale, is the Burg-geist, or castle spectre, of a German family, whom he aids with his counsel, as he defends their castle by his supernatural power. But the Dwarf Peter is so unfortunate an adviser, that all his counsels, though producing success in the immediate results, are in the issue attended with mishap and with guilt. The youthful baron, the owner of the haunted castle, falls in love with a maiden, the daughter of a neighbouring count, a man of great pride, who refuses him the hand of the young lady, on account of his own superiority of descent. The lover, repulsed and affronted, returns to take counsel with the Dwarf Peter, how he may silence the count, and obtain the victory in the argument, the next time they enter on the topic of pedigree. The dwarf gives his patron or pupil a horse-shoe, instructing him to give it to the count when he is next giving himself superior airs on the subject of his family. It has the effect accordingly. The count, understanding it as an allusion to a misalliance of one of his ancestors with the daughter of a blacksmith, is thrown into a dreadful passion with the young lover, the consequences of which are the seduction of the young lady, and the slaughter of her father.

If we suppose the dwarf to represent the corrupt part of human nature, — that "law in our members which wars against the law of our minds," — the work forms an ingenious allegory.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE MONASTERY.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.